

MTB World Championships – CM

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By Rob Jones in Livigno www.cyclingnews.com

September 4: Elite Men and Women Cross Country

Dahle defeats all again - and says she's not stopping any time soon

Gunn-Rita makes it look easy, and she hasn't offered any encouragement to her rivals for the future - announcing in the post-race press conference that she intends to keep racing until the Beijing Olympics in 2008, where she will defend the gold medal.

The women faced two and a half laps of the 12.1 kilometre circuit, starting with a short half loop of the figure eight course and then two full laps. Three time world champion Alison Sydor (Canada) led the charge up the first climb, closely followed by Dahle, Marie-Helene Premont (Canada), Poland's Maja Wloszczowska, Petra Henzi (Switzerland) and Sabine Spitz (Germany). Four kilometres later, at the end of the first loop, Dahle already had 35 seconds on Wloszczowska, with the rest of the field falling further behind.

Dahle appeared to go into cruise control, although she still recorded the fastest laps every lap of the race. Wloszczowska rode consistently in second place, managing to hold the gap to just over two minutes. Behind the front two there was a shuffle going on, with Petra Henzi moving up from sixth after the first short lap to third by the end of the first full lap. Premont fell back, explaining that the course did not suit her talents.

"I am not as strong on the flat sections as some other riders, and this race much more flat pieces than normal, so it was very tough for me. I could make up time on Petra (Henzi) on the climbs, but she was much stronger than me on the flat parts."

Premont was fighting to hold off Sabine Spitz for fourth, while Sydor was chasing the German for fifth. At the end of the first full lap, Spitz was only seven seconds behind Premont, but began to fade in the final lap. Sydor was picking up the pace behind, managing to move from 1:07 back to only 22 seconds in arrears by the finish line.

"I felt really good at the start, and I wanted to ride conservatively in the early part because it is tough at this altitude (1800 metres). I wanted to save my energy for the last lap, but I lost too much time to make up at the end. Sixth place isn't too bad on this tough course."

Dahle may have made it look easy, but she was fighting tears on the podium. After winning the Marathon Worlds in Lillehammer, the European Championships and now her third cross-country world title all in one year, the Norwegian isn't blasé about this latest title.

"Achieving another rainbow jersey makes this a perfect day for me. It is still unbelievable for me to win a rainbow jersey. Today, I think I had my best race of the year. Everything came down on me at the podium, with all my family there it was an unbelievable moment."

Race Notes

- Wloszczowska won her fourth silver medal, but had no complaints. "Another silver - I like my silvers! As a Junior I had a silver, and last year a silver in Les Gets, but this year I did not expect silver. I don't know whether to laugh or cry."

She also spoke about the strength of the Polish women's team: "I think the main thing is our great coach, Andrej Piatek. All of the riders (for the national team) are on the same (professional) team; coaching and riding together 200 days a year. So the strength is the coach and the team."



Gunn-Rita Dahle (Norway)
Photo ©: Marek Lazarski



Maja Wloszczowska (Poland)
Photo ©: Marek Lazarski



Sabine Spitz (Germany)
Photo ©: Marek Lazarski



Dahle also spoke of the difference between winning the Marathon world title in her home country, and the cross-country title. "It is very hard to compare. Winning a world title in Norway was beyond a dream; we didn't know a year ago that we would have the world championship. On the other side, my sport is cross-country, and the stature of being world champion is special. I intend to wear the jersey and race all over the world representing our sport of mountain biking.

The medalists and their gongs
Photo ©: Marek Lazarski

Now I think I am a complete rider, so I can win both, but the competition is getting higher (in the Marathon); the time was close in Lillehammer. I think it will become harder and harder for cross-country riders to beat the marathon specialists, especially now that they have their own World Cup series."

RESULTS

Women's XC - 30.45 km

1 Gunn-Rita Dahle (Norway)	1.47.19 (17.02 km/h)
2 Maja Wloszczowska (Poland)	2.09
3 Petra Henzi (Switzerland)	3.07
4 Marie-Helene Premont (Canada)	4.14
5 Sabine Spitz (Germany)	5.27
6 Alison Sydor (Canada)	5.49
7 Mary McConneloug (United States Of America)	6.14
8 Severine Hansen (France)	7.01
9 Irina Kalentieva (Russian Federation)	7.25
10 Anna Enocsson (Sweden)	7.36
11 Adelheid Morath (Germany)	9.27
12 Shonny Vanlandingham (United States Of America)	9.36
13 Blaza Klemencic (Slovenia)	9.46
14 Paola Pezzo (Italy)	10.00
15 Eva Lechner (Italy)	10.09
16 Rosara Joseph (New Zealand)	10.31
17 Anna Szafraniec (Poland)	10.39
18 Cecile Rode (France)	11.56
19 Katrin Leumann (Switzerland)	12.15
20 Lene Byberg (Norway)	12.20
21 Katerina Hanusova (Czech Republic)	
22 Ivonne Kraft (Germany)	12.47
23 Nina Gohl (Germany)	12.59
24 Nina Homovec (Slovenia)	13.26
25 Elisabeth Osl (Austria)	13.36
26 Willow Koerber (United States Of America)	13.45
27 Maria Ostergren (Sweden)	13.51
28 Evelyn Staffler (Italy)	14.34
29 Emilie Siegenthaler (Switzerland)	14.43
30 Laurence Leboucher (France)	14.44
31 Trish Sinclair (Canada)	14.59
32 Sarah Koba (Switzerland)	15.10
33 Bernardine Boog-Rauwerda (Netherlands)	15.21
34 Magdalena Sadlecka (Poland)	17.20
35 Kelli Emmett (United States Of America)	17.24
36 Barbel Jungmeier (Austria)	17.50
37 Heather Irmiger (United States Of America)	17.55
38 Robyn Wong (New Zealand)	18.05
39 Claudia Marsilio (Italy)	18.06
40 Rie Katayama (Japan)	18.39
41 Maroussia Rusca (Switzerland)	19.23
42 Sabrina Enaux (France)	19.39
43 Nathalie Schneitter (Switzerland)	20.21
44 Janka Stevkova (Slovakia)	20.37
45 Maaris Meier (Estonia)	20.53
46 Sandra Klose (Germany)	20.55
47 Sonia Foote (New Zealand)	20.57
48 Masami Mashimo (Japan)	

49 Mical Dyck (Canada)	21.13
50 Maria Osl (Austria)	21.18
51 Franziska Rothlin (Switzerland)	22.14
52 Catherine Pendrel (Canada)	22.37
53 Elena Gaddoni (Italy)	23.48
54 Jaqueline Mourao (Brazil)	24.09
55 Laura Lorenza Morfin (Mexico)	25.51
56 Katrin Schwing (Germany)	26.13
57 Cristina Mascarreras Sabria (Spain)	27.59
58 Amanda Sin (Canada)	28.38
59 Carla Salgado (Mexico)	31.27
60 Niki Gudex (Australia)	32.26
61 Francisca Campos Salas (Chile)	32.27
62 Emma Colson (Australia)	32.41
63 Tarja Owens (Ireland)	33.22
64 Oxana Rybakova (Russian Federation)	38.36
65 Niki Fisher (Australia)	38.37
66 Viena Balen (Croatia)	43.09
67 Margarita Noelia Rodriguez (Argentina)	45.22

1 lap behind

68 Hanlie Booyens (South Africa)
69 Carmen Bassingthwaighe (Namibia)
70 Emese Simon (Hungary)
DNF Kiara Bisaro (Canada)
DNF Petra Schorkmayer (Austria)
DNF Rocio Gamonal Ferrera (Spain)
DNF Ivana Ruzskowski (Croatia)
DNS Jennifer Smith (New Zealand)