

Hill wins downhill

By Tour of Japan published July 25, 2009 – cyclingnews.com

Sam Hill (Specialized/Monster Energy) finally broke the string of bad luck which produced one of the longest winless streaks of his career, when he took the sixth round of the World Cup on Saturday in Mont Sainte Anne, Quebec, Canada. Hill's win propelled him into the overall World Cup series lead, ahead of Steve Peat (Santa Cruz Syndicate).

The first fast run of the afternoon was produced by Marcel Beer at 4:59.94. Beer held the Hot Seat for 17 racers, with Cameron Cole (Team Maxxis-Rocky Mountain Bicycles) the next to spend an extended time on top. Pierre Charles Georges (Solid Aclass) finally bumped him, but the final 20 riders saw frequent changes and, with ten riders to go, the leader was Aaron Gwin (Yeti/Fox), who defended his US National Championship title just last weekend.

Many were hoping to see a good run from World Cup leader Greg Minnaar (Santa Cruz Syndicate) who started in 21st place due to a flat tire during qualifying yesterday. Unfortunately Minnaar had a crash, which cost him time. He could only manage a 22nd place finish. "I washed out my front wheel in some mud under the lift and down I went. I got up pretty quickly, but my glove was half off so I had to freewheel while I took it off. [It was] definitely not a good weekend."

Fabien Barel (Subaru) came close to Gwin, leaving the American to anxiously wait for the final four riders. Samuel Blenkinsop (Yeti/Fox) had a slow run (16th place) and quickly left the finish area, visibly unhappy. World champion Gee Atherton (Animal Commencal) came close. That left only Steve Peat (Santa Cruz Syndicate), a perennial favourite here, and Hill to come down.

To thunderous applause, Peat didn't disappoint, with a time of 4:41.48 to Gwin's 4:42.91. He took the Hot Seat, but didn't really settle in. All eyes were glued to the big screen TV and the scoreboard, which was showing the splits on the course. Hill was the fastest through every split, showing incredible control skills through the rock gardens. To huge applause he finished in 4:38.44, 3.04 seconds better than Peat.

Hill was pleased with his win, the first of the season for him after an uncharacteristically long drought. "This is one of the most high speed, and the longest courses, on the World Cup circuit. It was a lot slicker this morning. It dried out a lot. I was conservative in the first few corners just to check it out. It was good so I went hard from there."

Peat had another stellar day with his second place, which marked an unprecedented 50th World Cup podium appearance for the British star. He also holds the record for the most World Cup career wins. "I think this course suits me. You've got to be an all-rounder to do well here. I've got another podium which I'm pleased about."

Gwin hung on to third for his first World Cup podium appearance. On the podium, the other racers did their best to drown him in champagne. "It was pretty crazy watching Gee and those guys come through. I'm happy. It's about time!"

With his win, Hill moves from third to first in the World Cup Points race with 1,039, a mere four points in front of Peat. Minnaar drops from first to third. Canada's Steve Smith (Evil Bikes) retains his ninth place standing as the top North American, after finishing seventh at Mont Sainte Anne.

Results

1	Samuel Hill (Aus) Monster Energy	0:04:38.44
2	Steve Peat (GBr) Santa Cruz Syndicate	0:00:03.04
3	Aaron Gwin (USA) Yeti Fox Shox Factory Race Team	0:00:04.47
4	Gee Atherton (GBr) Animal Commencal	0:00:05.07
5	Fabien Barel (Fra) Subaru Mountain Bike Pro Team	0:00:06.19
6	Chris Kovarik (Aus) Chain Reaction Cycles/Intense	0:00:07.09
7	Steve Smith (Can) MS Evil Racing	0:00:07.95
8	Brendan Fairclough (GBr) Monster Energy / Specialized / Mad Catz	0:00:08.14
9	Michael Hannah (Aus) GT Bicycles	0:00:09.14
10	Justin Leov (NZl) Trek World Racing	0:00:09.29
11	Nick Beer (Swi) Scott 11	0:00:10.10
12	Andrew Neethling (RSA) Trek World Racing	0:00:10.66
13	Mickael Pascal (Fra) MSC Bikes	0:00:11.05
14	Mitchell Delfs (Aus) Kenda Morewood	0:00:11.10
15	Marc Beaumont (GBr) GT Bicycles	0:00:11.97
16	Samuel Blenkinsop (NZl) Yeti Fox Shox Factory Race Team	0:00:12.95
17	Pierre Charles Georges (Fra) Solid Aclass Factory Team	0:00:13.25
18	Josh Bryceland (GBr) Santa Cruz Syndicate	0:00:13.87
19	Ben Cathro (GBr)	0:00:14.17
20	Fabien Pedemanaud (Fra) Scott 11	0:00:14.41
21	Matthew Simmonds (GBr) Chain Reaction Cycles/Intense	0:00:15.22
22	Greg Minnaar (RSA) Santa Cruz Syndicate	0:00:16.14
23	Luke Strobel (USA) Team Maxxis-Rocky Mountain Bicycles	0:00:16.40
24	Damien Spagnolo (Fra) Subaru Mountain Bike Pro Team	0:00:16.56
25	Cameron Cole (NZl) Team Maxxis-Rocky Mountain Bicycles	0:00:17.13
26	Duncan Riffle (USA) Duncan Riffle Racing	0:00:17.16
27	Ben Reid (Irl) Just Reid Race Team	0:00:17.47
28	Ivan Oulego Moreno (Spa) Massi	0:00:17.94
29	Filip Polc (Svk) MS Evil Racing	0:00:18.01
30	Joseph Smith (GBr) Kona	0:00:18.09
31	Nico Vink (Bel)	0:00:18.17
32	Dan Atherton (GBr) Animal Commencal	0:00:18.29
33	Joshua Button (Aus)	0:00:18.98
34	Matti Lehtikainen (Fin) MS Evil Racing	0:00:19.18
35	Dan Stanbridge (GBr)	0:00:19.60
36	David Vazquez Lopez (Spa) Lapierre Powered By Saab Salomon	0:00:20.46
37	Danny Hart* (GBr) Lapierre Powered By Saab Salomon	0:00:20.74
38	Pasqual Canals Flix (Spa) XMS-Devinci World Cup Team	0:00:20.84
39	Marcel Beer (Swi)	0:00:21.50
40	Jared Rando (Aus) Giant Mountain Bike Team	0:00:21.64
41	Ruaridh Cunningham (GBr) Chain Reaction Cycles/Intense	0:00:21.74
42	Lorenzo Suding (Ita)	0:00:21.75
43	Joris Bigoni (Fra)	0:00:22.56
44	Bernat Guardia Pascual (Spa)	0:00:22.81
45	Antoine Badouard (Fra)	0:00:23.09
46	Nathan Rankin (NZl)	0:00:23.39
47	Thomas Braithwaite (GBr)	0:00:23.51

48	Wyn Masters (NZL)	0:00:23.60
49	Will Rischbieth (Aus)	0:00:23.61
50	Harry Heath* (GBr)	0:00:23.65
51	Bernard ° Kerr (GBr)	0:00:24.43
52	Herman Olund (Swe)	0:00:24.90
53	Markus Pekoll (Aut)	0:00:25.65
54	Harry Molloy* (GBr)	0:00:25.79
55	Kyle Strait (USA)	0:00:26.00
56	David Eme (Fra)	0:00:26.04
57	Maxime Remy (Fra)	0:00:26.16
58	Rémi Thirion (Fra)	0:00:26.30
59	Patrick Thome* (Fra)	0:00:26.98
60	Bradley Benedict (USA)	0:00:27.04
61	Curtis Keene (USA)	0:00:27.37
62	Jurgen Beneke (Ger)	0:00:27.51
63	Aari Barrett* (NZL)	0:00:27.53
64	Cyrille Kurtz (Fra)	0:00:28.61
65	Antonio Ferreiro Pajuelo (Spa)	0:00:28.83
66	Dean Tennant (Can)	0:00:29.07
67	George Brannigan* (NZL)	0:00:29.29
68	Esteban Deronzier (Fra)	0:00:29.30
69	Marco Bugnone (Ita)	0:00:29.37
70	Boris Tetzlaff (Aut)	0:00:30.66
71	Gerard Wolfe (Irl)	0:00:31.35
72	Rémy Charrier (Fra)	0:00:32.13
73	Fabien Cousinie (Fra)	0:00:32.24
74	Kyle Marshall* (Can)	0:00:32.36
75	Shaun Palmer (USA)	0:00:32.89
76	Bryn Atkinson (Aus)	0:00:33.83
77	Shaun O'connor* (Aus)	0:00:38.35
78	Thibaut Ruffin (Fra)	0:00:53.82
79	Jared Graves (Aus)	0:03:06.57
DNF	Simon Garstin (Can)	
DNF	John Swanguen (USA)	

Team

1	Trek World Racing	72	pts
2	Yeti Fox Shox Factory Race Team	69	
3	Monster Energy / Specialized / Mad Catz	63	
4	Santa Cruz Syndicate	57	
5	Team Maxxis-Rocky Mountain Bicycles	54	
6	Chain Reaction Cycles/Intense	54	
7	Scott 11	54	
8	GT Bicycles	38	
9	Suspension Center	35	
10	Subaru Mountain Bike Pro Team	35	
11	Animal Commencal	30	
12	Morzine-Avoriaz 74	30	
13	Iron Horse-Kenda-Playbiker	28	
14	MS Evil Racing	26	
15	Norco World Team	21	
16	MSC Bikes	18	
17	Kenda Morewood	17	
18	Ancillotti Doganaccia Racing Team	17	
19	Team Sunn	15	

20	Solid Aclass Factory Team	14	
21	2Stagefactory	13	
22	Duncan Riffle Racing	5	
23	Just Reid Race Team	4	
24	Massi	3	
25	Kona	1	