

MTB World Cup XC, DH & 4X #1 - CDM

Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, April 10-12, 2009

April 11: Elite women cross country

Osl outdoes the world's best

By Rob Jones in Pietermaritzburg – cyclingnews.com

The women's race saw a new face at the front - Austria's Elisabeth Osl (Ghost), who had previously medaled in the junior ranks at the World Championships, but had never reached the podium in a World Cup event. Today was definitely her day, as she rode away from the field to finish over two minutes clear of Olympic bronze medalist Irina Kalentieva (Topeak Ergon). Norway's Lene Byberg (Specialized) made a late surge to take third.

Osl and American national champion Mary McConneloug (Team Kenda/Seven/NoTubes) took the lead on the first lap of the five lap race, and then Osl increased the pace, forcing McConneloug to drop back.

"I was first into the singletrack," said Osl "and I was thinking 'Come and catch me', but they never did."

They never did, because Osl clocked the fastest lap times for each and every lap of the race, with her first lap the only sub-19 minute lap of the race, and the rest sub-21 minutes.



Austria's 22 year old Elisabeth Osl
Photo ©: Rob Jones

"This was fantastic," exclaimed a tearful Osl afterwards. "I cannot believe it. I won a Swiss Cup race last weekend, but I never thought that I could win a World Cup! I changed my coach of six years over the winter, and my team. I spent more time working on my power and it has made a difference. I had nothing to lose, so I just rode my best."

Kalentieva also overtook McConneloug before the end of the first lap, who dropped back to join compatriot Willow Koerber (Subaru-Gary Fisher). Koerber soon drifted back, eventually finishing just off the podium in sixth place, but McConneloug continued to battle for third. However, the heat and fast early pace took their toll, with Byberg and world champion Marga Fullana passing her in the fourth lap.

Fullana had been expected to contest for the win, however, a crash early in the first lap derailed that plan.

"I did not go down in the crash," Fullana explained "but I was stuck behind it and then had to chase very hard in the first laps. But, I am happy to be on the podium here. For me, this is still part of building up for my main goal - the Madrid World Cup."

Byberg, who had a slow start, kept getting quicker through the race, recording the second fastest lap splits (behind Osl) for each of the last two laps, and moving to within 30 seconds of Kalentieva before backing off slightly in the final few kilometres. Byberg's third equals her best ever previous result at Mont Sainte Anne last year.

"My riding style is always to start a little slower, but today I started stronger than usual and was in the top six on the first lap. I needed to find the right pace, because you could really feel the heat. Once I got on Marga's wheel, I knew it was important to stay with her on the climbs, because she is really strong there. I didn't realize that I was so close to Irina, but it was just too short a distance to catch her for second."

Photography

Results

1 Elisabeth Osl (Aut) Central Ghost Pro Team	1.40.50
2 Irina Kalentieva (Rus) Topeak Ergon Racing Team	2.07
3 Lene Byberg (Nor) Specialized Factory Racing	2.46
4 Margarita Fullana Riera (Spa) Massi	3.58
5 Mary Mcconneloug (USA) Kenda/Seven/NoTubes	4.24

6 Willow Koerber (USA) Subaru-Gary Fisher	4.55
7 Katrin Leumann (Swi)	5.11
8 Heather Irmiger (USA) Subaru-Gary Fisher	5.35
9 Petra Henzi (Swi) Fischer-BMC	5.56
10 Janka Stevkova (Svk)	6.07
11 Sabine Spitz (Ger) Central Ghost Pro Team	6.18
12 Adelheid Morath (Ger)	6.36
13 Helene Marcouyre (Fra) BH-Suntour	7.01
14 Julie Bresset* (Fra) Breiz Mountain	7.20
15 Marielle Saner-Guinhard (Swi) Team Bikepark.ch	8.15
16 Maja Wloszczowska (Pol) CCC Polkowice	8.34
17 Esther Suss (Swi)	8.40
18 Blaza Klemencic (Slo) Felt International MTB Team	8.48
19 Magdalena Sadlecka (Pol) CCC Polkowice	9.29
20 Laura Turpijn (Ned)	9.47
21 Yolande Speedy (RSA)	10.33
22 Anna Villar Argente (Spa) Massi	10.50
23 Githa Michiels (Bel) Team Saeco	11.35
24 Aleksandra Dawidowicz* (Pol) CCC Polkowice	12.35
25 Cecile Rode Ravanel (Fra) Lapierre International	12.50
26 Rowena Fry (Aus) Discovertasmania.com	12.59
27 Sabrina Enaux (Fra) BH-Suntour	13.57
28 Gracie Elvin* (Aus) Discovertasmania.com	14.29
29 Caroline Mani* (Fra) Team Bikepark.ch	15.02
30 Eva Lechner (Ita) Colnago Cap Arreghini	16.33
31 Maaïke Polspoel* (Bel)	16.48
32 Kate Potter (Aus)	17.06
33 Fiona Macdermid (GBr)	17.42
34 Katherine O'Shea (Aus) Torq Performance Nutrition	18.06
35 Melanie Spath (Ger)	18.46
36 Inbar Ronen (Isr)	19.21

Behind one lap

37 Nathalie Schneitter (Swi) Colnago Cap Arreghini
38 Kathrin Stirnemann* (Swi)
39 Tania Raats (RSA)
40 Sara Muhl (RSA)

Behind two laps

41 Shawna Thunder (RSA)
42 Janneke Leask* (RSA)
43 Heletje Van Staden* (Nam)
44 Hilana Marais (RSA)
45 Ivonne Kraft (Ger)

Behind three laps

46 Carmen Bassingthwaighe (Nam)

Behind four laps

47 Carla Freysen (RSA)

* indicates under 23 riders

Teams

1 Central Ghost Pro Team	60 pts
2 Subaru-Gary Fisher	49
3 Massi	39
4 Topeak Ergon Racing Team	35
5 CCC Polkowice	34
6 Specialized Factory Racing	32
7 Fischer-BMC	22
8 BH-Suntour	22
9 Team Bikepark.ch	18
10 Breiz Mountain	17
11 Felt International MTB Team	13
12 Team Saeco	8
13 Discovertasmania.com	8
14 Lapierre International	6
15 Colnago Cap Arreghini	1