

MTB World Cup DH #1 - CDM

Maribor, Slovenia, May 9-11, 2008

May 10: 4X Finals, New Names Dominate

By Luke Webber – www.cyclingnews.com

As predicted, with team changes and star riders missing it was a case of learning the new names in the four cross this evening at the first round of the World Cup in 2008.

The Maribor track was very dry, made up of dust and rocks producing a very difficult surface to race on. With a lot of braking points, the track became cut up and looser as the race went on and for many, bad luck dictated an early exit from the competition.

From the gate, the track went into a series of jumps, a left turn and then a right. It was this last opening turn that ended the hopes for many riders as everyone accelerated frantically to have any chance of making the triple that followed. In practice, fastest qualifier Dan Atherton looked fast as he dialled the outside line on one bend with immense speed. However, in heat one he had to come from dead last to squeak through into round two. Unfortunately, there would be no rerun in this heat and a bad first third of the race made any comeback impossible.



Alvares takes his first
Photo: Luke Webber

It was left to Cedric Gracia, Romain Saladini and Guido Tschugg in the two semi finals to hold the old guard strong, but only Tschugg could advance to the final leaving Gracia to claim the small event.

Just as in every heat that came before, Rafael Alvarez dominated the finals to take a convincing win ahead of Tschugg. Johannes Fischback was third and Tomas Slavik fourth.

The women's races were less of a new-names affair, with three of the top four qualifiers making it to the final, but there was the notable absence of Jill Kintner. She is concentrating on the Olympic BMX, which left the door wide open for Anneke Beerten to squeeze through. In the past three years Beerten has always been competitive even beating Kintner on occasions but it was consistency at the very top level that defied her. Today however, she looked like the new winning face of fourcross.

Second place was something of a surprise Anita Molcik put in three solid rides and in the process confirmed second step on the box ahead of the far more experienced Fionn Griffiths and Melissa Buhl.

Tomorrow is the first World Cup Downhill race and everyone's eyes are on Sam Hill.

Results

Elite women

Big final

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------|-----|-----|
| 1 | Anneke Beerten (Ned) | Ms-Intense Factory-Racing | Factory-Racing | 250 | pts |
| 2 | Anita Molcik (Aut) | | | 150 | |
| 3 | Fionn Griffiths (GBr) | Norco World Team | World Team | 100 | |
| 4 | Melissa Buhl (USA) | | | 80 | |

Small final

| | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|-----|--|----|-----|
| 5 | Lucia Oetjen (Swi) | | | 60 | pts |
| 6 | Helene Fruhwirth (Aut) | | | 40 | |
| 7 | Castro Fernandez Eva (Spa) | Esp | | 20 | |
| 8 | Diana Marggraff (Ecu) | | | 10 | |

1/4 finals

| | | | | | |
|----|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------|--|
| 9 | Kathleen Pruitt (USA) | | | 1.05.66 | |
| 10 | Marielle Jonker (Ned) | | | 1.05.89 | |
| 11 | Tereza Votavova (Cze) | | | 1.09.28 | |
| 12 | Katarina Tothova (Cze) | | | 1.14.31 | |
| 13 | Elisa Canepa (Ita) | Playbiker - Iron Horse | - Iron Horse | 1.08.16 | |
| 14 | Angelika Hohenwarter (Aut) | | | 1.24.89 | |
| 4 | Mio Suemasa (Jpn) | Ms-Intense Factory-Racing | Factory-Racing | 1.02.13 | |