

MTB World Cup XC #4 & DH #2 - CDM - CDM

Vallnord, Andorra, May 31-June 1, 2008

June 1: Elite men downhill

Gee completes astounding Atherton triple

By Luke Webber in Vallnord, Andorra – cyclingnews.com

Animal Commencal rider Gee Atherton completed his family's amazing triple win when he took out the men's downhill on Sunday afternoon, edging out world champion Sam Hill (Monster Energy / Iron Horse) by just 0.31 seconds. After Rachel Atherton won the women's event in the morning, the possibility for a triple win had the Atherton camp buzzing. But it wasn't going to be easy. Gee Atherton undoubtedly had the talent to win but for many tipsters the course just played to too many of Sam Hill's strengths.

Initially the weather was much improved - the course even drying for a short time - but as the top riders started their runs rain began to fall. It looked like an obvious choice; these conditions were made for Hill and when he came over the line and dislodged Greg Minnaar (Santa Cruz Syndicate), celebrations were already underway. Hill's arms were aloft, the white jersey readied and journalists writing the story of another Hill win.



The Atherton family, with team manager Dan Brown,
Photo ©: Luke Webber

What they underestimated though was the belief held by the Atherton family. Nothing could damage morale, the unit is so strong and winning twice already only added to that. At the split it was clear - today Hill was not alone.



The delirious excitement at the finish was unprecedented. Fans, press and of course family stormed the finish zone to experience an unforgettable moment in mountain bike history. For the following hour a throng followed every step of an Animal-Commencal-Atherton dominated presentation and loved every second.

It was a new beginning in downhill and fourcross racing which will add to the excitement for the rest of the series. After the race of his life Gee Atherton could not contain his excitement, but he was already looking forward to next week's Fort William round: the team's home race.

Sam Hill would eventually finish second
Photo ©: Luke Webber

"I'm pretty stoked this has happened," said Gee. "We have been working on it for a while it's something we're always aiming at and for it to come off now it is just surreal. I am really looking forward to the rest of the season now, I can get

into the travelling and the racing and get stronger as I go along. There is always more to come, I can always improve and I'm confident of doing that. That's what I love about the sport."

Gee's sister Rachel summed up the family's mood. "I am so proud of us all, Dan yesterday and Gee under pressure pulled it off, it was perfect really."

Results

1	Gee Atherton (GBr)	Animal Commencal	2.35.4
2	Samuel Hill (Aus)	Monster Energy	0.00.3
3	Greg Minnaar (RSA)	Santa Cruz Syndicate	0.01.4
4	Steve Peat (GBr)	Santa Cruz Syndicate	0.02.1
5	Samuel Blenkinsop (NZl)	Yeti Fox Shox Factory Rac	0.03.4
6	Chris Kovarik (Aus)	Chain Reaction Cycle	0.03.8
7	Fabien Barel (Fra)	Subaru Mountain Bike Pro	0.03.9
8	Fabien Pedemanaud (Fra)	Team Pyrenees Morewood	0.06.1
9	Matti Lehtikainen (Fin)	Ms-Intense Factory-Racing	0.06.3
10	Steve Smith (Can)		0.06.6
11	Mickael Pascal (Fra)	Msc Bikes	0.06.9
12	Bernat Guardia Pascual (Spa)	Msc Bikes	0.07.1
13	Nick Beer (Swi)	Ixs Sports Division Racin	0.07.3
14	Justin Leov (NZl)	Yeti Fox Shox Factory Rac	0.08.4
15	Andrew Neethling (RSA)	Gt Bicycles	0.08.6
16	Florent Payet (Fra)	Subaru Mountain Bike Pro	0.08.8
17	Pasqual Canals Flix (Spa)	Massi	0.09.5
18	Damien Spagnolo (Fra)	Subaru Mountain Bike Pro	0.09.6
19	Dan Stanbridge (GBr)	Mojo Orange	0.09.8
20	Dan Atherton (GBr)	Animal Commencal	0.09.8
21	David Vazquez Lopez (Spa)	Lapierre Dh Powered By Sa	0.09.9
22	Danny Hart (GBr)	Lapierre Dh Powered By Sa	0.09.9
23	Ivan Oulego Moreno (Spa)	Massi	0.10.0
24	Mitchell Delfs (Aus)	Kenda Tomac	0.10.7
25	Robin Wallner (Swe)		0.10.8
26	Antoine Badouard (Fra)		0.11.1
27	Ruaridh Cunningham (GBr)	Chain Reaction Cycle	0.11.1
28	Bryn Atkinson (Aus)	Gt Bicycles	0.11.2
29	Duncan Riffle (USA)	Cannondale Factory Racing	0.11.2
30	Amiel Cavalier (Aus)	Giant Mountain Bike Team	0.11.4
31	Joseph Smith (GBr)	Tomac Factory Racing	0.11.4
32	Wyn Masters (NZl)		0.12.4
33	Marcel Beer (Swi)	Ixs Sports Division Racin	0.12.6
34	Dominik Gspan (Swi)		0.12.6
35	Gracia Cedric (Fra)	Commencal - Furious - Oak	0.12.8
36	Pierre Charles Georges (Fra)		0.13.0
37	Joshua Button (Aus)		0.13.0
38	Jared Rando (Aus)	Giant Mountain Bike Team	0.13.1
39	Matthew Simmonds (GBr)	Chain Reaction Cycle	0.13.1
40	Cody Warren (USA)		0.13.3
41	Thibaut Ruffin (Fra)		0.13.4
42	Maxime Remy (Fra)	Team Sunn	0.13.4
43	Kowan Sorrell (GBr)		0.13.5
44	Herman Olund (Swe)		0.13.6
45	Alan Beggin (Ita)		0.13.9
46	Nathan Rennie (Aus)	Santa Cruz Syndicate	0.14.2
47	Marcus Klausmann (Ger)	Team Ghost International	0.14.4
47	Arnau Sugranes Mateu (Spa)	Msc Bikes	
49	Adam Brayton (GBr)	Playbiker - Iron Horse	0.14.5
50	Chris Hutchens (GBr)	Mojo Orange	0.14.9
51	Adam Vagner (Cze)		0.15.1
52	Markus Pekoll (Aut)	Solid Aclass Factory Team	0.15.3
53	Brook Macdonald (NZl)		0.15.4
54	Cameron Cole (NZl)	Team Maxxis	0.16.2
55	Sam Dale (GBr)	Cannondale Factory Racing	0.16.5
56	Danh Pha Kvin (Fra)	Team Pyrenees Morewood	0.16.5
57	Esteban Deronzier (Fra)	Sport Promotion	0.17.6
58	Nico Vink (Bel)	Dolphin-Trek Mountainbike	0.17.6
59	Neil Donoghue (GBr)	Team Bike Radar	0.17.8
60	Carlo Gambirasio (Ita)	Surfing Shop	0.18.1
61	Marco Milivinti (Ita)		0.18.9
62	Julien Camellini (Fra)	Chain Reaction Cycle	0.19.6
63	Thirion Remi (Fra)	Team Sunn	0.19.6
64	John Swanguen (USA)	Ms-Intense Factory-Racing	0.20.0

65 Daniel Critchlow (GBr) Chain Reaction Cycle	0.20.4
66 Andreas Sieber (Ger) Solid Aclass Factory Team	0.20.6
67 Cole Bangert (USA)	0.20.7
68 Kyle Strait (USA) Specialized Factory Racin	0.20.9
69 Anton Ferreiro Pajuelo (Spa) Massi	0.21.6
70 Nathan Vials (GBr) Reverse Components	0.22.3
71 Ivan Oziol (Fra)	0.22.3
72 Tamryn Murrell (Aus)	0.22.4
73 Matej Charvat (Cze)	0.23.8
74 Emanuel Pombo (Por)	0.26.2
75 Filip Polc (Svk) Kenda Tomac	0.27.1
76 Ben Cathro (GBr) Mojo Orange	0.28.9
77 Vlastimil Hyncica (Cze)	0.30.5
78 Marco Bugnone (Ita)	0.32.5
79 Will Rischbieth (Aus)	0.50.3
80 Oscar Saiz Castane (Spa) Giant Mountain Bike Team	2.00.5
81 Brendan Fairclough (GBr) Monster Energy	4.33.3
DNS Marc Beaumont (GBr) Team Bike Radar	