

Tissot/UCI Mountain Bike World Cup - 2000 - Coupe du Monde MTB

XC #3 - HOUFFALIZE, BEL - 29/30 APRIL

The Tissot-UCI Mountain Bike World Cup resumed racing after a three-week break this weekend, attracting an estimated 30,000 spectators and perfect racing conditions to the charming Ardenne town of Houffalize, in southern Belgium. Set amongst green hills and historic buildings, the town was at a standstill Sunday as the huge crowds lined one of the sport's most enduring courses.

An hour after the women finished their race, 160 men were called up to the village start line for their 1:30 p.m. event. The crowds, which had been increasing in size all morning, now packed the town centre and surrounding hills to get a glimpse of their favourite riders as they sped by during their five-lap event. One man in particular, **Filip Meirhaeghe** (BEL, *Subaru-Specialized*), was the obvious Belgian favourite but started the race at a marked disadvantage.

Because of the large number of professional racers vying for a spot in the men's race, a qualifier race was held on Saturday to set Sunday's final start list. Meirhaeghe who - like teammate Fullana did not finish Napa Valley's round one and missed Mazatlan's round two - came into the Houffalize event ranked low enough (94) to compel him into Saturday's qualifier race, at which he finished third.

And so the Belgian began his race several rows back, but got a lucky break when a crash occurred in front of him and allowed him to peak the first big climb in 40th position. It then took him only one lap to ride his way into the top three, as he followed only **Christophe Dupouey** (FRA, *Giant*) and **Miguel Martinez** (FRA, *Full Dynamix*), the two Frenchmen trading the lead. **Bas Van Dooren** (NED, *Be-One*) and **Jose Antonio Hermida** (ESP, *Bianchi Albacom*) rounded out the top-five at this point.

By the end of the third lap there were three men locked in a tight battle for the lead, as Dupouey assumed the lead, with Meirhaeghe and Martinez close behind Bas Van Dooren riding alone 16 seconds back. **Thomas Frischknecht** (SUI, *Ritchey-Yahoo!*), **Lado Fumic** (GER, *German National Team*) and **Tom Larsen** (NOR, *Giant*) rode in the next chase group, 26 seconds behind the leading trio. **Jose Antonio Hermida** (ESP, *Bianchi Albacom*) was in 8th position at this point, after being delayed by a flat tyre.



Filip Meirhaeghe - BEL

Lap four witnessed the biggest change of the front-runners, when Hermida made an amazing surge for the front and ended up in the lead, Meirhaeghe and Dupouey still chasing in the lead pack. Martinez fell back to 5th position at 20 seconds, while Frischknecht remained steady in 4th.

As the fifth and final lap began, Meirhaeghe made his move and attacked for the lead, leaving both Dupouey and Hermida in his wake. Although both counter-attacked, neither could match Meirhaeghe's power as he rode out of the town centre and up the long paved climb of the feed zone in first position. Within minutes he

amassed a 40-second gap over Dupouey and Hermida, with Frischknecht and Martinez riding ten seconds apart in 4th and 5th.

At the finish Meirhaeghe's earned his biggest personal victory, riding a wave of cheers and support to another world cup win. 36 seconds later, Hermida and Dupouey sprinted for second place, with Dupouey edging out the Spanish rider by just a metre, giving the French Dupouey another strong finish after his win here last year, and Hermida his career's-best finish.

Quoted:

1st Place - Filip Meirhaeghe

"It really is a dream come true to win here in Belgium. I was a bit worried yesterday having to race a qualifier, but became confident and kept talking to myself to stay calm. I stayed focused today, but it was hard you get nervous in those situations. And Hermida was strong today, I thought he'd kill me, so I attacked on the last climb I knew it was now or never."

2nd Place Christophe Dupouey

"Meirhaeghe was really just too strong today especially on the paved climb out of the feed zone that last lap. I lost 40 seconds just there it was an incredible performance by him. I'm not so happy with my riding right now, Miguel and I tried to work together at some points, but there was nothing to do today."

3rd Place - Jose Antonio Hermida

"I'm very happy with today, this is my best finish. I was in front, after riding with Frischknecht, but had a flat tyre in the 3rd lap. I connected again with Frischknecht and thought 'I'm strong today, so go ahead and try.' In the last lap my energy wasn't like Filip's, I tried to attack, but had no help from Dupouey and then got pushed by a spectator on the final climb."



Christophe Dupouey - FRA

Next stop of the Tissot-UCI Mountain Bike World Cup is round #4 of the cross-country tour, next weekend in St. Wendel Germany.

Ari Cheren



Martinez | Hermida | Meirhaeghe | Dupouey | Frischknecht

	#	UCI Code	Surname	Firstname	Team	Time
1	94	BEL19710305	MEIRHAEGHE	Filip	SUBARU-SPECIALIZED	2:18:53
2	13	FRA19680808	DUPOUEY	Christophe	GIANT	2:19:29
3	19	ESP19780824	HERMIDA	Jose Antonio *	BIANCHI ALBACOM	2:19:29
4	28	SUI19700217	FRISCHKNECHT	Thomas	TEAM RITCHEY-YAHOO!	2:20:12
5	8	FRA19760117	MARTINEZ	Miguel	FULL DYNAMIX	2:20:24
6	39	NOR19720422	LARSEN	Tom	GIANT	2:20:54
7	5	NED19730825	VAN DOOREN	Bas	BE-ONE TEAM	2:21:19
8	6	NED19681010	BRENTJENS	Bart	SUBARU-SPECIALIZED	2:21:25
9	14	SUI19760713	HOCHSTRASSER	Thomas	SCOTT USA	2:22:14
10	17	SUI19760413	SAUSER	Christoph	VOLVO/CANNONDALE	2:23:16
11	7	FRA19731117	DUBAU	Ludovic	MARIN SMITH	2:23:22
12	3	GER19760520	FUMIC	Lado	GERMAN NATIONAL TEAM	2:23:23
13	76	ITA19740429	PIRAZZOLI	Mirko	G.S. PROMOBike	2:24:11
14	100	ITA19741202	CIONI	Dario	MAPEI DIAMOND BACK	2:24:31
15	15	FRA19661119	ARNOULD	Dominique	GIANT	2:24:58
16	30	FRA19750321	VOLLET	Gregory	BIANCHI ALBACOM	2:25:05
17	44	GER19700904	BRESSER	Carsten	ROCKY MOUNTAIN	2:25:17
18	34	FRA19760413	FRECH	Frederic	SCOTT LA CLUSAZ	2:25:21
19	9	AUS19680505	WOODS	Rob	AIS-GT AUSTRALIA	2:25:29
20	112	POL19780503	KOWAL	Mariusz *	POLAND	2:25:39
21	110	ITA19700324	FONTANA	Alessandro	FULL-DYNAMIX	2:25:41
22	11	ESP19670723	LEZAUN	Roberto	ORBEA	2:25:43
23	1	ITA19770721	FRUET	Martino	TEAM RITCHEY-YAHOO!	2:25:48
24	69	SUI19670523	WABEL	Beat		2:26:12
25	50	FRA19800816	ABSALON	Julien *	SCOTT USA	2:26:21
26	12	CAN19740729	GREEN	Roland	TEAM GT	2:26:28
27	26	CAN19801209	HESJEDAL	Ryder *	GARY FISHER/SAAB	2:26:34
28	57	RUS19720513	TCHERKASSOV	Pavel	GARY FISHER/SAAB	2:26:37
29	95	NED19650626	TOLHOEK	Patrick	BE-ONE TEAM	2:26:55
30	98	ITA19750310	ACQUAROLI	Dario	BIANCHI ALBACOM	2:27:16
31	113	BEL19800402	COENEN	Davy *		2:27:19
32	29	NZL19780630	LEUCHS	Kashi *	VOLVO/CANNONDALE	2:27:32
33	126	DEN19770522	BONNE	Thomas	DEN BLA KURER	2:27:38
34	59	GER19791123	MENDE	Matthias *	STEVENS-JEANTEX	2:28:00
35	99	POL19740801	GALINSKI	Marek	POLAND	2:28:07
36	42	DEN19740601	RASMUSSEN	Michael	HARO/LEE DUNGAREE	2:28:12
37	51	ITA19720501	STAUDER	Roland	CORRATEC WORLD TEAM	2:28:13
38	21	AUS19751114	FLEMING	Josh	GT AUSTRALIA	2:28:32
39	38	CAN19700512	HESTLER	Andreas	TEAM FORD-DEVINCI	2:29:14
40	129	ESP19690404	DE PORTUGAL	Guillermo	CORONAS TEAM	2:29:34
41	101	MEX19770523	MADRIGAL	Ziranda	TURBO	2:29:45
42	117	FRA19770629	POULY	Peter	EGOBIKE CAMELBACK	2:29:45
43	163	ESP19781023	GISPER LABARTA	Marti *	FINA MONTY	2:29:48
44	54	GBR19730411	LASENBY	Paul	MARIN	2:29:48
45	16	USA19610304	JUAREZ	Tinker	VOLVO/CANNONDALE	2:30:12
46	105	FRA19740808	DIETSCH	Thomas	BIANCHI RACING TEAM	2:30:21
47	55	CAN19760503	MCGRATH	Seamus	HARO/LEE DUNGAREE	2:30:24
48	132	CZE19770913	JEZEK	Vaclav	AUTHOR EXPANDIA PRAH	2:30:41
49	109	CZE19731201	KORINEK	Radim	CESKA SPORITELNA MTB	2:30:47
50	125	CZE19680606	STICHA	Pavel	AUTHOR EXPANDIA PRAH	2:30:47
51	36	BEL19660501	VAN DEN ABEELE	Peter		2:30:55
52	40	ITA19650917	PALLHUBER	Hubert	DIAMONDBACK	2:31:18
53	74	GBR19760607	BECKINGSALE	Oliver	SCOTT	2:31:48
54	116	POL19680706	KARCZYNSKI	Marcin	POLAND	2:31:51
55	22	DEN19660422	DJERNIS	Henrik	TEAM RITCHEY-YAHOO!	2:31:51
56	162	CZE19770322	SPESNY	Milan	RUBENA FORT MTB TEAM	2:31:59

57	37	SLO19720916	STRANCAR	Primoz	STOP TEAM-LEE COUGAN	2:32:05
58	190	GER19740904	MÜLLER	Christoph	SCHWALBE-RACING TEAM	2:32:20
59	62	GER19720903	WEICHERT	Marc	SCHWALBE-RACING TEAM	2:32:23
60	82	CAN19760803	TOULOUSE	Mathieu	TEAM FORD-DEVINCI	2:32:25
61	35	FRA19720910	HERISSET	Christophe	ORBEA	2:32:30
62	131	SWE19770427	JUNGAKER	Erik		2:32:47
63	61	USA19700313	LARSEN	Steve	LL BEAN/MONGOOSE	2:32:59
64	159	NED19771029	HESELING	Marcel		2:33:13
65	182	ESP19811219	ALVAREZ GUTIERRE	Ivan *	CORONAS BH	2:33:38
66	88	AUT19780617	PRESSLAUER	Peter *	CORRATEC WORLD TEAM	2:33:53
67	58	GER19680208	SCHWEDLER	Jens	STEVENS-JEANTEX	2:33:55
68	220	FRA19781206	LEBRETON	Pierre *	BIANCHI RACING TEAM	2:34:10
69	155	ESP19750509	ORTIZ BARRANCO	Antonio	CORONAS TEAM	2:34:28
70	49	USA19741030	EATOUGH	Chris	TREK/VOLKSWAGEN	2:34:38
71	56	ITA19750428	DE BERTOLIS	Massimo	DIAMONDBACK	2:34:48
72	93	NOR19780305	AUSTAD	Hakon *	DBS WORLD CUP TEAM	2:34:51
73	104	IRL19710406	SEYMOUR	Robin		2:34:52
74	127	AUS19731230	STOCKWELL	Luke	ROCKY MOUNTAIN BICYC	2:34:52
75	137	NED19791010	BAKKER	Erwin *		2:35:04
76	123	AUT19801011	SOUKUP	Christoph *	URSV HI TEC KTM TEAM	2:35:26
77	65	NED19770522	VAN MIL	Ruud		2:35:36
78	63	AUS19780411	REDENBACH	Paul *	RACELINE/FLEXOVIT	2:36:09
79	130	NED19760514	PETERS	Bas	GIANT	2:36:34
80	217	CZE19810426	VOKROUHLIK	Tomas *	RUBENA FORT MTB TEAM	2:36:42
81	167	AUT19711013	KOCH	Georg	WWW.RAINERWURZ.COM	2:36:48
82	32	ITA19771017	BUI	Marco	FULL-DYNAMIX	2:37:11
83	86	USA19700420	SWENSON	Carl	RLX POLO SPORT	2:37:13
84	161	ESP19690720	OCAÑA GARCIA	Fernando	CORONAS TEAM	2:37:20
85	149	NED19800616	AL	Thys *		2:37:37
86	141	SUI19770918	FLEURY	Patrik		2:38:13
87	75	GER19780511	DILGER	Andreas *	SCHWINN	2:38:14
88	157	SWE19790515	WESTERGREN	Jens *		2:39:03
89	90	SUI19780613	BUNDI	Silvio *	BIKERS VISION WHEEL	2:39:57
90	247	ITA19720501	PALLHUBER	Johann	RAINER BIKE	2:40:15
91	118	NED19710705	DE VRIES	Micha		2:40:16
92	71	GER19780221	ESCHENBACH	Florian *	LSP RACING	2:40:41
93	184	DEN19790918	POULSEN	Christian *		2:41:05
94	83	MEX19770729	BARRIGA	Salvador	TURBO	2:41:31
95	102	AUS19720707	WALLACE	Matt		2:41:32
96	170	FRA19660806	SAVIGNONI	Jean Christoph	LOOK POLE FORME	2:41:55
97	147	SUI19720814	CATTIN	Pascal		2:41:58
98	135	BEL19761101	HANKART	David		2:42:02
99	227	SUI19810120	WEBER	Balz *	ARROW SWISS BIKE TM	2:42:05
100	187	SWE19710426	PALMBERG	Magnus		2:43:29
101	53	ITA19751001	ZOLI	Yader	DIAMONDBACK	2:44:05
102	140	SUI19781229	STEINHAUER	Kai *	BIKERS VISION WHEEL	2:44:30
103	91	NOR19800401	STORMO	Lars Petter *	DRAMMEN CK (N)	2:44:58
104	92	SLO19790526	DRASLER	Rok *	FULL DYNAMIX	2:45:05
105	85	NOR19770103	STORMO	Frederik	DRAMMEN CK (N)	2:45:08
106	78	BRA19690923	AZEVEDO	Abraao	SELECAO BRASILEIRA	2:45:30
107	179	GER19810505	KAESS	Jochen *		2:46:39
108	45	GBR19790414	WILKINSON	Ian *	GREAT BRITAIN	2:46:42
109	153	CZE19710113	CIRKL	Petr	SPORT HRINKOV STEYR	2:47:41
110	176	DEN19800108	NIELSEN	Klaus *		- 1 lap

111	203	NOR19800719	BOHLER	Joachim *	FOLLO SK (N)	- 1 lap
112	144	CHN19780404	LI	Fuyu *	CHINESE NATL TEAM	- 1 lap
113	158	SWE19780918	ERICSSON	Frederick *		- 1 lap
114	87	NAM19710714	HEYMANS	Mannie	FOCUS	- 1 lap
115	89	GBR19800216	DIXON	Philip *	GREAT BRITAIN	- 2 laps
	2	SUI19740621	HELLER	Marcel	ARROW SWISS BIKE TM	DNF
	4	NOR19691210	HÖYDAHL	Rune	GIANT	DNF
	10	AUS19701202	ROWNEY	Paul	AIS-BROOKS GIANT	DNF
	20	ITA19681106	BRAMATI	Luca	SCOTT RACING TEAM	DNF
	23	DEN19750218	AGERGAARD	Jesper	BE-ONE TEAM	DNF
	24	CAN19740128	TOURVILLE	Eric	ORYX-PROCYCLE	DNF
	25	CAN19720918	WEDGE	Peter	KONA FACTORY TEAM	DNF
	27	GER19750812	JURETZEK	Hans-jurgen	SCHWALBE RACING TEAM	DNF
	31	GBR19661211	CLARKE	Barrie	RALEIGH	DNF
	33	SUI19740807	BINKERT	Markus	SCOTT-ELVIA	DNF
	41	BEL19760427	PAULISSEN	Roel	TEAM GT	DNF
	43	SUI19721112	STOECKLI	Lukas	ARROW SWISS BIKE TM	DNF
	46	ITA19690206	BRUSCHI	Mirko	DIAMONDBACK	DNF
	47	ITA19681221	BETTIN	Mauro	FULL-DYNAMIX	DNF
	52	GBR19690403	CRAIG	Nicholas	DIAMONDBACK	DNF
	60	GER19760824	SAHM	Stefan		DNF
	68	BEL19790218	TREVISAN	Patrick *	ORBEA	DNF
	73	USA19800208	SWIGGERS	Jess *	MONGOOSE PRO	DNF
	79	AUT19670920	ZORN	Siegfried	WWW.RAINERWURZ.COM	DNF
	80	GER19780824	NICKE	Thomas *	STEVENS-JEANTEX	DNF
	84	RSA19690523	BAKER	Aldon	TIME FREIGHT	DNF
	97	AUS19710207	GORDON	Craig	AIS	DNF
	103	SLO19771207	GOLCER	Jure	TEAM GT	DNF
	107	ESP19760317	MARQUEZ GRANADOS	José	CORONAS TEAM	DNF
	108	DEN19680516	KRISTENSEN	Lennie	TEAM FAKTA	DNF
	111	FRA19730616	CEARD	Claude	BIANCHI RACING TEAM	DNF
	120	ESP19700929	GARCIA HERNANDEZ	Luis	ROTOR EDR	DNF
	121	AUT19770630	KIRCHER	Robert	CORRATEC WORLD TEAM	DNF
	124	GER19740627	HANISCH	Marc		DNF
	128	BEL19750321	GALLE	David	ORBEA	DNF
	133	CZE19780617	DOLEZAL	Tomas *	CZE	DNF
	134	AUT19690816	POSPICHAL	Kurt	BANK AUSTRIA NATL TM	DNF
	136	FRA19701215	ORCEL	David	BIANCHI RACING TEAM	DNF
	138	FRA19790514	VACHETTE	Yohann *	GIANT	DNF
	145	DEN19800725	ANDERSON	Peter Riis *	DEN BIA KURER	DNF
	146	NED19730823	SMEETS	Roger		DNF
	150	SUI19800510	NÄF	Ralph *		DNF
	156	FRA19811021	FILIPPI	Nicolas *	BIANCHI ALBACOM	DNF
	160	ESP19810928	COLOMA	Carlos *	ORBEA	DNF
	164	SUI19750414	WEBER	Christian		DNF
	183	GER19800128	RUGEL	Joachim *	CORRATEC WORLD TEAM	DNF
	210	AUT19770108	SCHEIDERBAUER	Jörg	WWW.RAINERWURD.COM	DNF
	214	GER19771130	GÖLZ	Marc	LSP RACING	DNF
	239	FRA19660712	MANIN	Christophe	CILO TEAM FACTORY	DNF
	64	CAN19730419	SHEPPARD	Chris	HARO/LEE DUNGAREE	DNS
	70	DEN19610220	OSTERGAARD	Jan	DIFFUOLONGE	DNS