

Miller and Flying Lopes Win Dual World Cups

Illuminated by floodlights and spurred on by the roar of the crowd, *American Brian*

Lopes (Mongoose) and *Australian Katrina Miller (Jamis)* became the first Swatch-UCI Dual World Cup champions.

These two denizens of the dirt overcame mud and night time darkness to put on a display of riding that sent the crowd of nearly 10,000 at Arai City, Japan, into a roaring frenzy.

Men

Lopes ended a thrilling season of head-to-head with a surprise win, coming from a 10 point deficit in the world cup series to pass leader *David Cullinan (USA, Schwinn-Toyota)* in the series final.

For Lopes, 27, a resident of Mission Viejo, California, this was the first major international title in mountain biking. His talent has long been recognised, and he has won the US national downhill series three times, but the demands of the international downhill circuit seemed too severe for him. *"When they said they were going to do this format (Dual) I knew it would suit my style, and I'm so stoked to win the title."* He said after the finish.

Cullinan who had looked the likely series winner earlier in the season was hindered in the final event by his shoe jamming in his pedal and was eliminated in the quarter finals to finish fifth on night and second overall.

Eric Carter (USA, GT) finished second here in Japan and moved up from fourth overall to third, completing a US 1-2-3 in one of the few cycling disciplines this has not been dominated by French riders this year.

Women

Miller came into these finals with a perfect record of 250 points. Her nearest rival was *Sari Jorgenson (SUI, Yeti)* who was over a hundred points back in the overall standings. Jorgenson finished third this evening, behind the surprisingly strong *Miwa Sakamoto (JPN, Tack Night Hatto)*.

The Arai City course was a classic Glen Jacobs creation to begin with, but the addition of several days' rain and the dark of night combined to give the undulating course many dark secrets. The floodlights overhead dazzled riders as they launched into the air off the jumps, and on landing the problem was readjusting vision to the dark of land level.

Lopes' friend *Shaun Palmer (USA, Specialized)* who gained extensive experience with jumping under floodlights as a professional freestyle snowboard rider before becoming a downhill racer knew just how it would be. *"Palmer warned me about the lights before I ever made a run,"* Lopes recounted, adding *"It was unbelievable! I just jumped and hoped I'd land right. What a crowd though - the Japanese are crazy!"*

The crowd - the largest ever for this sport at 8,620 - was loud, enthusiastic and elated by the fine performance of their countrywoman Sakamoto. The rain, which had stopped briefly during competition, began to fall immediately after it ended, and a sea of people moved down to the large podium stage to watch a live band and the season-ending awards ceremony. The men were presented with trophy cups and Japanese lanterns and after spraying full magnums of Champagne over all and sundry, further thrilled the crowd by hurling items of their outer clothing into the throng. It was joyous and good humoured end to a great season.

by *Ari Cheren*

Women/Femmes--

<i>rank</i>	<i>bib</i>	<i>name/nom</i>		<i>nat</i>	<i>points</i>	<i>UCIcode</i>
1	201	MILLER	KATRINA	AUS	50	AUS19750915
2	202	SAKAMOTO	MIWA	JPN	40	JPN19761108
3	204	JORGENSEN	SARI	SUI	30	SUI19800725
4	203	SHER	LISA	USA	20	USA19690419
5	205	MORTIMER	HELEN	GBR	10	GBR19760801
5	206	KAMAKURA	SACHIKO	JPN	10	JPN19710921
5	207	MASUDA	MAMI	JPN	10	JPN19740606

Knock Out Table

DUAL #8 ,ARAI FINALS (JAPAN)									
Elite Women									
				1/4			Semi-Finals		Finals

	Bib	Name	Bib	Name	Bib	Name

1	201	MILLER Katrina		
8	208			
-		201	MILLER Katrina	
		204	JORGENSEN Sari	
- 4	204	JORGENSEN Sari		
- 5	205	MORTIMER Helen	Final	
			201	MILLER Katrina
-			202	SAKAMOTO Miwa
2	202	SAKAMOTO Miwa		
7	207	MASUDA Mami		
-		202	SAKAMOTO Miwa	
		203	SHER Lisa	Consolation
- 3	203	SHER Lisa		
6	206	KAMAKURA Sachiko		
-			204	JORGENSEN Sari