



Diesel/UCI Mountain Bike World Cup - 1999

An Amazing Day in the Alps

Thanks to Annie Robillard for information used in this report. Ms Robillard is the UCI Press Chief for the Diesel/UCI Mountain Bike World Cup.

The opening round of the Diesel-UCI Downhill World Cup was full of fantastic feats and big surprises when afternoon sun changed the ground conditions changed from wet to tacky. **Steve Peat (GBR)** and UCI-ranked number one **Anne-Caroline Chausson (FRA)** emerged victorious.

The most remarkable ride of the day must have been by Chausson to win women's event, ahead of **Missy Giove (USA)** and **Marla Streb (USA)**. Chausson's finishing margin of over 17 seconds over Giove hardly told of the drama she experienced on her way down the mountain.

A big, tumbling crash separated the Dijonaise 22 years-old downhill superstar from her bicycle by what appeared to be some 50 metres. She ran back up the hill to where it lay, ensnared by the course marking tape, and remounted with the Diesel ribbons streaming from her handlebars.

"I thought then that I was out of contention, so I just rode as hard as I could for the practice," a happy Chausson explained at the finish line. She also stated that this season she has two main goals: to repeat her feat of 1998 by winning the World Cup and the World Championship. Remarkably, Chausson has won each of the six world championships she has entered. She has won the World Cup once.



Anne-Caroline Chausson - FRA

Chausson had also been fastest by a long way on Sunday morning's semi- final run, which seeds the start order for the final in the afternoon. Until Chausson arrived, Missy Giove had occupied the *"Hot Seat"* of the fastest rider.

Giove, who is now riding in an unregistered team having left the mighty Volvo-Cannondale squad last year (for which Chausson now competes), was pleased with her result.



It was a day when the ground conditions made the final run an act of spontaneity and quick thinking - as in slalom skiing. The mud was so deep in the morning that the race organisers laid sawdust on the course after the semi-final.

Then the sun came out and the well drained course dried very rapidly in the fierce mountain light.

True to form, Giove explained it how it was. *"After the sawdust was laid I couldn't find my lines any more and at times I just didn't know where to go. I crashed twice."*

Giove, who had undergone emergency root canal dental treatment the day before the race said that her plan for the eight-race series is to ride conservatively and aim for a top five result in each round.

In the current format of the series, where every result counts, consistency, rather than brilliance, is likely to be the marker of success.

Steve Peat, 26, claimed his second world cup round win on a new bike with radical design features that has so far served him well this season. Peat, who being British knows a thing or two about muddy conditions, showed on the previous weekend that he can also do it in the dust by winning a NORBA race at Big Bear, California.

"That win gave me confidence, and my new bike is working really well," said the big-grinning Yorkshireman. After the semi-final, in which he finished second to Sweden's **Johan Engstrom**, Peat ground down the knobs on his tyres to reduce rolling resistance in the fast-drying mud.



Steve Peat - GBR

The brilliant, but somewhat inconsistent *Frenchman*, **Cedric Gracia**, was on a winning run until the final corner, where he was involved in one of the smoothest crashes imaginable. According to eye-witness Steve Boehmke of Rock Shox, *"It was awesome, he went over the bars, still holding on to his handlebars with his left hand, rolled over and slid right back on to the bike,"* all in one fluid action.

Chuck Yeager himself might have been impressed by this exhibition of spatial genius, which kept Gracia in contention although the aberrance almost certainly cost him the win. Peat's time was 0.16 of a second faster.

"I don't know how it happened, I just fell," said the bewildered 21 years- old from Saint Gaudens in the French Pyrenees - who like Peat is one of the most likable characters on the circuit.

Third fastest was the seven-times world champion, **Nicolas Vouilloz (FRA)**. Vouilloz crashed at least once on what he declared to be a terrible ride. *"It was just not my day, not my weekend, I have been very tired this weekend."* He said while sitting in the leader's hot seat watching the track gradually get faster and expressing surprise that he was still there in the lead.

Vouilloz, who turned in a poor result in the semi-final, started 24th from the end of the 70 riders. He seemed almost relieved when his former team- mate Gracia relieved him of the lead.

From here the downhill circuit moves for the first time to Maribor, Slovenia, for 29-30 May, and then on to the famous Dolomite track at Nevegal, Italy on 5-6 June.



place	name	nom	nat	team	t	t+
1	CHAUSSON	Anne-caroline	FRA	VOLVO/CANNONDALE	8:00.74	
2	GIOVE	Missy	USA	FOES/AZONIC	8:17.97	17.23
3	STREB	Marla	USA	YETI	8:18.63	17.89
4	JÖRGENSEN	Sari	SUI	TOMAC/MANITOU	8:31.14	30.40
5	REPO	Katja	FIN	GT-FINLAND	8:35.55	34.81
6	BONAZZI	Giovanna	ITA	DH RACING KASTLE	8:36.50	35.76
7	JONNIER	Sabrina	FRA	SUNN	8:45.20	44.46
8	DONOVAN	Leigh	USA	INTENSE CYCLES	8:46.09	45.35
9	MILLER	Katrina	AUS	TEAM JAMIS	8:46.14	45.40
10	BRUTSAERT	Elke	USA	SCHWINN/TOYOTA	8:46.21	45.47
11	MORTIMER	Helen	GBR	MBUK SPECIALIZED FOX	8:46.98	46.24
12	GONZALEZ	Mercedes	ESP	TEAM GT	8:47.21	46.47
13	MOSELEY	Tracy	GBR	VOLVO CANNONDALE(UK)	8:56.69	55.95
14	GUY	Emma	GBR	TEAM RALEIGH	8:56.93	56.19
15	LINDGREN	Malin	SWE	SCOTT ONE LIVE LIVE IT	8:57.31	56.57
16	SHER	Lisa	USA	FOES/AZONIC	9:10.68	1:09.94
17	WALKER	Sandra	SUI		9:14.64	1:13.90
18	JÜLLICH	Maren	GER	MONGOOSE	9:37.25	1:36.51
19	VUILLAUME	Carole	SUI		9:37.71	1:36.97
20	SANER	Marielle	SUI	HOT CHILI	9:47.46	1:46.72
21	GROS	Céline	FRA	SCOTT/LA CLUSAZ	9:55.40	1:54.66
22	MÖSER	Florentina	AUT	BANK AUSTRIA NATION	9:55.63	1:54.89
23	WINTERHALDER	Petra	GER	CYCLE-CRAFT-LION SIGG	9:58.61	1:57.87
24	GRANGE	Carole	FRA	ANCILLOTTI BIKE	10:09.89	2:09.15
25	RÜBEL-TÖDT	Johanna	GER	FIAT-ROTWILD	10:12.26	2:11.52
26	VALLAZZA	Irene	GER	TRC BERGMANN	10:20.69	2:19.95
27	BLAS OTONDO	Miriam	ESP	SUNN 99	10:30.89	2:30.15
28	STIEGER	Sarah	SUI	FIAT ROTWILD	11:18.99	3:18.25
29	HASSELBECK	Stefanie	GER	DIAMOND/STEPPEWOLF	12:31.46	4:30.72
30	LLANES	Tara	USA	MT DEW/SPECIALIZED	12:50.87	4:50.13