

DH:#8 : MONT-SAINTE-ANNE, CAN - 25-26.8.2001

World Cup Downhill's Exciting Finish

Downhill's 2001 season in the **Tissot-UCI World Cup** came to a close on a brilliant sunny afternoon in *Quebec*, when 20-year-old **Greg Minnaar** (*RSA, Global Racing Team*) upset five-time champion **Nicolas Vouilloz** (*FRA, Vouilloz Racing Team*) for the men's world cup title. **Anne-Caroline Chausson** (*FRA, Volvo-Cannondale*) won the women's title decisively over #2 **Missy Giove** (*USA, Global Racing Team*), while two others - **Chris Kovarik** (*AUS, Intense Cycles*) and **Sabrina Jonnier** (*FRA, RSP Import Intense*) - made their debut as world cup winners.

Conditions on Mont Sainte-Anne's modified 3km course were perfect Saturday, as sunny blue skies brought out huge crowds and international media for the season's final round of racing just north of Quebec City. After the morning's qualifying round of racing, the world's top pros were ready for one last race to the finish, one last chance at overall world cup points.



Sabrina Jonnier, FRA

Sabrina Jonnier (*FRA, RSP Import Intense*) earned the first world cup victory of her career at just twenty years of age in the women's finals, beating fifth-ranked **Fionn Griffiths** (*GBR, Ancillotti Zeal*) and eighth-ranked **Marielle Saner** (*SUI, Team Global Racing*) in an exciting women's final that featured several upsets - and a rare DNF for world cup champion **Anne-Caroline Chausson** (*FRA, Volvo-Cannondale*).

Chausson qualified third-fastest, then crashed out of contention for the podium near the bottom of the track to earn a DNF (*did not finish*) for the day, as number two-ranked **Missy Giove** (*USA, Global Racing Team*) finished fourth after riding through course tape and hitting a tree limb during her final run, still earning enough points to remain second-ranked for the season.

Chausson had the overall points series locked up before this event, making this final round a showdown for top-five rankings and the coveted UCI crystal globe trophies that are awarded to the top finishers. Sixth-ranked Jonnier served notice in the morning's qualifying session that she would be looking for one of the trophies, as she finished first in the semi-final, with 5th-ranked Griffiths second.



Marielle Saner, SUI

8th-ranked Marielle Saner (*SUI, Team Global Racing*) qualified sixth-fastest in the semi-finals, then posted a time of 5:45 in her final run to overtake the hotseat from then-leading **Katja Repo** (*FIN, Team GT*). #1-ranked Chausson then started her run as the fourth-fastest qualifier, but crashed and stopped mid-course while the remaining women rode by.

Missy Giove had qualified third-fastest and crossed the finish-line next, but didn't unseat her teammate Saner, who had now matched her career's best. Fionn Griffiths came down the hill as the penultimate finalist after qualifying second, and was able to beat Saner by three seconds. Griffiths was then assured of matching her career's best finish in second - a result she also posted in Vars this season.

That left only top-seeded Sabrina Jonnier, who maintained her momentum from the semi-finals and topped Griffiths by one and a half seconds - earning her first-ever world cup win - and moving up from 6th overall to 3rd in the process.

"The past two years here I had bad luck, but today I feel very lucky," said Jonnier. "I like this course - it's fast with technical sections in the middle. I didn't have a good run, and made a mistake in the first turn. But somewhere I decided I could win on this course and so I pedaled harder. This is good for my head going to Worlds."



Fionn Griffiths, GBR

Griffiths was happy with her finish as well, saying *"I had a get-off in the woods, but the top of the course was good for me. You have to relax up top, and I felt strong on this course. I knew I had to do good today for the overall, but tried to keep the pressure off myself."*

Saner also matched her career's best result (equaling another third place from Nevegal, Italy 1999), commenting *"I tried to be relaxed and breathe - especially between the forest sections - and tried not to crash. This was my last world cup of the season and I didn't have a podium, so I thought 'I have nothing to lose.' So I'm very happy and will go to Worlds with more confidence after my team's altitude training camp."*

Giove then ended fourth for the day, remaining number-two in the overall rankings. Fifth-place went to **Katja Repo** (FIN, Team GT), who dropped from third overall to fifth in the world cup standings.

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words: Ari Cheren



Repo | Griffiths | **Jonnier** | Saner | Giove

	<i>Bib</i>	<i>UCI Code</i>	<i>Surname</i>	<i>Firstname</i>	<i>Team</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Gap</i>
1	6	FRA19810819	JONNIER	Sabrina	FRANCE	5:40.49	0
2	5	GBR19820827	GRIFFITHS	Fionn	ANCILLOTTI UK ZEAL	5:42.00	1.51
3	8	SUI19770322	SANER	Marielle	GLOBAL RACING	5:45.99	5.5
4	2	USA19720120	GIOVE	Missy	GLOBAL RACING	5:47.85	7.36
5	3	FIN19730304	REPO	Katja	TEAM GT	5:52.15	11.66
6	4	USA19681211	DONOVAN	Leigh	SCHWINN	5:54.95	14.46
7	10	USA19650624	STREB	Marla	AZONIC FOES	5:57.31	16.82
8	7	GBR19790412	MOSELEY	Tracy	TEAM KONA FORD FOCUS	6:00.22	19.73
9	31	GBR19760801	MORTIMER	Helen	GIANT TOYOTA	6:02.04	21.55
10	17	USA19750401	LAWYER	April	MAXXIS	6:06.26	25.77
11	19	USA19821226	PRUITT	Kathy	DIRTWORKS	6:06.27	25.78
12	33	NZL19761015	QUIN	Vanessa	DD INC INTENSE	6:08.67	28.18
13	51	USA19820410	CONNOLLY	Danielle	KARPIEL	6:10.95	30.46
14	22	AUS19730205	MUXLOW	Tai-Lee	DIRTWORKS USA	6:11.54	31.05
15	30	CAN19730808	ALLEN	Sylvie	ROCKY MOUNTAIN BICYCLES	6:16.90	36.41
16	24	CHI19851019	PIZARRO	Bernardita	CHILE	6:24.10	43.61
17	15	GBR19830116	GASKELL	Helen	TEAM SANTA CRUZ	6:24.99	44.5
18	13	SUI19810719	WALKER	Sandra	SWITZERLAND	6:27.45	46.96
19	26	ECU19840319	MARGGRAFF	Diana	SOCAL - NICOLAI	6:28.12	47.63
20	23	USA19820125	BUHL	Melissa	ODI KHS	6:29.85	49.36
21	11	NED19820707	BEERTEN	Anneke	BE-ONE TEAM	6:31.05	50.56
22	41	CAN19790713	HUARD	Kim	BALFA	6:33.35	52.86
23	38	CAN19670907	WATANABE	Karey	MOM AND POPS	6:47.93	+1:07.44
24	44	USA19690226	GRIFFITH	Brittany	INTENSE	6:48.18	+1:07.69
25	39	SUI19810612	REUSSER	Pascaline	FOCUS GONSO	6:50.95	+1:10.46
26	45	AUS19830130	MCNAUGHTON	Emma	AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL TEAM	6:55.06	+1:14.57
27	50	CAN19810905	MARTIN	Elise	INDEPENDENT	7:01.02	+1:20.53
28	37	AUS19700215	WEBB	Kylie	AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL TEAM	7:24.73	+1:44.24
29	48	CAN19750124	JOHNSON	Cassidy	INDEPENDENT	7:47.03	+2:06.54
	1	FRA19771008	CHAUSSON	Anne-Caroline	VOLVO CANNONDALE	DNF	