

MTB World Cup XC #4 & DH #2 - CDM

Vallnord, Andorra, May 31-June 1, 2008

May 31: Elite women cross country

Fullana finally makes top spot

By Luke Webber in Vallnord, Andorra – cyclingnews.com

In what was nearly a home race for Spaniard Marga Fullana (Massi), who finally secured her first win in emphatic style on a climber's course in Andorra. Winding through the Pyrenees, the Spaniard started in the same style as every other race this year; pure aggression and leading from the front with the hope that nobody could follow.

Today belonged to a delighted Fullana who will in all likelihood now rest before the World Championships, preferring to miss Fort William next weekend.

"I will probably be staying in Spain and doing some local races for my sponsors, Massi, who have helped me so much this season. This will be my preparations for the World Championships and I am confident of doing well there. After the first three races I have fought a lot and now the reward for the hard work is worth it."



Fullana enjoyed the climbing and that she finally won
Photo: Luke Webber

In previous weeks, the aggressive starts were followed by a string of mid-race blues as Fullana could not keep the searing initial pace set and was forced to back off. Today though was not one of those days. A gap opened and there was little hope of anyone closing. The cynics may say this was due to the absence of the strongest riders of all Gunn Rita Dahle Flesja (Multivan Merida), Sabine Spitz (Team Central Ghost), Irina Kalentieva (Topeak Ergon) just three of the big names missing from this weekends competition.

Second position for Eva Lechner (Colnago Cap Arreghini) was a career best result and one which she hopes to build on for the Worlds. "From the start I was in third position and chasing Leboucher. On the fourth lap I had a bit of a fright on the decent Marie [Helen Premont (Rocky Mountain)] was getting a bit close. Hopefully I can keep good form now for the Worlds and Olympics I am headed straight home to get some good training in and skipping Fort William."

Another podium for Premont was enough to keep the World Cup leaders' jersey in safe hands and although not spectacular it was a result she was satisfied with, especially after early problems with the cold. "It was a hard race today the first three laps I was so cold I could not steer the bike. I have a condition, when it gets this cold the blood doesn't want to get into my fingers! I couldn't even drink. In the last lap it became better. I am so pleased to have kept the jersey because it should have been so much worse I think."

A typically fast start from Fullana immediately put the pressure on every rider and today she succeeded in doing what she has failed to so far breaking down every chase group, making riders go it alone and lose the rhythm they wanted to set.

On lap one Eva Lechner and Laurence Leboucher chased hard while overall leader Marie Helen Premont struggled with the cold conditions. Heavy rain for the hour before the start sent temperatures plummeting and Premont has a circulatory problem in the cold with her hands. This meant a lack of control on the descents and some strange shaking exercises on the climbs. Another rider not to make a mark was Chengyuan Ren. A poor start erased any chances of glory.

It was instead Ying Liu who was trying to bridge the gap to third as Leboucher dropped back. Pendrel and Premont formed a duo on lap three to bring back the deficit to Lechner but it would not be enough.

Next weekend with the exception of Lechner and Fullana - it is expected that all the riders will return to Fort William to race the fifth round of the World Cup. This will be the final race to judge form before the second-biggest event of 2008, the World Championships.

Results

Women

1	Margarita Fullana (Spa) Massi	1.44.34
2	Eva Lechner (Ita) Colnago Cap Arreghini	1.43
3	Marie-Helene Premont (Can) Rocky Mountain	1.55
4	Catherine Pendrel (Can) Luna Womens MTB Team	2.19
5	Nathalie Schneitter (Swi) Colnago Cap Arreghini	3.16
6	Katerina Nash (Cze) Luna Womens MTB Team	3.41
7	Tereza Hurikova (Cze) Ceska Sportitelna MTB	4.14
8	Petra Henzi (Swi) Fischer-BMC	4.25
9	Laurence Leboucher (Fra)	4.40
10	Nina Homovec (Slo)	5.38
11	Katrin Leumann (Swi)	6.10
12	Ying Liu (Chn)	6.27
13	Kiara Bisaro (Can)	7.00
14	Mary Mc Conneloug (USA)	7.17
15	Cécile Rode Ravanel (Fra) Team Lapierre International	7.31
16	Blaza Klemencic (Slo) Giant Italia Team	8.12
17	Georgia Gould (USA) Luna Womens MTB Team	8.30
18	Anna Villar Argente (Spa) Massi	8.53
19	Adelheid Morath (Ger)	9.34
20	Willow Koerber (USA) Subaru-Gary Fisher	10.01
21	Sabrina Enaux (Fra) Team Lapierre International	10.16
22	Maria Osl (Aut) Sunshine Racers Asv Nals	10.48
23	Tanja Zakelj (Slo)	11.15
24	Lea Davison (USA) Trek-VW	11.32
25	Maroussia Rusca (Swi)	11.41
26	Ivonne Kraft (Ger)	11.58
27	Heather Irmiger (USA) Subaru-Gary Fisher	12.03
28	Julie Bresset (Fra) Breiz Mountain	
29	Sandra Walter (Can)	12.32
30	Sandra Santanyes Murillo (Spa) Cemelorca-Seguros10.Com	13.29
31	Julie Krasniak (Fra) Team Lapierre International	13.48
32	Chengyuan Ren (Chn)	14.20
33	Wendy Simms (Can) Kona	15.20
34	Francisca Campos Salas (Chi) Massi	15.33
35	Katrin Schwing (Ger) Dolphin-Trek Mountainbike Racing Team	15.44
36	Caroline Mani (Fra)	15.46
37	Rocio Gamonal Ferrera (Spa)	16.01
38	Sarah Koba (Swi)	16.53
39	Alexandra Engen (Swe)	17.09
40	Susan Haywood (USA) Trek-VW	17.34
41	Githa Michiels (Bel)	18.19
42	Cristina Mascarreras Sabria (Spa) Conor - Camping La Siesta	19.22
43	Zoe King (Aus)	19.39

Two laps behind

44	Rocio Martin Rodriguez (Spa)
45	Ruth Moll Marques (Spa)
46	Sandra Dolcerocca (Den)
47	Fiona Macdermid (GBr)
48	Emma Colson (Aus)
49	Janka Stevkova (Svk)
50	Laure Boulay (Fra) Team CIBF Keops
51	Kate Potter (Aus)
52	Neus Parcerissas (Spa)
53	Jingjing Wang (Chn)

Three laps behind

54	Daniela Bunzli Rojas (Chi)
55	Liliana Alejandra Uzategui Vasquez (Ven)
56	Asa Maria Erlandsson (Swe) Subaru-Gary Fisher
57	Jennifer Fischer (Fra) Team CIBF Keops

Four laps behind

58 Athina Chatzistyli (Gre)

Women's teams

1	Luna Womens MTB Team	70 pts
2	Colnago Cap Arreghini	63
3	Massi	53
4	Rocky Mountain	32
5	Team Lapierre International	26
6	Ceska Sportelna MTB	24
7	Fischer-BMC	23
8	Giant Italia Team	15
9	Subaru-Gary Fisher	15
10	Sunshine Racers Asv Nals	9
11	Trek-VW	7
12	Breiz Mountain	3
13	Cemelorca-Seguros10.Com	1
