

## Budapest, HUN- 2-3.5.98- XC#3-

### Daucourt's glory puts Sydor back on top

In wet and miserable conditions, the top contenders for the women's World Cup, **Alison Sydor** (CAN, Volvo-Cannondale) and **Paola Pezzo** (ITA, Gary Fisher) could muster little appetite for a muddy afternoon's racing on the verdant hills of Csilliberc Park, on the outskirts of Budapest.

But an exciting battle developed between rising star **Alison Dunlap** (USA, GT) and come-back rider **Chantal Daucourt** (SUI, Trek Volkswagen). A late surge on foot by Daucourt gave her the win, which in turn re-installed Sydor, fourth today, as the World Cup leader.



Experienced reporters present likened round three of the 1998 Grundig/UCI Mountain Bike World Cup to conditions at the 1993 World Championships at Metabief, France.

When the day began with a steady and light drizzle, teams made final tyre selections, dressed their riders appropriately and then hunkered down for what would surely be a battle of will and endurance.

First rider to succumb to the gloopy conditions was Pezzo. The World Cup leader rode the first lap strongly until, according to her mechanic, a piece of wood lodged in her rear cassette and prevented her from shifting gear. In pulling out, Pezzo knew that she was giving up the Blue Jersey of the series leader, but with World Cup races at St Wendel and Plymouth on the next two weekends, an energy sapping race in the rain today was not necessarily in her best interests.

**Margarita Fullana** (ESP, Mt.

Dew/Specialized) waged a secondary battle for the fourth podium spot with Sydor, who knew that if Dunlap won it and she was fifth, Dunlap would finish the day in blue. Fullana managed to fend off the Canadian three-times World Champion for most of the lap, but was finally passed on the long climb and ended her long afternoon in fifth. For Sydor, there was little joy in her achievement today. *"It was horrible,"* she muttered, gingerly walking her mud-covered bike to her team truck after two and a half hours of racing.

The long climb leading from the valley floor to the plateau of the start/finish are proved decisive as it has done in past years. It was an unrideable chute of thick mud where wheels became mud-locked and all riders pushed or carried their bikes. With a kilometre to the finish, Dunlap was pushing and the strain was evident on her face. Daucourt saw her up ahead, and drew from her deep well of mountain biking skills. *"I run a lot,"* she commented *"so it totally helped,"* she explained. *"She ran right past me,"* confirmed Dunlap who didn't hear Daucourt's squelching steps until she was in second place. *"I was alone up front and had a gap until that final climb. I tried to keep up when she went by me, but I couldn't... so much running."* As Daucourt explains it, *"She was walking, I was running, so I passed her. I was going at my own pace today and it paid off."*

Dunlap, a former road racer, found this a day when broad mountain bike racing experience counted more than anything else. The race came down to running skill, favouring Daucourt, who said *"When I saw it was raining today, I thought 'OK - I think I can do well'."* Daucourt, who hasn't won a World Cup event for six years when she won rounds 5 and 7 in '92, proved she can still dominate when the conditions favour her and took advantage of the circumstances to win.

Gunn-Rita Dahle, who hasn't ridden exceptionally well since a phenomenal '96 season, was also happy to be back on the podium. *"I felt I had a body that works well today,"* she smiled. *"I've been training hard for three weeks and am looking forward to the rest of the world cup."* Plagued by illness, a tonsillectomy, bee stings (which she's allergic to) and interrupted training, Dahle hopes to return to the form that saw her win round 10 in Hawaii and stand on nearly every podium in '96.

Last year's winner, Dunlap, and Daucourt went out together on lap two and made a race of it. Third was the powerful figure of **Gunn-Rita Dahle** (NOR, American Eagle), who would ride the entire day in this position, while Sydor chased in fourth.

After an hour of racing, the rain eased off and conditions went from extremely difficult to almost impossible. *"Actually, the conditions were better when it was raining,"* said Dunlap, adding: *"Once the rain stopped the mud actually got worse and stuck to everything. I think my bike weighed a ton."* The first half of each lap was a super-slick single-track which had riders sliding sideways through turns and barely negotiating the normally manageable tree lined descents. The second half was dominated by a long climb, which became unrideable after the rain stopped.

On lap 3 at the 4km mark, Dunlap had a 56 second lead over Daucourt with Dahle 1:12 back and Sydor 2:15 off. In lap 4 Daucourt closed the gap to 25 seconds and Dahle moved up to only 45 seconds back. Going into the fifth, final lap it looked as if any one of these three women could win this slow motion slog through the mire.



Sydor, who won round one in Napa this season, regains the Blue Jersey of the World Cup Leader, and is again the top rider in the world going into next week's round four in St. Wendel, Germany.

Source: [Ari Cheren](#)



Pos	bib	UCIcode	name/nom	nat	team	time	+	points
			<b>DAUCOURT</b>					
1	15	SUI19660623	Chantal	SUI	TREK/VOLKSWAGEN	2:28:09.22		75
2	3	USA19690727	DUNLAP Alison	USA	TEAM GT	2:29:18.16	1:08.93	70
3	13	NOR19730210	DAHLE Gunn-rita	NOR	AMERICAN EAGLE	2:29:45.94	1:36.71	66
4	2	CAN19660909	SYDOR Alison	CAN	VOLVO/CANNONDALE	2:34:33.60	6:24.38	62
			<b>FULLANA</b>					
5	5	ESP19720409	Margarita	ESP	MT DEW/SPECIALIZ	2:34:59.19	6:49.97	58
			<b>ZU PUTTLITZ</b>					
6	20	GER19650904	Hedda	GER	BE-ONE	2:39:42.24	11:33.01	55
7	64	ITA19720406	DE NEGRI Nadia	ITA	BIANCHI MARTINI	2:41:02.04	12:52.81	52
8	16	CAN19660316	REDDEN Christina	CAN	RITCHEY	2:43:03.40	14:54.17	49
9	10	RUS19761202	EPIFANOVA Alla	RUS	VOLVO/CANNONDALE	2:43:25.01	15:15.79	46
10	75	ITA19721024	SALA Veronica	ITA	AVIOTEC FIOCCO G	2:44:26.63	16:17.40	43

<b>11</b>	18	USA19650312	JACQUES Tammy	USA	SCHWINN/TOYOTA	2:45:21.99 17:12.76	40
<b>12</b>	14	SUI19610508	FÜRST Silvia	SUI	BE-ONE	2:46:57.52 18:48.30	39
<b>13</b>	19	GBR19700608	BRUNGER Tracy	GBR	K2 BIKE	2:50:16.42 22:07.19	38
<b>14</b>	38	GER19680826	MARUNDE Regina	GER	VW/NUTZ./FZ./GT	2:52:42.60 24:33.38	37
<b>15</b>	30	GER19711114	MICHELS-SMITH Andrea	GER	IKO/CORRATEC	2:56:13.42 28:04.20	36
<b>16</b>	12	CAN19591226	TOMLINSON Lesley	CAN	POLO SPORT	2:57:12.98 29:03.76	35
<b>17</b>	26	GER19711227	SPITZ Sabine	GER	TEAM KONA-EMS	2:57:38.16 29:28.93	34
<b>18</b>	6	GBR19680303	ALEXANDER Caroline	GBR	RITCHEY	2:57:41.35 29:32.13	33
<b>19</b>	55	ITA19680704	STROPPARO Annabella	ITA	VOLVO/CANNONDALE	3:00:31.36 32:22.14	32
<b>20</b>	79	GBR19690413	ROUNTREE Isla	GBR	RALEIGH	- 1 lap	31
<b>21</b>	27	SWE19701227	JONSSON Annica	SWE	CRESCENT	- 1 lap	30
<b>22</b>	40	ITA19591123	GRASSI Liuccia	ITA	CICLI MAGGI FAUS	- 1 lap	29
<b>23</b>	84	CZE19640201	POLIVKOVA Kaja	CZE	PRO FREE SPORT	- 1 lap	28
<b>24</b>	104	AUT19670510	EMBACHER Hildegard	AUT	OATMC RV FORD SC	- 1 lap	27
<b>25</b>	44	FRA19690624	CLARET Daniele	FRA	EGS	- 1 lap	26
<b>26</b>	86	AUT19750122	SCHLAGER Evelyn	AUT	OAMTC HRINKOW BI	- 2 lap	25
<b>27</b>	17	SWE19720302	LINDBERG Madeleine	SWE	CRESCENT	- 2 lap	24
<b>28</b>	37	CAN19761119	DORION Melanie	CAN	ORYX-PROCYCLE	- 2 lap	23
<b>29</b>	65	GBR19650121	ROBINSON Louise	GBR	RALEIGH	- 2 lap	22
<b>30</b>	85	HUN19740303	VAJDA Marta	HUN	POSTAS MATAV	- 2 lap	21
<b>31</b>	50	GBR19751119	COPNALL Jenny	GBR	BIKEPARK/RALEIGH	- 2 lap	20
<b>32</b>	100	GER19790110	ELSNER Anna- barbara	GER	SCOTT-POLAR	- 2 lap	19
<b>33</b>	21	CAN19670127	PALMER-KOMAR Susan	CAN	HARO	- 2 lap	18
<b>34</b>	77	AUT19730405	BRAUMANN Birgit	AUT	ROOX/ROCKY MOUNT.	- 2 lap	17
<b>35</b>	102	SWE19790805	ERIKSSON Helena	SWE	CANNONDALE JDT	- 2 lap	16
<b>36</b>	103	GER19740000	FRÄDRICH Birgit	GER	HAWK-GREENERY	- 3 lap	15
<b>37</b>	82	ITA19711019	MARSILIO Claudia	ITA	KLEIN MODOLO RAC	- 3 lap	14
<b>38</b>	53	BEL19710602	VAN DEUN Hilde	BEL	SMOUT	- 3 lap	13
	1	ITA19690108	PEZZO Paola	ITA	GARY FISHER	DNF	
	4	FRA19720222	LEBOUCHER Laurence	FRA	PEUGEOT LA POSTE	DNF	
	7	FRA19690125	TEMPORELLI Sandra	FRA	PEUGEOT LA POSTE	DNF	
	9	AUS19710603	GRIGSON Mary	AUS	A.I.S.	DNF	

11	CAN19730517	MCQUAID Melanie	CAN	ROCKY MOUNTAIN	DNF
32	ESP19671215	ROVIRA Silvia	ESP	MARIN SPAIN	DNF
42	GER19670901	JÜNGST Birgit	GER	SCOTT/POLAR RACI	DNF
76	ITA19730606	GOLDIN Annarita	ITA	CARRARO	DNF
		VEZENTAN			
101	ROM19700629	Simona	ROM	ROMANIA	DNF
46	GER19750708	RÖSCH Nora	GER	K2 BIKE	DNS