

Schurter seals World Cup with second place

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Kulhavy claims final round



Jaroslav Kulhavy (Rubina/Birell/Specialized) wins his first world cup race at Windham Mountain after escaping on the last lap. (Image credit: Dave McElwaine/trailwatch.net)

The 2010 UCI cross country Mountain Bike World Cup concluded on Saturday in Windham, New York, and a new champion was crowned: Nino Schurter (Scott-Swisspower). Schurter had to settle for second place in the final race behind first time World Cup winner Jaroslav Kulhavy (Rubena-Birell-Specialized), who became the first Czech rider to win a World Cup cross country event.

"I was more conservative in the beginning, to preserve my third place [in the overall standings] from [Jose] Hermida," said Kulhavy. "But we dropped him, and I could see that I was riding the technical sections better than the others, so I was able to move up there.

"I tried to get by Nino before the downhill, but he beat me there, so I just had to wait for the right moment," he said. "This is an incredible win, the highest of my career, and it is very good timing,

just before the world championships."

The 5.4-kilometre course was straightforward: a long climb followed by a quick descent. The riders zig-zagged their way up the climb, alternating open double track with loose, rocky and rooty single track, then descended through more of the same back to the start.

The six-lap race pitted Schurter against his season-long rival Julien Absalon (Orbea), the defending champion, with only 26 points separating the pair. Coming through the finish line at the end of the first lap, a group of five riders were at the front - Schurter, his teammate Florian Vogel, Burry Stander (Specialized), Manuel Fumic (Cannondale) and Martin Gujan (Cannondale). Absalon was just behind, having had a slightly slower start.

The race also saw the beginning of a flurry of flats and mechanicals, especially among the North Americans, with Geoff Kabush (Maxxis-Rocky Mountain), Adam Craig (Giant), Todd Wells (Specialized), Adam Morka and Peter Glassford (Toronto Trek Store) and Andrew Watson (Norco) all affected. Kabush pulled out after a very lengthy stop in the pits that dropped him to the back of the field.

However Absalon was the most significant, flatting on the second lap, having to run to the pits for service, and dropping to the high teens. There then became two races - the one at the front, and the one behind as Absalon tried to claw his way back into contention, working his way through the traffic

of slower riders. He made a magnificent effort, turning in some of the fastest laps of the race, but could only move up as high as sixth by the finish.

Schurter and Vogel were the only consistent riders to stay at the front of the race, as they poured on the power to keep Absalon at bay. Stander, Gujan and Fumic eventually burned out, and were replaced by Christoph Sauser (Specialized), Lukas Flückiger (Trek World Racing) and Kulhavy, who joined the leaders on the fourth lap.

By the final lap, it was still these five, with Vogel doing the pace making. Kulhavy finally made his move just before the top of the climb, but Schurter immediately responded, taking the lead into the descent. Kulhavy then made a brilliant pass on the descent to take the lead. Sauser also managed to get by Schurter, but then crashed, allowing both Schurter and Vogel to pass as Kulhavy extended his lead. This would be the final order, with Schurter taking second, Vogel third and Sauser fourth. Flückiger held off Absalon by 26 seconds for the final podium spot.

Schurter took the overall title with 1136 points, followed by Absalon at 1040 and Kulhavy, also at 1040 points. Absalon got the nod for second, but it took some calculating: they both had one win, but Absalon had two second places results to Kulhavy's one making it a very tight finish to the season. Vogel jumped from sixth to fourth overall and Jose Hermida (Multivan Merida) took the fifth and final podium spot.

#	<i>Rider Name (Country) Team</i>	<i>Result</i>
1	Jaroslav Kulhavy (Cze) Rubena-Birell-Specialized Cycling Team	1:39:28
2	Nino Schurter (Swi) Scott-Swisspower MTB-Racing	0:00:14
3	Florian Vogel (Swi) Scott-Swisspower MTB-Racing	0:00:15
4	Christoph Sauser (Swi) Specialized Factory Racing	0:00:17
5	Lukas Flückiger (Swi) Trek World Racing	0:00:44
6	Julien Absalon (Fra) Orbea	0:01:11
7	José Antonio Hermida Ramos (Spa) Multivan Merida Biking Team	0:01:19
8	Burrry Stander (RSA) Specialized Factory Racing	0:01:57
9	Marco Aurelio Fontana (Ita) Cannondale Factory Racing	0:02:31
10	Sergio Mantecon Gutierrez (Spa) Trek-Lorca Taller Del Tiempo	0:02:41
11	Martin Gujan (Swi) Cannondale Factory Racing	0:02:49
12	Liam Killeen (GBr)	0:02:54
13	Manuel Fumic (Ger) Cannondale Factory Racing	0:03:15
14	Cédric Ravanel (Fra) Lapierre International	0:03:56
15	Marek Galinski (Pol) JBG-2 Professional MTB Team	0:04:20
16	Inaki Lejarreta Errasti (Spa) Orbea	0:04:38
17	Maxime Marotte (Fra) BH-Suntour	0:04:49
18	Mathias Flückiger* (Swi) Trek World Racing	0:04:58
19	Ralph Naef (Swi) Multivan Merida Biking Team	0:05:42
20	Ruben Ruzafa Cueto (Spa) Orbea	0:06:24
21	Patrik Gallati* (Swi) Scott-Swisspower MTB-Racing	0:06:34
22	Samuel Schultz (USA) Subaru-Trek	0:06:47
23	Ivan Alvarez Gutierrez (Spa) Giant Italia Team	0:06:51
24	Todd Wells (USA) Specialized Factory Racing	0:07:05
25	Umberto Corti (Ita) Team Cbe Tecnoimpianti A.S.D.	0:07:23
26	Jukka Vastaranta (Fin) Trek-Brentjens Mountainbike Racing Team	0:07:24
27	Alexis Vuillermoz* (Fra) Lapierre International	0:07:33
28	Carlos Coloma Nicolas (Spa) MSC Bikes	0:07:46
29	Fabian Giger (Swi) Rabobank-Giant Offroad Team	0:08:08
30	Henk Jaap Moorlag* (Ned) Rabobank-Giant Offroad Team	0:08:14
31	Jelmer Pietersma (Ned) Trek-Brentjens Mountainbike Racing Team	0:08:28
32	Magnus Darvell (Swe)	0:08:37

33	Rudi Van Houts (Ned) Multivan Merida Biking Team	0:08:56
34	Matous Ulman (Cze) S&H Superior MTB Team	0:09:21
35	Jelmer Jubbega* (Ned) Rabobank-Giant Offroad Team	0:09:29
36	Jochen Kass (Ger) Multivan Merida Biking Team	0:09:34
37	Kohei Yamamoto (Jpn)	0:10:08
38	Matthew Hadley (Can)	0:10:29
39	Oliver Beckingsale (GBr) Giant Factory Team	0:10:32
40	Stéphane Tempier (Fra) TX Active Bianchi	0:10:38
41	Derek Zandstra (Can)	0:10:52
42	Jeremy Horgan-Kobelski (USA) Subaru-Trek	0:10:58
43	Adam Craig (USA) Rabobank-Giant Offroad Team	0:11:06
44	Wolfram Kurschat (Ger) Topeak Ergon Racing Team	0:11:12
45	Moritz Milatz (Ger) Multivan Merida Biking Team	0:11:21
46	Jan Skarnitzl (Cze)	0:11:28
47	Michael Broderick (USA)	0:11:41
48	Robert Mennen (Ger)	0:12:07
49	Martin Loo* (Est) Infotre - Leecougan	0:12:10
50	David Fletcher* (GBr)	0:12:54
51	Hannes Metzler (Aut) Muskelkater Genesis Team	0:12:56
52	Lachlan Norris (Aus)	0:12:59
53	Carl Decker (USA) Giant Factory Team	0:13:13
54	Spencer Paxson (USA)	0:13:36
55	Rotem Ishai (Isr)	0:14:12
56	Cameron Jette (Can)	0:14:41
57	Kyosuke Takei (Jpn)	0:14:52
58	Troy Wells (USA)	0:15:17
-1lap	Fabian Strecker* (Ger)	
-1lap	Michael Northcott (NZl)	
-1lap	Felix Euteneuer* (Ger)	
-1lap	Pierre Lebreton (Fra) BH-Suntour	
-1lap	Eric Batty (Can)	
-1lap	Emil Lindgren (Swe) Rabobank-Giant Offroad Team	
-1lap	Zhen Wang* (Chn)	

-1lap	Benjamin Buchi* (Swi)
-1lap	Stephen Ettinger* (USA)
-1lap	Jianhua Ji (Chn)
-1lap	Karl Markt (Aut) Felt Oetztal X-Bionic Team
-1lap	Andy Eyring* (Ger)
-1lap	Peter Glassford (Can)
-1lap	Michael Mccalla (USA)
-1lap	Carl Jones* (NZl)
-1lap	Félix Cote* (Can)
-1lap	Bryan Alders (USA)
-1lap	Mitch Hoke* (USA)
-2laps	Jack Hinkens* (USA)
-2laps	Pete Ostroski* (USA)
-2laps	Thomas Sampson* (USA)
-2laps	Zsolt Juhasz* (Hun) Euro One-Cube MTB Team
-2laps	Markus Bauer* (Ger)
-2laps	Yu Takenouchi* (Jpn)
-2laps	Kerry Werner* (USA)
-2laps	Russell Finsterwald* (USA) Subaru-Trek
-2laps	Seamus Powell* (USA)
-2laps	Ryan Atkins (Can)
-2laps	Ethan Gilmour* (USA)
-3laps	Stuart Houltham (NZl)
-3laps	Scott Green* (NZl)
-3laps	Adam Morka (Can)
-3laps	Robbie Squire* (USA)
-3laps	Eudaldo Asencio Rosario (PuR)
-3laps	Cal Britten* (Aus)
-3laps	Adrian Retief* (NZl)
-3laps	Andy Schultz (USA)
-3laps	Alex Ryan* (USA)
DNF	Zachary Hughes* (Can)
DNF	Nicolas Jeantet* (Ita) ISD Cycling Team

<i>DNF</i>	Geoff Kabush (Can) Team Maxxis-Rocky Mountain
<i>DNF</i>	Adam Snyder (USA)
<i>DNF</i>	Andrew Watson (Can)
<i>DNF</i>	Zhiqiang Duan (Chn)
<i>DNS</i>	Mattias Wengelin* (Swe) Team Firebike-Droessiger

<i>Teams</i>		
1	Scott-Swisspower MTB Racing	77 pts
2	Specialized Factory Racing	60
3	Cannondale Factory Racing	60
4	Orbea	52
5	Trek World Racing	41
6	Rubena - Birell - Specialized Cycling Team	40
7	Multivan Merida Biking Team	36
8	Trek-Lorca Taller Del Tiempo	21
9	Lapierre International	21
10	JBG-2 Professional MTB Team	16
11	BH-Suntour	14
12	Subaru-Gary Fisher	9
13	Giant Italia Team	8
14	Team CBE Tecnoimpianti A.S.D.	6
15	Trek-Brentjens Mountain Bike Racing Team	5
16	MSC Bikes	3
17	Rabobank-Giant Offroad Team	3

Race notes

Nino Schurter raced in the world champion's rainbow stripes rather than the World Cup leader's jersey, a big no-no, for which he received a substantial 5000 Swiss Franc (\$4865 US) fine. Team director Thomas Frischknecht claimed that the leader's jersey he had been provided with was too small to race in. Frischknecht also pointed to Julien Absalon as the source of the protest that saw Schurter fined, sending out an inflammatory e-mail:

Julien was at all times a great sportsman when I raced against him and after too. I did not only respect him for his great results, I liked him as a person as well. Now he showed his real face of a sorry loser. Nino beat him over the whole season fair and square. A wrong jersey does not change the fact that Nino was better in 2010.

When I raced against the French armada with Martinez, Dupouey, Chiotti and Absalon I had to live with a second place many times. Sometimes even under special circumstances [when Chiotti won the world title and later admitted to doping]. But I tried to be a fair loser. A champion, and as such I counted Julien up 'til today, also is a champion in losing.

Sorry Julien. I don't know what you were thinking!