

Absalon wins his fifth Offenburg World Cup

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Perfect record intact despite challenges from Kulhavy and Marotte



Julien Absalon (Orbea) takes his 5th win on the Offenburg circuit. (Image credit: Tour of Japan)

Julien Absalon (Orbea) came into Offenburg undefeated during the past four years, and he left in the same fashion, after a dominating performance that also put him into the World Cup leader's jersey. Jaroslav Kulhavy (Specialized), the World Cup leader coming into the race finished second, while Maxime Marotte (BH Suntour Peisey Vallandry) took third.

Absalon came into Offenburg with two second places for the season in the World Cup, but he had stated earlier that he was building for this race, which he calls "the best World Cup course in the world".

A group of 12 riders formed at the front of the race on the first lap of seven, and rode away from the rest of the field along with Absalon, Kulhavy and Marotte, Burry Stander (Specialized), Christoph Sauser (Specialized), world champion Jose Hermida (Multivan Merida), Nino Schurter (Scott-Swisspower), Marco Fontana (Cannondale), Thomas Litscher (Felt Oetzal X-Bionic), Nicolas Coloma (Wildwolf-Trek), Rudi van Houts and Ivan Alvarez Gutierrez (Giant Italia).

By lap three, Coloma, Alvarez Gutierrez and van Houts were gone, and then Hermida flatted. Sauser crashed while chasing Absalon and Kulhavy and later suffered a broken wheel after getting a flat and riding his rim. Both had to run to the next tech zone on lap four.

Absalon launched his attack on the same lap, exploding the group. Kulhavy took off in solo pursuit, but couldn't close the gap, followed by Marotte just in front of Stander. They would finish in that order, with Coloma jumping back into the final podium spot after posting the fastest split for the sixth lap.

"I tried first to attack on the first lap," said Absalon, "but I saw six guys on my wheel, so I said, 'ok, I need to wait a little'. I sat in for two laps on wheels and I saw Kulhavy was very strong. I knew I needed to attack in the beginning of a long climb, like I have done each year, and so I did the same."

"In the third and fourth lap, I was waiting on the downhill and I attacked just at the first feed zone and I did the long climb at the front. After I took 15 sec on Kulhavy, I felt good. I made no mistakes. To win a World Cup you need to do a perfect race because the gaps are small. I planned the beginning of my season to peak for this race because I like it so much and it is only two hours from my home." He was greeted with hugs and kisses from his wife and baby.

Kulhavy was not surprised at Absalon's strong showing, saying, "Julien was way strong today and I did what I could to race for the finish. I knew Julien would be strong here and in fact, he was."

Additional reporting by Sue George

#	Rider Name (Country) Team	Result
1	Julien Absalon (Fra) Orbea	1:46:21
2	Jaroslav Kulhavy (Cze) Specialized Racing	0:00:29
3	Maxime Marotte (Fra) BH - Suntour - Peisey Vallandry	0:00:41
4	Burrry Stander (RSA) Specialized Racing	0:01:05
5	Carlos Coloma Nicolas (Spa) Wildwolf - Trek Racing	0:02:30
6	Fabian Giger (Swi) Rabobank - Giant Off-Road Team	0:02:33
7	Nino Schurter (Swi) Scott - Swisspower MTB - Racing	0:02:35
8	Marco Aurelio Fontana (Ita) Cannondale Factory Racing	0:02:36
9	Thomas Litscher (Swi) Felt Oetzal X - Bionic Team	0:02:45
10	Ivan Alvarez Gutierrez (Spa) Giant Italia Team	0:02:53
11	Rudi Van Houts (Ned)	0:02:57
12	Inaki Lejarreta Errasti (Spa) Orbea	0:03:06
13	Christoph Sauser (Swi) Specialized Racing	0:03:20
14	Moritz Milatz (Ger) BMC Mountainbike Racing Team	0:03:29
15	José Antonio Hermida Ramos (Spa) Multivan Merida Biking Team	0:03:31
16	Liam Killeen (GBr) Giant Factory Off-Road Team	
17	Florian Vogel (Swi) Scott - Swisspower MTB - Racing	0:03:40
18	Karl Markt (Aut) Felt Oetzal X - Bionic Team	0:03:44
19	Stéphane Tempier (Fra) TX Active Bianchi	0:04:02
20	Sergio Mantecon Gutierrez (Spa) Wildwolf - Trek Racing	0:04:21
21	Lukas Flückiger (Swi) Trek World Racing	0:04:43
22	Mathias Flückiger (Swi) Trek World Racing	0:04:45
23	Martin Gujan (Swi) Cannondale Factory Racing	0:04:47
24	Martin Fanger (Swi) Giant Swiss SR - Suntour	
25	Jan Skarnitzl (Cze) Rubena - Birell - Specialized Cycling Team	0:04:53
26	Derek Zandstra (Can)	0:04:56
27	Henk Jaap Moorlag (Ned) Rabobank - Giant Off-Road Team	0:05:09
28	Manuel Fumic (Ger) Cannondale Factory Racing	0:05:30
29	Ralph Naef (Swi) Multivan Merida Biking Team	0:05:31
30	Catriel Andres Soto (Arg) Team Protek	0:05:38
31	Wolfram Kurschat (Ger) Topeak Ergon Racing Team	0:05:39
32	Martino Fruet (Ita)	0:05:48

33	Todd Wells (USA) Specialized Racing	0:05:50
34	Sepp Freiburghaus (Swi) Thoemus Racing Team	0:05:51
35	Kevin Van Hoovels (Bel) Versluys - Evenza Team	0:05:54
36	Andras Parti (Hun) Euro One - Cube MTB Team	0:06:05
37	Balz Weber (Swi) BMC Mountainbike Racing Team	0:06:17
38	Matous Ulman (Cze) S&H Superior MTB Team	0:06:21
39	Daniel Mcconnell (Aus)	0:06:23
40	Uwe Hochenwarter (Aut) Muskelkater Genesis Team	0:06:28
41	Kohei Yamamoto (Jpn) Team Bridgestone Anchor	0:06:33
42	Nicola Rohrbach (Swi) Elettroveneta - Corratec	0:06:50
43	Cédric Ravanel (Fra) GT Skoda Chamonix	0:06:56
44	Marek Galinski (Pol) JGB - 2 Professional MTB Team	0:07:17
45	Samuel Schultz (USA) Subaru - Trek	0:07:29
46	Jochen Kass (Ger) Multivan Merida Biking Team	0:07:38
47	Periklis Ilias (Gre) Team Protek	0:07:45
48	Oliver Beckingsale (GBr)	
49	Irjan Luttenberg (Ned) MPL Specialized MTB Team	0:07:48
50	Hannes Metzler (Aut) Muskelkater Genesis Team	0:07:49
51	Martin Loo (Est) Infotre - Bi & Esse - Leecougan	0:07:53
52	Filip Eberl (Cze)	0:08:29
53	Patrik Gallati (Swi) BMC Mountainbike Racing Team	0:08:35
54	Michal Lami (Svk)	0:08:40
55	Niels Wubben (Ned) Rabobank - Giant Off-Road Team	0:08:47
56	Lukas Kaufmann (Swi)	0:08:53
57	Jiri Novak (Cze) S&H Superior MTB Team	0:09:07
58	Rene Tann (Ger)	0:09:12
59	Marc Colom (Fra) Team Newcycling	0:09:27
60	Robert Mennen (Ger) Topeak Ergon Racing Team	0:09:44
61	Sergii Rysenko (Ukr) Isd Cycling Team	0:09:55
62	Adam Craig (USA) Rabobank - Giant Off-Road Team	0:10:11
63	Ole Christian Fagerli (Nor)	0:10:24
64	Bjorn Brems (Bel) Versluys - Evenza Team	0:10:32
65	Jukka Vastaranta (Fin) Milka Trek MTB Racing Team	0:10:36

66	Giuseppe Lamastra (Ita) Elettroveneta - Corratec	0:10:40
67	Jeremy Horgan-Kobelski (USA) Subaru - Trek	0:10:54
68	Andrew Watson (Can)	0:11:10
69	Jonathan Galante (Fra)	0:11:28
70	Philip Buys (RSA)	0:11:33
71	Milan Spesny (Cze) S&H Superior MTB Team	0:11:35
72	Julien Tamarcaz (Swi) BMC Mountainbike Racing Team	0:11:39
73	Geoff Kabush (Can) Team Maxxis - Rocky Mountain	0:11:54
74	Mattias Wengelin (Swe)	0:12:02
75	Torsten Marx (Ger)	0:12:13
76	Cristian Cominelli (Ita) TX Active Bianchi	
77	Tim Wynants (Bel) Milka Trek MTB Racing Team	0:12:17
78	Yader Zoli (Ita) Torpado Surfing Shop	0:12:32
79	Matthias Leisling (Ger) Muskelkater Genesis Team	0:12:58
80	Pascal Hossay (Bel) G - Skin - Deforche MTB Racing Team	0:13:09
81	Pascal Schmutz (Swi)	0:13:14
82	Karl Platt (Ger) Team Bulls	0:13:23
83	Ludovic Dubau (Fra) Team Newcycling	0:13:43
84	Jiri Friedl (Cze) Rubena - Birell - Specialized Cycling Team	0:14:31
85	Michele Casagrande (Ita) Elettroveneta - Corratec	0:14:40
-1lap	Benjamin Wittrup Justesen (Den)	
-1lap	Umberto Corti (Ita) Team Cbe Tecnoimpianti A.S.D.	
-1lap	Jelmer Pietersma (Ned) Milka Trek MTB Racing Team	
-1lap	Jonas Baumann (Swi)	
-1lap	Simon Scheiber (Aut) Felt Oetztal X - Bionic Team	
-1lap	Simon Gegenheimer (Ger)	
-1lap	Alexis Chenevier (Fra) Scott Les Saisies	
-1lap	Jeroen Boelen (Ned) Milka Trek MTB Racing Team	
-1lap	Cristobal Silva Ibaceta (Chi)	
-1lap	Marc Bassingthwaighe (Nam)	
-1lap	Kazuhiro Yamamoto (Jpn)	
-1lap	Severin Disch (Swi) Thoemus Racing Team	
-2laps	Jorgen Flion (Bel)	

-2laps	Marco Schätzing (Ger) Team Firebike - Droessiger
-2laps	Bas Peters (Ned) Team Merida Combee
-2laps	Michael Broderick (USA)
-2laps	Paul Remy (Fra)
-2laps	Seiya Hirano (Jpn) Team Bridgestone Anchor
-2laps	Christopher Maletz (Ger)
-2laps	Samuele Porro (Ita)
-2laps	Giancarlo Sax (Swi) Thoemus Racing Team
-2laps	Lukas Sablik (Cze)
-2laps	Steffen Thum (Ger)
-2laps	Klaus Nielsen (Den)
-2laps	Heiko Gutmann (Ger)
-2laps	Artyom Golovaschenko (Kaz)
-2laps	Raphael Gagne (Can)
-2laps	Marco Arnold (Swi) Giant Swiss SR - Suntour
-2laps	Sang Hoon Na (Kor)
-2laps	Marios Athanasiadis (Cyp)
-2laps	Robby De Bock (Bel)
-3laps	Emil Lindgren (Swe) Rabobank - Giant Off-Road Team
-3laps	Spencer Paxson (USA) Kona
-3laps	Georgios Pattes-Toumanis (Gre) Team Protek
-3laps	Gabor Bogar (Hun) Euro One - Cube MTB Team
-3laps	Brian Lopes (USA)
-3laps	Rafal Hebisz (Pol)
-3laps	Kirill Kazantsev (Kaz)
-3laps	Brice Scholtes (Bel) G - Skin - Deforche MTB Racing Team
-3laps	Lucien Besancon (Swi)
-4laps	Chris Jongewaard (Aus)
-4laps	Matthias Waldhart (Aut)
-5laps	Frank Schotman (Ned) MPL Specialized MTB Team
-5laps	Besik Gavasheli (Geo)
DNF	Jean-Christophe Peraud (Fra)
DNF	Christoph Soukup (Aut)

<i>DNF</i>	Pascal Meyer (Swi) Thoemus Racing Team
<i>DNF</i>	Evgeny Nikolaev (Rus)
<i>DNF</i>	Andrea Tiberi (Ita) Torpado Surfing Shop
<i>DNF</i>	Oleksandr Gerashchenko (Ukr) Isd Cycling Team
<i>DNF</i>	Ruben Ruzafa Cueto (Spa) Orbea
<i>DNF</i>	Magnus Darvell (Swe)
<i>DNF</i>	Matthias Lauk (Swi)
<i>DNF</i>	Tony Longo (Ita) TX Active Bianchi
<i>DNF</i>	Pierre-Geoffroy Plantet (Fra) Team Newcycling
<i>DNF</i>	Daniel Federspiel (Aut)
<i>DNF</i>	Fabio Ursi (Ita) Team Cbe Tecnoimpianti A.S.D.
<i>DNF</i>	Alban Lakata (Aut) Topeak Ergon Racing Team
<i>DNF</i>	Max Plaxton (Can)
<i>DNS</i>	Pierre Lebreton (Fra) BH - Suntour - Peisey Vallandry