

# MTB World Cup XC #3 & 4X #2 - CDM - CDM

Houffalize, Belgium, May 2-3, 2009

## May 3: Elite men cross country

### Absalon absolutely amazing

By Rob Jones – [cyclingnews.com](http://cyclingnews.com)

Julien Absalon (Orbea) took his second consecutive victory in the men's cross country World Cup and his second ever win at Houffalize. The Frenchman's win helped pad his lead in the overall World Cup standings.

"This is a country of cycling. They are really crazy about it here, so this makes it the biggest World Cup of the season," said Absalon.

The men's five and a half lap race began with an attack almost immediately from Ralph Näf (Multivan Merida). Only Olympic silver medalist Jean-Christophe Peraud (Massi) was able to respond, and the pair started to build a gap on a chase group containing Absalon, Wolfram Kurschat (Topeak Ergon) and Jose Hermida (Multivan Merida).

"I was trying to go hard, but conserve energy as well," said Näf. "I was with Julien until the final lap, and then I exploded totally, with nothing left."

"He went fast, so I followed. But by the middle of the race it became more difficult for me, and I had to let him [Näf] go," said Peraud. "I was still going pretty good until the last lap when I had a problem with the [last rider] moto. He was in the way, and I went off the course and crashed and dropped my chain; maybe without that problem I would have beaten Burry [Stander for fourth]."



Julien Absalon (Orbea) takes a 15 second  
Photo ©: Rob Jones



Adam Craig (Giant Mountain Bike Team)  
Photo ©: Rob Jones

Absalon decided that it was time to reel in the lead pair on lap three, and quickly bridged up, taking Hermida, and with Kurschat only a few seconds behind. Peraud was suffering and dropped back, and then Hermida flatted, leaving just Absalon and Näf at the front, with Kurschat chasing.

"At least I am back again," said Hermida, referring to the illness last week which forced him to drop out of Offenburg and lose the leader's jersey.

"It wasn't easy, being with Julien when we were going up [to the leaders], but then I flatted just before the start of the last lap. I used the foam I had with me and stopped in the pit for a cartridge, but then I was back with Jean-Christophe and Burry," he added. "Without the flat I think that I would have been on the podium."

Näf managed to hang on until halfway through the final lap before his extended time at the front caught up with him and he couldn't respond to the latest attack from Absalon. Näf was also caught by Kurschat, who took his second consecutive second place behind Absalon, but hung on for third place ahead of Under 23 series leader Burry Stander (Specialized) and Peraud.

"It was impossible to keep the wheel of Näf, when he attacked so hard," said Absalon. "But I think that he also made a mistake by going so hard in the beginning, and it caught up with him at the end."

Canada's Geoff Kabush (Maxxis-Rocky Mountain), coming off an eighth place last week, got his front wheel tweaked on one of the bridges and crashed in the opening lap, negating his high start position. Worse, he had to stop into the pit and change wheels, putting him back in the high 60s by the time he got going again.



Wolfram Kurschat (Topeak Ergon Racing Team)  
kept his head down  
Photo ©: Rob Jones

The top North American for the day was Adam Craig (Giant) in 29th, who put it succinctly, "I was solid but not spectacular."

## Results

|    |                                                                        |         |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1  | Julien Absalon (Fra) Orbea                                             | 1.51.34 |
| 2  | Wolfram Kurschat (Ger) Topeak Ergon Racing Team                        | 0.15    |
| 3  | Ralph Näf (Swi) Multivan Merida Biking Team                            | 0.52    |
| 4  | Burrry Stander* (RSa) Specialized Factory Racing                       | 1.15    |
| 5  | Jean-Christophe Peraud (Fra) Massi                                     | 1.26    |
| 6  | José Antonio Hermida Ramos (Spa) Multivan Merida Biking Team           | 1.31    |
| 7  | Sergio Mantecon Gutierrez (Spa) Cemelorca-Trek-Lorca Taller Del Tiempo | 1.54    |
| 8  | Marco Aurelio Fontana (Ita) Cannondale Factory Racing                  | 2.16    |
| 9  | Moritz Milatz (Ger) Multivan Merida Biking Team                        | 2.22    |
| 10 | Roel Paulissen (Bel) Cannondale Factory Racing                         | 2.45    |
| 11 | Christoph Sauser (Swi) Specialized Factory Racing                      | 3.03    |
| 12 | Stéphane Tempier (Fra) Tx Active Bianchi                               | 3.12    |
| 13 | Nino Schurter (Swi) Scott-Swisspower Mtb-Racing                        | 3.22    |
| 14 | Alexis Vuillermoz* (Fra) Lapierre International                        | 3.23    |
| 15 | Manuel Fumic (Ger) Fumic.Brothers.International                        | 3.36    |
| 16 | Florian Vogel (Swi) Scott-Swisspower Mtb-Racing                        | 3.48    |
| 17 | Hector Leonardo Paez Leon (Col) Tx Active Bianchi                      | 4.13    |
| 18 | Cédric Ravanel (Fra) Lapierre International                            | 4.46    |
| 19 | Chris Jongewaard (Aus) Trek-Brentjens Mountainbike Racing Team         | 5.02    |
| 20 | Jochen Kass (Ger) Multivan Merida Biking Team                          | 5.21    |
| 21 | Umberto Corti (Ita) Team CBETecnoimpianti A.S.D.                       | 5.23    |
| 22 | Jaroslav Kulhavy (Cze) Rubena-Specialized                              | 5.43    |
| 23 | Martin Gujan (Swi) Cannondale Factory Racing                           | 5.51    |
| 24 | Inaki Lejarreta Errasti (Spa) Orbea                                    | 5.54    |
| 25 | Emil Lindgren (Swe) Felt International MTB Team                        | 6.04    |
| 26 | Rudi Van Houts (Ned) Multivan Merida Biking Team                       | 6.43    |
| 27 | Andrea Tiberi (Ita) Tx Active Bianchi                                  | 6.46    |
| 28 | Ivan Alvarez Gutierrez (Spa) Giant Italia Team                         | 7.00    |
| 29 | Adam Craig (USA) Giant Mountain Bike Team GMT                          | 7.06    |
| 30 | Ruben Ruzafa Cueto (Spa) Orbea                                         | 7.17    |
| 31 | Lado Fumic (Ger) Fumic.Brothers.International                          | 7.31    |
| 32 | Jiri Friedl (Cze) Merida Biking Team                                   | 7.39    |
| 33 | Filip Eberl (Cze)                                                      | 7.41    |
| 34 | Johnny Cattaneo (Ita)                                                  | 7.52    |
| 35 | Lukas Flückiger (Swi) Trek World Racing                                | 7.55    |
| 36 | Christof Bischof (Swi) Isd Cycling Team                                | 8.00    |
| 37 | Anders Hovdenes* (Nor) Team Etto Hoydahl                               | 8.08    |
| 38 | Cristian Cominelli* (Ita) Tx Active Bianchi                            | 8.09    |
| 39 | Periklis Ilias (Gre) Isd Cycling Team                                  | 8.21    |
| 40 | Bas Peters (Ned)                                                       | 8.23    |
| 41 | Thomas Litscher* (Swi) Sks M.I.G. Team                                 | 8.25    |
| 42 | Marek Galinski (Pol) Jbg-2 Professional MTB Team                       | 8.26    |
| 43 | Derek Zandstra (Can)                                                   | 8.30    |
| 44 | Milan Spesny (Cze) Ceska Sportelna Mtb                                 | 8.41    |
| 45 | Geoff Kabush (Can) Team Maxxis-Rocky Mountain Bicycles                 | 8.45    |
| 46 | Robert Mennen (Ger)                                                    | 8.52    |
| 47 | Pierre Geoffroy Plantet (Fra) Lapierre International                   | 9.03    |
| 48 | Sergiy Rusenko (Ukr) Isd Cycling Team                                  | 9.09    |
| 49 | Jan Skarnitzl (Cze) Giant Mountain Bike Team GMT                       | 9.21    |
| 50 | Paolo Cesar Montoya Cantillo (CRc) Giant Italia Team                   | 9.28    |
| 51 | Irjan Luttenberg* (Ned)                                                | 9.36    |
| 52 | Ludovic Dubau (Fra)                                                    | 9.37    |
| 53 | Hannes Metzler (Aut)                                                   | 9.39    |
| 54 | Kohei Yamamoto (Jpn)                                                   | 9.42    |
| 55 | Guillaume Vinit* (Fra) Team Scott Valloire Galibier                    | 9.46    |
| 56 | Karl Markt (Aut) Srm Stevens Team                                      | 9.48    |
| 57 | Lachlan Norris* (Aus) Discovertasmania.Com                             | 9.51    |
| 58 | Nicolas Vermeulen (Bel) Lingier-Versluys Team                          | 10.05   |
| 59 | Klaus Nielsen (Den)                                                    | 10.12   |
| 60 | François Bailly Maitre (Fra) Team Scott Valloire Galibier              | 10.22   |
| 61 | Lukas Kaufmann* (Swi)                                                  | 10.24   |
| 62 | Mirko Pirazzoli (Ita) Isd Cycling Team                                 | 10.26   |
| 63 | Miguel Martinez (Fra)                                                  | 10.31   |
| 64 | Oliver Beckingsale (GBr) Giant Mountain Bike Team GMT                  |         |
| 65 | Connor Mcconvey* (Irl) Felt International MTB Team                     | 10.33   |

|     |                                                                            |       |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 66  | Kristian Hynek (Cze) Scott & Hagget MTB Team                               | 10.57 |
| 67  | Fabian Giger* (Swi) Sks M.I.G. Team                                        | 11.06 |
| 68  | Magnus Darvell (Swe)                                                       | 11.14 |
| 69  | Patrik Gallati* (Swi) Scott-Swisspower Mtb-Racing                          | 11.26 |
| 70  | Juan Pedro Trujillo Hernandez (Spa) Cemelorca-Trek-Lorca Taller Del Tiempo | 11.31 |
| 71  | Jimmy Tielens (Bel) Team Saeco                                             | 11.34 |
| 72  | Marcel Wildhaber (Swi) Scott-Swisspower Mtb-Racing                         | 11.36 |
| 73  | Igor Bogdan (Ukr)                                                          | 11.44 |
| 74  | Peter Sagan* (Svk)                                                         | 11.51 |
| 75  | Alejandro Diaz De La Pena Lopez (Spa)                                      | 12.00 |
| 76  | Maxime Marotte (Fra) BH-Suntour                                            | 12.07 |
| 77  | Niels Wubben* (Ned)                                                        | 12.13 |
| 78  | Mattias Wengelin* (Swe)                                                    | 12.18 |
| 79  | David Lozano Riba* (Spa) Cemelorca-Trek-Lorca Taller Del Tiempo            | 12.28 |
| 80  | Marco Arnold* (Swi)                                                        | 12.35 |
| 81  | Fabien Canal* (Fra) Lapierre International                                 | 12.36 |
| 82  | Martin Fanger* (Swi) Giant Mountain Bike Team GMT                          | 12.37 |
| 83  | Frank Beemer* (Ned) Trek-Brentjens Mountainbike Racing Team                | 12.54 |
| 84  | Filip Meirhaeghe (Bel)                                                     | 13.03 |
| 85  | Dario Alejandro Gasco* (Arg) Massi                                         | 13.08 |
| 86  | Marc Colom (Fra)                                                           | 13.19 |
| 87  | Sebastien Carabin* (Bel) Lingier-Versluys Team                             | 13.20 |
| 88  | Bjorn Brems (Bel) Team Saeco                                               | 13.23 |
| 89  | Andras Parti (Hun) Srm Stevens Team                                        | 13.47 |
| 90  | Dariusz Batek (Pol)                                                        | 14.07 |
| 91  | Jelmer Pietersma (Ned) Trek-Brentjens Mountainbike Racing Team             | 14.20 |
| 92  | Cristobal Silva Ibaceta (Chi)                                              | 14.25 |
| 93  | Pascal Meyer* (Swi) Sks M.I.G. Team                                        | 14.31 |
| 94  | Giuseppe Lamastra (Ita)                                                    | 14.35 |
| 95  | Anthony Grenet* (Fra)                                                      | 15.04 |
| 96  | Arnaud Grosjean (Fra)                                                      | 15.21 |
| 97  | Ondrej Cink* (Cze) Merida Biking Team                                      | 15.33 |
| 98  | Torsten Marx (Ger) DS-Rennsport                                            | 15.47 |
| 99  | Frank Schotman (Ned)                                                       | 15.48 |
| 100 | Zdenek Stybar (Cze)                                                        | 15.56 |
| 101 | Mattias Nilsson (Swe)                                                      | 16.04 |
| 102 | Patrick Gaudy* (Bel)                                                       | 16.12 |
| 103 | Erik Groen* (Ned) De Brink-Ten Tusscher                                    | 16.15 |
| 104 | Joris Massaer (Bel)                                                        | 16.24 |
| 105 | Catriel Andres Soto* (Arg) Infotre - Leecougan                             | 16.29 |
| 106 | Pascal Schmutz* (Swi)                                                      | 16.33 |
| 107 | Julien Saussac* (Fra) BH-Suntour                                           | 16.34 |
| 108 | Nicolas Jeantet* (Ita) Team CBETecnoimpianti A.S.D.                        | 16.49 |
| 109 | Henk Jaap Moorlag* (Ned) De Brink-Ten Tusscher                             | 16.50 |
| 110 | Shlomi Haimy* (Isr)                                                        | 16.57 |
| 111 | Jianhua Ji (Chn)                                                           | 16.59 |
| 112 | Jérémy Huguenin* (Swi)                                                     | 17.04 |
| 113 | Jonathan Galante (Fra)                                                     | 17.05 |
| 114 | Tad Elliott* (USA)                                                         | 17.12 |
| 115 | Evgeniy Nikolaev* (Rus)                                                    | 17.16 |
| 116 | Kevin Van Hoovels (Bel)                                                    | 17.22 |
| 117 | Luka Mezgec* (Slo) Mbk Orbea                                               | 17.26 |
| 118 | Robert Gehbauer* (Aut) Multivan Merida Biking Team                         | 17.32 |
| 119 | Adam Morka (Can)                                                           | 17.36 |
| 120 | Severin Disch (Swi) Giant Mountain Bike Team GMT                           | 17.42 |
| 121 | Kornel Osicki (Pol) Jbg-2 Professional MTB Team                            | 17.45 |
| 122 | Pascal Hossay* (Bel)                                                       | 18.00 |
| 123 | Laurent Mineur* (Bel)                                                      | 18.09 |
| 124 | Rene Tann* (Ger)                                                           | 18.20 |
| 125 | Luka Kodra (Slo) Mbk Orbea                                                 | 18.46 |
| 126 | Alexis Chenevier (Fra) Team Scott Valloire Galibier                        | 18.54 |
| 127 | Samuel Schultz* (USA) Subaru-Gary Fisher                                   | 18.56 |
| 128 | Rob Vangenechten (Bel) Team Saeco                                          | 18.57 |
| 129 | Chun Hing Chan (Hkg)                                                       |       |
| 130 | Olivier Maignan (Fra)                                                      | 19.05 |
| 131 | Matous Ulman (Cze) Scott & Hagget MTB Team                                 | 19.41 |
| 132 | Andi Weinhold (Ger)                                                        | 19.53 |

|     |                                             |       |
|-----|---------------------------------------------|-------|
| 133 | Jonas De Backer (Bel)                       | 19.59 |
| 134 | Ben Henderson* (Aus)                        | 20.19 |
| 135 | Zhiqiang Duan (Chn)                         | 20.25 |
| 136 | Tim Lemmers (Ned) De Brink-Ten Tusscher     | 20.40 |
| 137 | Evgeniy Pechenin* (Rus) Format-Udmurtia     | 20.55 |
| 138 | Vivien Legastelois (Fra) BH-Suntour         | 21.27 |
| 139 | Roan Exelby* (RSa)                          | 21.50 |
| 140 | Freddy Betremieux (Fra) BH-Suntour          | 21.59 |
| 141 | Marco Minnaard* (Ned) De Brink-Ten Tusscher | 22.23 |

#### One lap behind

|     |                                                            |  |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| 142 | Michael Broderick (USA)                                    |  |
| 143 | Tim Ottens (Ned)                                           |  |
| 144 | Anders Ljungberg* (Swe)                                    |  |
| 145 | Cal Britten (Aus) Torq Performance Nutrition               |  |
| 146 | Rob Squire* (USA)                                          |  |
| 147 | Thibaut Bellanger* (Fra)                                   |  |
| 148 | Thomas Lapeyrie* (Fra) Team Scott Valloire Galibier        |  |
| 149 | Matej Nepustil* (Cze) Ceska Sportelna MTB                  |  |
| 150 | Jo Thorson Nordskar* (Nor) Team Etto Hoydahl               |  |
| 151 | Sebastian Szraucner* (Ger)                                 |  |
| 152 | Andrew Blair* (Aus)                                        |  |
| 153 | Lee Williams (GBr)                                         |  |
| 154 | Erik Nellen (Ned)                                          |  |
| 155 | Romain Gihoul* (Bel)                                       |  |
| 156 | Nathan Haas* (Aus) Discovertasmania.Com                    |  |
| 157 | Rafal Hebisz* (Pol)                                        |  |
| 158 | Samuele Porro (Ita) Team CBETecnoimpianti A.S.D.           |  |
| 159 | Bjorn Rondelez* (Bel) Lingier-Versluys Team                |  |
| 160 | Tim Wijnants (Bel) Trek-Brentjens Mountainbike Racing Team |  |
| 161 | Barry Wicks* (USA) Kona                                    |  |
| 162 | Raphael Gagne (Can) Team Maxxis-Rocky Mountain Bicycles    |  |
| 163 | Ethan Gilmour* (USA)                                       |  |
| 164 | Axel Bult* (Ned) De Brink-Ten Tusscher                     |  |
| 165 | Jakub Magnusek (Cze) Ceska Sportelna Mtb                   |  |
| 166 | Christopher Maletz* (Ger)                                  |  |

#### Two laps behind

|     |                                            |  |
|-----|--------------------------------------------|--|
| 167 | Tom Hoekman (Ned)                          |  |
| 168 | Mikhail Baryshnikov (Rus)                  |  |
| 169 | Abdulkadir Kelleci* (Tur)                  |  |
| 170 | Henri Ojala (Fin)                          |  |
| 171 | Leon De Jong (Ned)                         |  |
| 172 | Jelmer Jubbega (Ned) De Brink-Ten Tusscher |  |
| 173 | Laurent Evrard* (Bel)                      |  |
| 174 | Boris Vasilyev* (Rus) Format-Udmurtia      |  |
| 175 | Daniel Kaufmann (Swi)                      |  |
| 176 | Simon Qvortrup* (Den)                      |  |
| 177 | Keiichi Tsujiura* (Jpn)                    |  |
| 178 | John Groves (Aus)                          |  |
| 179 | German Dorhmann (Arg) Infotre - Leecougan  |  |
| 180 | Abdurrahman Dandal* (Tur)                  |  |

#### Three laps behind

|     |                                                   |  |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------|--|
| 181 | Henrique Avancini* (Bra) Isd Cycling Team         |  |
| DNF | Balz Weber (Swi) DS-Rennsport                     |  |
| DNF | Christoph Soukup (Aut) Merida Biking Team         |  |
| DNF | Pierre Lebreton (Fra) BH-Suntour                  |  |
| DNF | Daniel McConnell (Aus) Torq Performance Nutrition |  |
| DNF | Yader Zoli (Ita) Torpado-4US                      |  |
| DNF | Carlos Coloma Nicolas (Spa) MSC Bikes             |  |
| DNF | Tony Longo (Ita)                                  |  |
| DNF | Simon Scheiber* (Aut) Sunshine Racers Asv Nals    |  |
| DNF | Jürg Graf (Swi)* Felt International MTB Team      |  |

DNF Kris Sneddon (Can) Kona  
 DNF Juri Ragnoli (Ita) Felt International MTB Team  
 DNF Mathias Flückiger\* (Swi) Trek World Racing  
 DNF Nicola Rohrbach (Swi) Central Ghost Pro Team  
 DNF Josef Kamler\* (Cze) Ceska Sportitelna MTB  
 DNF Oleksandr Kachanov\* (Ukr)  
 DNF Calle Friberg (Swe)  
 DNF Ludovic Mottet (Bel)  
 DNF Adrian Brzozka\* (Pol) JBG-2 Professional MTB Team  
 DNF Martin Loo\* (Est)  
 DNF Jeremy Horgan-Kobelski (USA) Subaru-Gary Fisher  
 DNF Kevin Kane\* (USA)  
 DNF Todd Wells (USA) Specialized Factory Racing  
 DNS Dries Govaerts\* (Bel) Lingier-Versluys Team

\* Indicates Under 23

## Teams

|                                            |        |
|--------------------------------------------|--------|
| 1 Multivan Merida Biking Team              | 96 pts |
| 2 Cannondale Factory Racing                | 52     |
| 3 Specialized Factory Racing               | 50     |
| 4 Orbea                                    | 48     |
| 5 TX Active Bianchi                        | 37     |
| 6 Topeak Ergon Racing Team                 | 35     |
| 7 Scott-Swisspower MTB-Racing              | 33     |
| 8 Lapierre International                   | 30     |
| 9 Massi                                    | 28     |
| 10 Cemelorca-Trek-Lorca Taller Del Tiempo  | 24     |
| 11 Fumic.Brothers.International            | 16     |
| 12 Trek-Brentjens Mountainbike Racing Team | 12     |
| 13 Team CBE Tecnoimpianti A.S.D.           | 10     |
| 14 Felt International MTB Team             | 6      |
| 15 Giant Italia Team                       | 3      |
| 16 Giant Mountain Bike Team                | 2      |