

メリダのホセ・ヘルミダ選手、世界チャンピオン奪取

~José Hermida is cross country world champion~

José Hermida produced his masterpiece, winning Mont-Sainte-Anne's world championship race.



9月4日、モント・セント・アン(カナダ、ケベック州)で開かれた世界選手権の男子クロス・カンントリー競技において、メリダのホセ・ヘルミダ選手が、最高峰のエリートクラスで優勝、世界チャンピオンとなった。

ヘルミダ選手は、ジュニアクラスならびにアンダー23(23歳以下)クラスで世界チャンピオンに輝いたが、エリートクラスでの世界チャンピオン奪取は今回が初。

今大会で、メリダ・チームは、金メダル4個、銅メダル1個を獲得。居並ぶ世界の自転車メーカーのなかで、最も優れた成績を収めることができた。

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After the Spaniard had already won a world championship title in both the junior and in the under23 category respectively, he now accomplished this feat in the elite class as well. For many years Hermida has been part of the world's elite, being Julien Absalon's only true opponent at times, but he never pulled off the trick of becoming world champion – until Mont-Sainte-Anne's historic race. «This is an epic day for me. To win in Mont-Sainte-Anne, one of mountain biking's most traditional races, makes it even more beautiful», Hermida commented after the race.

All the experienced pro he is, he started the race on a moderate pace only to accelerate massively midway into it, dropping all of his opponents except for Czechia's Jaroslav Kulhavy and South Africa's Burry Stander. Reigning world champion Nino Schurter was forced to risk so much that he flatted twice, whereas Julien Absalon crashed repeatedly when trying to give chase.

Hermida was in control for the entire race, and in the last lap he created a wide enough gap to secure the win. Finally Hermida crossed the finish line with tears in his eyes. No one in the international world of sports resents the possibly most likeable mountain bike athlete of all times the world championship title, as Hermida is known to be a jokester and a key element for the good mood on the race courses and at the race venues. Previously, Ralph Näf had led the Swiss team to the world championship title in the team relay race. In yesterday's elite race, he started out in second, but then his stomach cramped up, forcing him to slow down a bit. Finishing in 14th, Moritz Milatz further added to the «Multivan Merida Biking Team»'s excellent performance. Jochen Käß and Rudi van Houts both were involved in a first-lap crash, having to abandon due to mechanicals just a few metres into the race.

In the women's race, Gunn-Rita Dahle rode to a good 18th place finish, gradually working her way forward throughout the race. She had to start way back in 51st position, so she was fittingly pleased at the finish: «I'm happy with my result, but even more with the way the race went. On this course it's very hard to move up by that many positions.»

In the end, Merida is the most successful bicycle manufacturer at the world championships. The Taiwanese highend brand totalled four gold medals (in the junior, the team relay and the men's race respectively) and a bronze medal (team relay). No other brand comes close to this performance at 2010's world championships.

【Special Image Clip】

