

## Cliffhanger in the Alps

### Intro:

Round three of the inaugural Swatch Dual World Cup arrived in Les Gets, France, amid mild controversy and increasing fan acceptance. Dual, which is like dual slalom, only without separate tracks, is the latest discipline in mountain bike racing. The dual has enjoyed widespread fan acceptance since its debut at Stellenbosch, South Africa, although some top downhill riders are sitting out the series. Their concern is the risk of collision the day before the downhill race. Thousands of spectators lined the course on Saturday evening to watch many of downhill's brightest stars compete for UCI World Cup points. The interest of those who could not attend was served by live television coverage.

The format of the Dual is a single-elimination, aka knock-out event, where the field is reduced from 32 men and 16 women, until two riders remain to contest the final. Runs took an average of 30 seconds.

### WOMEN:

For **Katrina Miller** (AUS, Jamis-Manitou) this event was about opportunity and courage. In round two she had a lucky escape, recovering from riding off course to come back and beat **Tara Llanes** (Mt Dew/Specialized). After that scare she rode with great precision, and in the final against **Sabrina Jonnier** (FRA, Sintesi Verlicchi) she never looked like losing. **Helen Mortimer** (GBR, Sintesi Verlicchi) outrode **Malin Lindgren** (SWE, Scott International) to claim third place.

This was the first win of the season for the Australian, but last week's winner **Sari Jorgenson** (SUI, Yeti), who finished 9th retained the Swatch white jersey of the series leader.

### MEN:

High-flying **David Cullinan** (USA, Schwinn-Toyota), **Brian Lopes** (USA, Mongoose) and **Shaun Palmer** (USA, Mt Dew/Specialized) wowed the crowd with huge air and fast action through the berms to capture a USA 1-2-3 and show the thrilling potential for this new sport. Trained on the jumps and trails of Southern California, this trio dominated all comers and finessed their way through the course, fighting for the single best line through the turns.

Cullinan worked his way up through the ladder, beating Palmer in the semis and setting up a final with Lopes. Expectations for this clash were damped at the first corner when Lopes went down hard, losing more than 50 metres to Cullinan.

The most exciting round of the race was the *Palmer - Cullinan semi-final*. Cullinan, who has undergone heart valve replacement surgery no less than three times, outdid wild-boy Palmer not only in the finesse department, but also by his sheer pedalling speed.

Palmer took some consolation by beating **Scott Beaumont** (GBR, Kona) in the consolation round and taking third for the day. With his second win in as many weeks, Cullinan retained the white Swatch leader's jersey, commenting "*I can't believe this - it's a dream. It's been a long time since I've had this kind of success.*"

Cullinan, who was the 1991 downhill world champion, and is widely regarded as one of the finest stylists of all, seems to have recovered in one of sport's most remarkable come-back stories of all.

## Men/Hommes-



<i>pos</i>	<i>bib</i>	<i>UCIcode</i>	<i>name/nom</i>	<i>nat</i>	<i>team</i>	<i>points</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>USA19691029</b>	<b>CULLINAN Dave</b>	<b>USA</b>	<b>SCHWINN/TOYOTA</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>USA19710908</b>	<b>LOPES Brian</b>	<b>USA</b>	<b>MONGOOSE</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>USA19681114</b>	<b>PALMER Shaun</b>	<b>USA</b>	<b>MT DEW/SPECIALIZ</b>	<b>30</b>
4	11	GBR19780602	BEAUMONT Scott	GBR	KONA	20
5	8	GER19720223	BENEKE Jürgen	GER	SCHWINN/TOYOTA	10
5	26	IRL19770906	O'BRIEN Glyn	IRL	ROTEC	10
5	29	GER19760514	TSCHUGG Guido	GER	NPJ-DUAL-SLALOM-	10
5	30	RSA19761214	RUMBELOW Robin	RSA		10
9	6	GER19770808	KLAUSMANN Marcus	GER	BE-ONE	5
9	9	USA19690630	KING Mike	USA	TEAM GT	5
9	13	ESP19741212	QUINA Jaime	ESP	SINTESI LE FREAK	5
9	17	USA19700306	CARTER Eric	USA	TEAM GT	5
9	18	SVK19820410	POLC Filip	SVK	SEAT MERIDA KCK	5
9	19	SUI19761109	JOSEPH Michel	SUI	BE-ONE	5
9	23	ESP19700428	BARCONS Carlos	ESP	SCOTT	5
9	28	GBR19720523	REVELL Anthony	GBR	ANIMAL PLAYSTATI	5
17	3	FRA19770306	POUSSIN Florent	FRA	SUNN	
17	4	FRA19800826	DELDYCKE Mickael	FRA	PEUGEOT-PALAISEA	
17	5	ITA19660604	HERIN Corrado	ITA	SINTESI VERLICCHI	
17	7	FRA19780329	GRACIA Cédric	FRA	SUNN	
17	10	GBR19740617	PEAT Steve	GBR	TEAM GT	
17	14	NED19680416	DE BEVER Bas	NED	BE-ONE	
17	15	FRA19730605	KOCH Guillaume	FRA	SCOTT INTL	
17	16	FRA19700829	TAILLEFER Christian	FRA	PEUGEOT PALAISEA	
17	20	SWE19770802	ENGSTRÖM Johan	SWE	SCOTT INTL	
17	21	GBR19741123	LONGDEN Will	GBR		
17	22	SUI19780609	BÜELER Andy	SUI	SCOTT INTL	
17	24	JPN19720720	YANAGIHARA Y.	JPN	DIRT BROS	
17	25	USA19671103	TOMAC John	USA	TOMAC/MANITOU	
17	27	GBR19721010	PONTING Tim	GBR	ANIMAL/PLAYSTATI	
17	31	USA19730724	SCOFIELD Geoff	USA	ROTEC	
17	32	GBR19720201	PAGE Nigel	GBR	CLUBROOST-ROTWIL	



7	7	GRACIA Cédric	26	O'BRIEN Glyn	
23	23	BARCONS Carlos	23	BARCONS Carlos	
				2	LOPES Brian
10	10	PEAT Steve			
				11	BEAUMONT Scott
30	30	RUMBELOW Robin			
3	3	POUSSIN Florent	30	RUMBELOW Robin	
19	19	JOSEPH Michel	19	JOSEPH Michel	
14	14	DE BEVER Bas	30	RUMBELOW Robin	
27	27	PONTING Tim	11	BEAUMONT Scott	
6	6	KLAUSMANN Marcus	6	KLAUSMANN Marcus	
22	22	BÜELER Andy	11	BEAUMONT Scott	
11	11	BEAUMONT Scott			