

Subject - MOUNTAIN BIKE: Vera Looser and Andreas Seewald win the 2024 BMW HERO Südtirol Dolomites



THE 2024 BMW HERO SÜDTIROL DOLOMITES: VERA LOOSER AND ANDREAS SEEWALD ARE THE NEW HEROES

The toughest mountain bike marathon in the world took place today, ending with the spectacular win of the German Andreas Seewald with teammate Martin Stosek from Czech Republic and Colombian Leo Paez close on his heels. Namibia's Vera Looser's win was no less spectacular as she left the Italians Sandra Mairhofer and Debora Piana eating dust in her wake.

The starting grid was legendary right from the start thanks to Peter Sagan, Ned Overend, and Marco Aurelio Fontana whose performances didn't disappoint in the slightest. A runaway success for the third race route of 71 km which debuted during this edition of the BMW HERO Südtirol Dolomites.

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BMW HERO Südtirol Dolomites © Freddy Planinscheck

Selva Val Gardena, 15 June 2024 – With such a lineup, the expectations were high for the 2024 BMW HERO Südtirol Dolomites 2024 – and they did not disappoint! The toughest mountain bike marathon in the world saw the strongest UCI marathon cyclists in the world compete for the title of HERO. The bar was raised and all eyes were on Peter Sagan, Ned Overend, and Marco Aurelio Fontana.



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THE HEROES

Andreas Seewald from Germany, representing team Canyon Sidi Mtb, won the men's competition, ascending to the podium of the long course boasting 86 km and 4,500 hm in 4:31'32".



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"I knew I had to beat Paez," says Seewald, "which is why I went all out right away on purpose to put pressure on him, as his strength lies in long distances. It was a bit of a gamble considering how tough the HERO is. However, I knew I had the necessary stamina to manage the second part of the race and keep ahead of everyone else."

It wasn't a walk in the park as other cycling giants were hot in pursuit: Martin Stosek, his teammate, placed second, 3'16" behind the winner, followed by the eight-time HERO champion, Leon Paez whose time of 4:37'48".secured him the third place.

THE HEROINES

The Elite women vied for the title of champion on the 60-km and 3,200 hm course – but only one came out on top, namely Vera Looser from Namibia representing team Lapierre Bikes, crossing the finish line at 4:04'34".



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"I had to keep focused throughout the race. Unlike Mairhofer, climbs aren't my strong suit – flat stretches and downhill are," says Looser. "I'm overjoyed with this result as it is a show of strength in the run-up to the Olympics, where I'll be competing in the road cycling discipline."

Looser beat her biggest threat, Sandra Mairhofer from team Polisportiva Caluschese Ciclismo ASD, whose 6'02" difference when crossing the finish line left her in second position, followed by Debora Piana in third place at 4:10'52".



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THE LEGENDS

Even among extraordinary heroes there are people who stand out from the crowd – legends of road and off-road cycling graced us with their presence at the event.

Peter Sagan's participation caused much anticipation – after retiring from his road cycling career, he moved back to his first love: mountain biking. After competing at the HERO in Abu Dhabi he's now back, racing the mother of all races set against the backdrop of the Dolomites. The Slovak cyclist had mountains of fun "competing" against Marco Aurelio Fontana (they battled it out on the Dantercepies' first climb). This isn't the first time the two have battled it out on the race course, as they've competed in different cross-country races, including back in 2016 when Sagan gave it his best shot at the 2016 Rio Olympics.



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Ned Overend, first cross-country mountain bike champion in 1990 also raced at the HERO. The 68-year-old flew on the wings of his passion and saw him complete his second HERO (after his debut in 2019) on the 60 km course at finishing at 05:10:08,4.

Once you try the HERO, it will be difficult to shake it off - **Marco Aurelio Fontana** also returned to the Dolomites after his experience last year. The Olympic bronze at the 2016 Rio Olympics raced on the 60 km, coming in at 4:07'28".

You can find the overall rankings on www.datasport.com

MEN'S RANKINGS

1. Seewald Andreas – GER – Canyon Sidi Mtb Team – 04:31:32,6
2. Stosek Martin – CZE – Canyon Sidi Mtb Team – 04:34:49,5 – +3:16,9
3. Paez Leon Hector Leonardo – COL - TOP RACE TEAM ASS. SPORTIVA CICLISTICA DILETTANTISTICA - 04:37:48,3 – +6:15,7
4. Rosa Diego – ITA – A.S.D. TORPADO-SÜDTIROL INTERNATIONAL MTB PRO TEAM – 04:41:00,0 – +9:27,4
5. Stutzmann Marc – SUI – Canyon Sidi Mtb Team – 4:42:44,5 – +11:11,9
6. Porro Samuele – ITA – ASSOCIAZIONE SPORTIVA DILETTANTISTICA EASY INFINITY – 04:42:46,2 – +11:13,6
7. Geismayr Daniel – AUT – ASSOCIAZIONE SPORTIVA DILETTANTISTICA EASY INFINITY – 04:42:46,7 – +11:14,1
8. Dorigoni Jakob – ITA – A.S.D. TORPADO-SÜDTIROL INTERNATIONAL MTB PRO TEAM – 04:44:13,2 – +12:40,6
9. Cherchi Dario – ITA – TOP RACE TEAM – 04:46:24,8 – +14:52,2
10. De cosmo Gioele – ITA – G.S. SCOTT RACING TEAM ASSOCIAZIONE SPORTIVA DILETTANTISTICA – 04:47:42,4 – +16:09,8

WOMEN'S RANKING

1. Looser Vera – NAM – Lapierre Bikes – 04:04:34
2. Mairhofer Sandra – ITA – POLISPORTIVA CALUSCHESE CICLISMO ASD – 4:10:37 – +6:02,7
3. Piana Debora – ITA – VELO CLUB CICLI CINGOLANI A.S.D. – 04:10:52 – +6:18,5
4. Morath Adelheid – GER – 04:16:46 – +12:12,5
5. Dr. Walter Stefanie – GER – CANYON SIDI MTB TEAM – 4:18:28 – +13:54,0
6. Zarantonello Maria – ITA – 4:20:09 – +15:35,3
7. Burato Chiara – ITA – 4:20:54 – +16:20,6
8. Fasolis Costanza – ITA – MENTECORPO BY BIEMME ASSOCIAZIONE SPORTIVA DILETTANTISTICA – 4:20:55 – +16:20,8
9. Nay Alessia – SUI – KOBÄ / RMV-Chur – 4:25:02 – +20:28,2
10. Ziolkowska Michalina – POL – 4:31:22 – +26:48,0

For further information visit www.herodolomites.com

Organising Committee

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