



Diesel/UCI Mountain Bike World Cup - 1999

Nevegal, ITA - dl#3 - 4-6 June 1999 - Report / Rapport

Lopes and Miller Forge Ahead

Thanks to Annie Robillard for information used in this report. Ms Robillard is the UCI Press Chief for the Diesel/UCI Mountain Bike World Cup.

Brian Lopes (USA) and **Katrina Miller (AUS)**, the leading names of the 1998 season Swatch-UCI Dual World Cup, triumphed again in Nevegal, Italy, on a fast, big-jump course.

Men

In a fast final in front of 5,000 fans, Lopes took the win from friend and rival **Dave Cullinan (USA)** after stealing the a winning advantage at the start gate.

Undeterred by Lopes' lead, Cullinan attempted a passing move on the inside two turns from the finish, but he slipped and could only watch as Lopes claimed his second win out of three starts in the '99 series.

Cullinan - a master of finesse - felt that the course was not ideal for his riding style. *"This course was too fast. It was a race to the first gate. There were no berms. I knew with Brian, I had to get there first. It was a race who could get the handlebars there and he won,"* said heart transplant hero Cullinan, who qualified first and posted his first strong result of the season.

This win puts Brian Lopes back into the overall series lead, with 105 points - 15 ahead of his *Volvo-Cannondale* team-mate **Cedric Gracia (FRA)**, who was third today.



The main tactic in the dual, Lopes explained, is to be fastest over the open first 50 metres of the course, and be the first one into the tighter gated section where most of the jumps and other obstacles are.

On Nevegal's fast, grassy, track, there were few exceptions to Lopes' rule. *"Nine out of ten, a lot of it is at the start. The qualifying is big. The guys that qualify best get the lane choice, and that's huge,"* said Lopes.

The course designers here used an angled start gate, much like sprinters at a track meeting, so there was no distance advantage from the inside start position. The course, with two double jumps, one triple jump and two sets of stutter bumps, was in perfect condition, which makes a

pleasant change at this scenic mountain resort. Many times in the past, rain at Nevegal on World Cup weekend has made the difficult downhill course nearly unridable.

In the ride-off for third place, Gracia beat the aggressive **Michal Marosi** (CZE). With his typical panache and cheekiness, the young Frenchman waved "bye-bye" to Marosi and pulled his legs off his bike over the final jump. The crowd went wild.

Women

Miller's strong bursts out of the gate each round laid the cornerstone of her victory here. She explained that: *"I made some changes to my bike. We put on longer cranks and changed the gearing and that made a world of difference this week."* Miller beat every rival to the first turn.

In the final against her main rival, **Tara Llanes** (USA), she was pushed the hardest. In the semi-final, Llanes had made a spectacular mid-air pass against third-place **Sari Joergensen** (SUI) on the first of two double jumps, and she tried the same tactic against Miller. *"If I hadn't passed in the air, I wouldn't have beat (Joergensen),"* said Llanes. She tried to pass Miller on the inside, but the strong Australian successfully blocked her and held onto the lead, of both race and series.

Joergensen, who last year at Nevegal won both the downhill and the dual, had a comfortable win in the third place ride-off against **Malin Lindgren** (SWE).

Many of the top female riders, including **Anne-Caroline Chausson** (FRA), **Missy Giove** (USA) and **Mercedes Gonzales** (ESP), did not compete in the dual.





<i>Rk</i>	<i>NAME</i>		<i>Nat</i>	<i>TEAM</i>	<i>Points</i>
1	LOPES	Brian	USA	VOLVO CANNONDALE	50
2	CULLINAN	David	USA	SCHWINN TOYOTA RAV 4	40
3	GRACIA	Cédric	FRA	VOLVO CANNONDALE	30
4	MAROSI	Michal	CZE	ROCK MACHINE	20
5	AMOUR	Karim	FRA	GT FRANCE	10
5	WATSON	David	CAN	ROCKY MOUNTAIN	10
5	LAWRENCE	Randy	USA	INTENSE CYCLES	10
5	O'DRISCOLL	Chris	USA	SOLID-ELLSWORTH	10
9	JOSEPH	Michel	SUI	BE-ONE	5
9	CALUORI	Claudio	SUI	TEAM TOMAC	5
9	O'BRIEN	Glyn	IRL	ANIMAL ORANGE	5
9	BÜELER	Andy	SUI	FIAT ROTWILD	5
9	TSCHUGG	Guido	GER	WHEELER	5
9	GEALL	Steve	GBR	SPOOKY	5
9	STEFFEN	Andreas	SUI	LION CYCLECRAFT	5
9	FUHRMANN	Oliver	GER	DOWNHILL-MAGAZIN	5
17	TSUKAMOTO	Takashi	JPN	MX/MONGOOSE	
17	KIRKCALDIE	John	NZL	SCHWINN TOYOTA RAV 4	
17	PONTING	Tim	GBR	ANIMAL ORANGE	
17	BEAUMONT	Scott	GBR	KONA	
17	CLOSSET	Pascal	BEL	DBR	
17	LONGDEN	Will	GBR	MBUK SPECIALIZED FOX	
17	VESIKKO	Jani	FIN	TEAM RIDE FREE	
17	MEYER	Holger	GER	GT GERMANY	
17	SIMCIK	Daniel	CZE	ROCK MACHINE	
17	SCHIECK	Sebastian	GER		
17	MEYENBORG	Sascha	GER	SINTESI	
17	KEINECKE	Elmar	GER	NICOLAI/WIESSMANN	
17	HANHILAHTI	Antti	FIN	FINLAND	
17	HYNCICA	Vlastimil	CZE	GRAFOBAL-ZAMO	
17	WEBER	Cornelis	AUT	UNION BAD ST. LEONHA	
17	WEBER	Oliver	AUT	BANK AUSTRIA NATION	