



Leonardo Páez and Pia Sundstedt obtain the victory in Gran Canaria

The present winners of the World carry out the predictions in a route, which has been described as demanding by the bikers

The double winner of the Tour of Italy ends sixth with eight minutes more than the winner

The Colombian Leonardo Páez and the Finn Pia Sundstedt won the Mountain Bike World Cup Marathon Gran Canaria after completing the demanding 91-km route (male event) and 77-km (female route) in a time of 3:27:24 and 3:27:17 respectively. The French Thomas Dietsch (second) and the Austrian Alban Lakata (third) completed the podium in the male event. The German Ivonne Kraft and the French Helene Marcouyre held the second and the third place in the female race respectively.

Páez and Sundstedt, the present winner of the mountain bike World cup maratón, carried out the predictions, which gave them the condition of favourites. Páez had to take thoroughly himself to exceed Dietsch, who accompanied him practically during the route until he obtained to impose his powering the last hill, in the curl of La Ventocilla. "The route has been very hard in the hills and in the descents", explained Leonardo Páez when he finished the race. "The objective is validating the title, and this victory permits me dreaming about that possibility", agreed. Then he dared to state: "The excellent Gran Canaria's food and the exceptional welcome of the island have helped me to win the race".

Although her victory was more approved (she separated in five minutes more than the second), Pia Sundstedt admitted that she found it difficult to impose her rivals. Even so, she led the race in the different control steps always. In the second provisioning point she had almost sentenced the race. In this point of the race the Swiss Anna Enocsson leaved, third in the Marathon World Cup 2005 and one of the big favourites for the victory.

The presence of Gilberto Simoni became interest in this event. The Italian biker could only stay in the sixth place, with eight minutes more than the winner, a position, which he considered "good". "My preferences are in the route cycling. The mountain bike is only a discipline which attracts me and permits me preparing myself", declared Simoni in the finishing line, and explained that the route of the race had demanded him because of its hardness and the land's characteristics.

Deho was unlucky

Leonardo Páez recognized too the bad luck of the Italian Marzio Deho, who suffered four punctures during the race. Deho led the race in different phases, but the punctures took him to the fourth place. "He was very hard, but the blowouts impeded him fight for the victory", suggested the Colombian Páez.

The first Spanish, Oriol Morata

Oriol Morata, with a time of 3:38:28, became the first classified Spanish of the race. His time valued him to classify in a good tenth place of a race, which counted on the best bikers of the world. There participated the four first classified in the Mountain Bike World Cup Marathon 2006.

Abraham Olano focused all the attentions

Although he participated in the 90 Challenge, the amateur event at the same time the World Cup, Abraham Olano, ex-world winner of route cycling and winner of the Tour of Spain, captured the attention of enthusiasts and cameras. The Basque biker completed the route in a time of 3:52:27. "That is very hard, but it is well as experience although I never thought it was so demanding", explained Olano, who added that the climate excellences of Gran Canaria and the route of this event wondered him pleasantly.

Exceptional atmosphere and tracking

The theme west park Sioux City, in the South of Gran Canaria, was the nerve centre of the World Cup's development. There was installed the starting and the finishing line, a fair with 20 theme mountain bike stands and different exhibitions, which livened up a day, which received hundreds of enthusiasts with a light rain, that disappeared when the bikers arrived.

The villages Aldea Blanca and La Sorrueda received also with open arms the bikers to accompany them during the route's development, classified as "demanding and hard" by the bikers.