



BMW HERO SÜDTIROL DOLOMITES: LEONARDO PAEZ AND MARA FUMAGALLI AHEAD OF THE REST AND WIN THE TENTH EDITION OF THE RACE

In the palma d'oro of the tenth edition of BMW HERO Südtirol Dolomites are the names of Hector Leonardo Paez Leon and Mara Fumagalli who came home first and ahead of the rest in the 86 and 60 kilometre races around the Sella Group.

More than 4,000 bikers representing 41 countries were at the start line. As a demonstration of the internationality of the event, the organisers have in these days announced the creation of the HERO World Series: in 2020, in addition to the Dolomites, the HEROes will also be able to compete in two races in Dubai and Thailand.

Gerhard Vanzi: "The HERO is no longer just a competition, but a brand with a strong international outlook".

Reference Hashtag: #hero2019 #herosüdtiroldolomites #heroworldseries #mountainbike

Selva di Val Gardena (BZ), 15 June 2019 - The **tenth edition of the BMW HERO Südtirol Dolomites** was an important milestone. This morning the BMW HERO Südtirol Dolomites saw 4,019 bikers at the start of Selva Val Gardena, ready to compete in the two customary (and now famous) 86 and 60 kilometre routes stretching out around the Sella Group.



Selva di Val Gardena, 15 giugno 2019 - Da sinistra Mara Fumagalli e Hector Leonardo Paez Leon.
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The men's ranking in the Elite category was dominated, for the sixth time, by **Hector Leonardo Paez Leon** of the **Giant Polimedical** team, who completed the closed the long and exhausting route through the Passes of Gardena, Campolongo, Pordoi and Duron, covering 4,500 metres of difference in altitude, with the time of **4:30.52**. Behind him in second place, in a time of **4:34.55** was **Urs Huber** of the **Team BULLS** and the third place on the podium was occupied

by **Diego Alfonso Arias Cuervo** racing for team **Giant Polimedical** in **4:35.31**.

*«I am so happy to have won, especially as it is the sixth victory here. It was not so easy to win today but I felt good and I was able to establish a lead in the first uphill, on a stretch which was a bit difficult to cross – commented **Leonardo Paez**, and who also let us in on a secret – to tell the truth I did not intend to go ahead, but the ground was slippery and my adversaries decided on a different way up: from that moment I gained a few metres and I was able to keep that advantage, the others falling behind a bit and I able to continue on alone».*



As in all long distance races, strategy is an important part of winning the HERO. *«My strategy involved having a sufficient advantage so as to take the first downhill from Passo Gardena in a controlled manner, and this I was able to do – continued Leonardo – but then, in the downhill from Duron I was too sure of things, and on a bend I skidded and got a few scratches and cuts on my leg and arm, but it was nothing too serious and I was able to carry on and win».*

GIRL POWER. The BMW HERO Südtirol Dolomites is on the international calendar of the UCI Marathon Series, so the Elite women competed in the 60 km route with 3,200 metres of elevation gain, and first home was **Mara Fumagalli**, wearing the team colours of **A.S.D. EVOLUTION TEAM** who clocked a time of **3:54.15**. In second place was **Sini Alusniemi**, representing the **Augment Sports team**, she finishing in **3:55.40**; and completing the women's podium was Katazina Sosna of team **A.S.D. TORPADO-SÜDTIROL INTERNATIONAL MT** who took **3:56.45** to complete the race.



*«I was really keen to win the HERO and do justice to the Italian colours, and at last I was able to do so: it is a really satisfying achievement for me and it is almost as good as winning a World Championship. – this the comment of **Mara Fumagalli** immediately after crossing the finish line – Compared to last year I was much better motivated and arrived at the start with lots of good training behind me. I really did want to win at all costs». It was a finish to the race transmitted direct in TV and which had all concerned when the biker from Lecco stopped pedalling and began to massage her thigh: «in the final 5 kilometres I began to suffer with cramp, but I was able to dig deep and was so happy when I reached the finish line, and just before doing so I was handed an Italian flag by the HERO Organisation Committee».*



Selva di Val Gardena, 15 giugno 2019 – Da sinistra Sini Alusniemi, Mara Fumagalli e Katazina Sosna.
Fh credit wisthaler.com

There were 219 women at the start of the two HERO routes: a percentage equivalent to 5% of the total number of participants, and considering the commitment that the race requires (the HERO is considered to be the toughest marathon in the world for distance and height difference), it is a statistic which shows how the female world is responding well to this event.

And to remain in the statistical sphere for a moment, it should be noted that the province most represented at the start of HERO 2019 is that of Rome with 180 bikers coming from the capital.

HERO WORLD SERIES 2020. The BMW HERO Südtirol Dolomites is just completed, its tenth birthday celebrated, and we are already thinking about next year, a year which will see a great novelty entering the international agendas of the globe-trotting bikers. In fact, the Organisation has announced the birth of the HERO WORLD SERIES circuit, and which will see the first appointment in **Hatta** in the desert of Dubai **from 6 to 8 February**, and will end in **Chiang Rai** in northern Thailand **from 8 to 10 October 2020**. Of course, in the middle of the two competitions, our loyal bikers will again compete at the HERO Dolomites on Saturday 20 June 2020. "It is a circuit which will touch three continents and, in addition to the competitive aspect, will be a great chance to discover new cultures from one's very own mountain bike", explains Vanzi, he the man behind this initiative.



Selva di Val Gardena, 15 giugno 2019 - Da sinistra Urs Huber, Hector Leonardo Paez Leon e Diego Alfonso Arias Cuervo
Fh credit wisthaler.com



Selva di Val Gardena, 15 giugno 2019 - Edmund "Ned" Overend
Fh credit wisthaler.com

The prestigious partnership with Specialized resulted in having the race registration of **Ned Overend**. Ned is the American that gave the spark to the birth of mountain biking when he won the first edition of the World Championships in Durango in 1990. Now, at the age of 64, he showed to still be in good form when finishing the 86 kilometre route of the HERO here in Selva in 6:13'05", less than 2 hours behind the overall winner. Well done, Ned!

RESULTS BMW HERO SÜDTIROL DOLOMITES MEN (86 KM)

1. HECTOR LEONARDO PAEZ LEON (CO) - Giant Polimedical - 4:30.52,3
2. URS HUBER (CH) - TEAM BULLS - 4:34.55,2
3. DIEGO ALFONS ARIAS CUERVO (IT) - Giant Polimedical - 4:35.31,7
4. SAMUELE PORRO (IT) - TEAM TREK-SELLE SAN MARCO-TONE - 4:37.09,1
5. TONY LONGO (IT) - ASD FOL - 4:38.15,8
6. ALEKSEY MEDVEDEV (RU) - A.S. D. CICLI TADDEI - 4:39.16,7
7. FABIAN RABENSTEINER (IT) - TEAM TREK-SELLE SAN MARCO-TONE - 4:40.58,2
8. JOHNNY CATTANEO (IT) - ASD FOL - 4:43.05,4
9. SASCHA WEBER (DE) - MALOJA-ROCKY MOUNTAIN - 4:43.23,4
10. MATTIA LONGA (IT) - G.S. SCOTT RACING TEAM - 4:43.45,7

RESULTS BMW HERO SÜDTIROL DOLOMITES LADIES (60 KM)

1. MARA FUMAGALLI (IT) - A.S.D. EVOLUTION TEAM - 3:54.15,6
2. SINI ALUSNIEMI (FI) - AUGMENT SPORTS - 3:55.40,9
3. KATAZINA SOSNA (IT) - A.S.D. TORPADO-SÜDTIROL INTERN - 3:56.45,3
4. ELENA GADDONI (IT) - A.S.D. CICLI TADDEI - 4:00.51,1
5. BLAZA PINTARIC (SI) - PINTATIM - 4:12.34,0
6. ANGELIKA TATZREITER (AT) - KTM MTB FACTORY TEAM - 4:13.58,1
7. MARIA CRISTINA NISI (IT) - NEW BIKE 2008 - 4:14.55,1
8. GAIA RAVAIOLI (IT) - CX SMP TEAM A.S.D. - 4:16.16,6
9. MICHALINA ZIOLKOWSKA (PL) - CST 7RMTB TEAM - 4:18.41,2
10. SILVIA SCIPIONI (IT) - ASD CICLI TADDEI - 4:20.51,3

Full rankings and split times can be found at: www.herodolomites.com

For further information: www.herodolomites.com

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