



## Diesel/UCI Mountain Bike World Cup - 1999

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### 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

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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>rank</i>	<i>NAME</i>		<i>Nat</i>	<i>TEAM</i>	<i>Points</i>
1	MILLER	Katrina	AUS	TEAM JAMIS	50
2	LLANES	Tara	USA	MT DEW SPECIALIZED	40
3	JÖRGENSEN	Sari	SUI	TOMAC/MANITOU	30
4	LINDGREN	Malin	SWE	SCOTT ONE LIFE LIVE IT	20
5	DONOVAN	Leigh	USA	INTENSE CYCLES	10
5	KURANDOVA	Helena	CZE	KANGAROO/DIRT	10
5	GUY	Emma	GBR	TEAM RALEIGH	10
5	MOLCIK	Anita	AUT	RSC HI TEC TEAM	10
9	STREB	Marla	USA	YETI	
9	BONAZZI	Giovanna	ITA	DH RACING KASTLE	
9	SHER	Lisa	USA	FOES/AZONIC	
9	MORTIMER	Helen	GBR	MBUK SPECIALIZED FOX	
9	WALKER	Sandra	SUI		
9	CROXON	Adele	GBR	ANIMAL/ORANGE	
9	MÖSER	Florentina	AUT	BANK AUSTRIA NATION	
9	FAGERSTRÖM	Sofia	SWE	BE-ONE TEAM	