

MTB World Cup XC #3 - CDM

Madrid, Spain, May 3-4, 2008

May 4: Elite men cross country,

Absalon makes it three in a row

By Luke Webber in Madrid, Spain – cyclingnews.com

Julien Absalon captured his third World Cup in succession - all in three consecutive weeks. The Frenchman finished in 2:12:30 and beat Spaniard Jos Antonio Hermida by 12 seconds and compatriot Jean-Christophe Peraud by 52 seconds.

His win was far more of a challenge than in either Houffalize, Belgium, or Offenburg, Germany, thanks to a fast course. A lead group split and reformed during the early laps. In the initial stages, American Todd Wells even led it out - his first experience and one he will not forget.

At one point, the lead group consisted of 20-30 riders, but as some made attempts at getting away, Absalon was aware that this move would not be successful. "With groups so big, never would one man or even a pair be able to ride to the win. It would be impossible," the savvy winner said after the race.



Julien Absalon (Orbea) got away
Photo ©: Dave McElwaine

How it unfolded



Julien Absalon (Orbea) gets the hole shot
Photo ©: Dave McElwaine

With five laps down and the lead group thinning, Jose Antonio Hermida, through a mix of power and strength drawn from the Spanish fans, launched a decisive attack that completely split apart chase group. At first Absalon did not react, but sensing that Hermida would not back down and knowing they would work well together to keep a lead, he bridged across.

Then, it was a bit of good luck and expert timing that clinched Absalon the victory. "On the steep climb, I knew I had the speed over Jose, so I entered the descent first and attacked hard in the final two kilometres. Once you had a small gap, there was not enough time in the closing stages to make it back."

Hermida saw things differently as his front wheel had washed out on the descent, gifting Absalon another couple of seconds in his attack. "I did not notice that," said Absalon in response. But when someone is winning, it is often the case that luck follows.

It was nearly a case of two Spaniards in the top three, but Frenchman Jean Christophe Peraud did not give Ruben Ruzafa the final podium spot, preferring instead to take the glory himself. It was the Orbea team who dominated the top five, with three riders making the cut.

Last week's top performer, Burry Stander, took another step up the ranks by winning the under 23 competition in convincing style, including finishing 13th overall. But the result did not entirely satisfy him.

"By lap three I was in the top group, but I got carried away spending too much time near the front and then having a silly crash, hitting my bad knee," said Stander. "I will, however, treat this as a learning experience. It is the first time I have been at the front from the early stages, so next time I will do things differently."



Jose Hermida Ramos (Multivan Merida)
leads Julien Absalon (Orbea)
Photo ©: Dave McElwaine

The World Cup takes a couple weeks off for cross country riders before reconvening in Andorra for round four on May 31 - June 1. In the meantime, the opening round of the Gravity World Cup will take place May 10-11 in Maribor, Slovenia.

Results

1	Julien Absalon (Fra) Orbea	2.12.30 (24.72km/h)
2	Jose Antonio Hermida Ramos (Spa) Multivan Merida Biking Team	0.12
3	Jean-Christophe Peraud (Fra) Orbea	0.52
4	Ruben Ruzafa Cueto (Spa) Orbea	0.56
5	Marco Aurelio Fontana (Ita)	1.02
6	Kashi Leuchs (NZL) Cannondale-Vredestein	1.12
7	Christoph Soukup (Aut)	1.18
8	Martin Gujan (Swi) Athleticum-MTB-Team	1.31
9	Lukas Fluckiger (Swi) Athleticum-MTB-Team	1.38
10	Graf Jorg (Swi) Swisspower MTB Team	1.41
11	Manuel Fumic (Ger) Fumic.Brothers.International	1.51
12	Christoph Sauser (Swi) Specialized Factory Racing	2.06
13	Burry Stander (RSA) GT Bicycles	2.27
14	Jaroslav Kulhavy (Cze)	2.29
15	Jeremy Horgan-Kobelski (USA) Subaru-Gary Fisher	2.32
16	Ravel Cedric (Fra) Team Lapierre International	2.39
17	Sergio Mantecon Gutierrez (Spa) Cemelorca-Seguros10.Com	2.45
18	Todd Wells (USA) GT Bicycles	2.49
19	Oliver Beckingsale (GBr) Giant Mountain Bike Team	2.57
20	Ralph Naef (Swi) Multivan Merida Biking Team	3.16
21	Geoff Kabush (Can) Team Maxxis	3.22
22	Chris Jongewaard (Aus) Dolphin-Trek Mountainbike Racing Team	3.23
23	Inaki Lejarreta Errasti (Spa) Orbea	3.35
24	Hannes Metzler (Aut) Giant Mountain Bike Team	3.41
25	Thomas Frischknecht (Swi) Swisspower MTB Team	3.46
26	Yader Zoli (Ita) Giant Italia Team	3.51
27	Seamus Mcgrath (Can)	3.56
28	Tony Longo (Ita) Full-Dynamix-It	4.22
29	Bart Brentjens (Ned) Dolphin-Trek Mountainbike Racing Team	4.53
30	Stephane Tempier (Fra) Gewiss Bianchi	
31	Adam Craig (USA) Giant Mountain Bike Team	4.56
32	Karl Markt (Aut)	4.57
33	Rudi Van Houts (Ned) Dolphin-Trek Mountainbike Racing Team	5.12
34	Wolfram Kurschat (Ger) Topeak Ergon Racing Team	5.24
35	Liam Killeen (GBr) Specialized Factory Racing	5.32
36	Ivan Alvarez Gutierrez (Spa) Giant Italia Team	5.58
37	Israel Nunez Baticon (Spa) Massi	6.12
38	Milan Spesny (Cze) Merida Biking Team	6.15
39	Marc Colom (Fra)	6.28
40	Florian Vogel (Swi) Swisspower MTB Team	6.35
41	Christof Bischof (Swi)	6.53
42	Jan Skarnitzl (Cze)	7.02
43	Martino Fruet (Ita)	7.06
44	Giuseppe Lamastra (Ita)	7.15
45	Karl Platt (Ger) Team Bulls	7.24
46	Jakob Fuglsang (Den) Cannondale-Vredestein	7.27
47	Michael Weiss (Aut)	7.34
48	Peter Riis Andersen (Den) Team ALB-Gold Mountainbike	7.36
49	Jelmer Pietersma (Ned) Beone Chainreaction Mountainbiketeam	
50	Nicolas Bazin (Fra) BH-SR. Suntour	7.40
51	Till Marx (Swi) Swisspower MTB Team	7.43
52	Marti Gispert Labarta (Spa) Ecp-Tau Ceramica	7.47
53	David Lozano Riba (Spa) MSC Bikes	8.03
54	Anders Hovdenes (Nor) Team Etto Hoydahl	8.19
55	Alejandro Diaz De La Pena Lopez (Spa)	8.20
56	Lado Fumic (Ger) Fumic.Brothers.International	8.29
57	Moritz Milatz (Ger) Multivan Merida Biking Team	8.32
58	Klaus Nielsen (Den) Team ALB-Gold Mountainbike	8.44
59	Bas Peters (Ned)	8.49
60	Lachlan Norris (Aus)	8.51
61	Derek Zandstra (Can)	8.55
62	Mathieu Toulouse (Can) Team Maxxis	9.20
63	Dariusz Batek (Pol) Halls Professional MTB Team	9.38
64	Filip Meirhaeghe (Bel) Versluys-Landbouwkrediet MTB Team	9.50

65 Kohei Yamamoto (Jpn)	9.52
66 Ji Jianhua (Chn)	10.12
67 Matthias Fluckiger (Swi) Athleticum-MTB-Team	10.17
68 Bjorn Brems (Bel)	
69 Stefan Sahm (Ger) Team Bulls	10.30
70 Dario Alejandro Gasco (Arg) Massi	10.33
71 Pierre Lebreton (Fra) BH-SR. Suntour	10.42
72 Frank Schotman (Ned)	11.07
73 Pierre Geoffroy Plantet (Fra) Team Lapierre International	11.25
74 Severin Disch (Swi)	11.32
75 Denis Vorontsov (Rus)	11.41
76 Maxime Marotte (Fra) BH-SR. Suntour	11.50
77 Martin Fanger (Swi)	12.04
78 Balz Weber (Swi) Bikepark.Ch BMC	12.13
79 Cristian Cominelli (Ita) Gewiss Bianchi	12.17
80 Jeremiah Bishop (USA) Trek-VW	12.25
81 Patrik Gallati (Swi) Swisspower MTB Team	12.56
82 Cristobal Silva (Chi)	13.12
83 Olivier Maignan (Fra)	13.22
84 Lukas Kaufmann (Swi)	13.38
85 Chun Hing Chan (HKg)	13.40
86 Sebastien Carabin (Bel)	13.45
87 Luis Leao Pinto (Por)	14.02
88 Javier Puschel (Chi)	14.15
89 Dmitry Medvedev (Rus)	14.27
90 Michael Broderick (USA)	14.33
91 Vivien Legastelois (Fra) Team Lapierre International	14.41
92 Kristian Hynek (Cze)	15.04
93 Emil Lindgren (Swe) Full-Dynamix-It	15.34
94 Juan Pedro Trujillo Hernandez (Spa) Cemelorca-Seguros10.Com	15.46
95 Alban Lakata (Aut) Dolphin-Trek Mountainbike Racing Team	15.59
96 Daniel McConnell (Aus)	16.34
97 Patxi Cia Apezteguia (Spa)	16.41
98 Kris Sneddon (Can) Kona	16.48
99 Ruud Rentmeester (Ned)	16.58
100 Ludovic Mottet (Bel) Windose Houffalzie	17.26
101 Diego Rosa (Ita) Giant Italia Team	17.29
102 Ian Field (GBr)	17.53
103 Jose Antonio De Segovia Botella (Spa)	18.16
104 Sergio Pulido Rodriguez (Spa) Cemelorca-Seguros10.Com	18.45
105 Nathan Haas (Aus)	19.11
106 Umberto Corti (Ita) Team Cbe Tecnoimpianti A.S.D	19.40
107 Laurent Mineur (Bel)	

One lap behind

108 Alexis Vuillermoz (Fra) Scott Valloire Galibier
109 Josef Kamler (Cze) Ceska Sportelna MTB
110 David Rosa (Por)
111 David Escolar Ballesteros (Spa) Sunshine Racers Asv Nals
112 Ricky Federau (Can)
113 Vladislavs Neroznaks (Lat)
114 Samuel Schultz (USA) Subaru-Gary Fisher

Two laps behind

115 Jo Thorson Nordskar (Nor) Team Etto Hoydahl
116 Freddy Betremiaux (Fra) BH-SR. Suntour
117 Gion Manetsch (Swi) Athleticum-MTB-Team
118 Milton Javier Ramos Gamez (Hon)

Three laps behind

119 Nicolas Jeantet (Ita) Team Cbe Tecnoimpianti A.S.D
120 Samuele Porro (Ita) Team Cbe Tecnoimpianti A.S.D
121 Dror Pekatch (Isr) Subaru-Gary Fisher

Four laps behind

122 Dries Govaerts (Bel) Lingier-Versluys Team
123 Joel Martinez Fernandez (And)
124 Frank Beemer (Ned)
DNF Nino Schurter* (Swi) Swisspower MTB Team
DNF Fredrik Kessiakoff (Swe) Full-Dynamix-It
DNF Roel Paulissen (Bel) Cannondale-Vredestein
DNF Carlos Coloma Nicolas (Spa) ECP-TAU Ceramica
DNF Tim Bohme (Ger) Team Alb-Gold Mountainbik
DNF Jochen Kass (Ger) Team Alb-Gold Mountainbik
DNF Marc Trayter Alemany (Spa) ECP-TAU Ceramica
DNF Max Plaxton (Can) Rocky Mountain
DNF Jiri Friedl (Cze) Merida Biking Team
DNF Magnus Darvell (Swe)
DNF Mirko Pirazzoli (Ita)
DNF Matous Ulman (Cze)
DNF Barry Wicks (USA) Kona
DNF Andrea Tiberi (Ita) Giant Italia Team
DNF Tim Wijnants* (Bel) Dolphin-Trek Mountainbike
DNF Pascal Meyer* (Swi)
DNF Gareth Montgomerie (GBr)
DNF Mitchell Peterson* (USA)
DNF Davide Marques (Por)
DNF Tobias Ullmann (Ger) Team XLC Haibike
DNF Nick Daems* (Bel)
DNS Yury Trofimov (Rus)
DNS Andreas Kugler (Swi) Fischer-BMC

Teams

1 Orbea	111 pts
2 Multivan Merida Biking Team	46
3 Athleticum-MTB-Team	45
4 GT Bicycles	31
5 Swisspower MTB Team	28
6 Cannondale-Vredestein	26
7 Giant Mountain Bike Team	21
8 Fumic.Brothers.International	20
9 Specialized Factory Racing	19
10 Subaru-Gary Fisher	16
11 Team Lapierre International	15
12 Cemelorca-Seguros10.Com	14
13 Dolphin-Trek Mountainbike Racing Team	13
14 Giant Italia Team	6
15 Full-Dynamix-It	4
16 Gewiss Bianchi	2