**INCREDIBLE NINO SCHURTER CONQUERS THE SIXTH ROUND OF**

**UCI MTB WORLD CUP XCO 2017 ELITE MEN**

**AN ELVETIC TRIUMPH COMPLETED BY THE WIN OF JOLANDA NEFF**

*The competitions that closed the rich program of UCI MTB World Cup Finals in Val di Sole have ensured the return to the highest levels of two great champions in the Cross Country, both victims of an injury this year: the Swiss Swiss, first of elite women and French Julian Absalon third among men.*

The XCO elite competitions started with the women's race, where 70 athletes from 27 nations took off. Fast start of **Catharine Pendrel**, who is preceded by a trio of **Gunn-Rita Dahle Flesja, Jolanda Neff and Annika Langvad** at the end of the first round. Just after her the riders **Yana Belomoina** and **Irina Kalentieva**.

On the second lap, an intense fight started with Belomoina faster on climbs and Neff faster on downhill. The Swiss rider didn’t give up and starting from the last lap she made a forcing that pushed the Ukrainian to 19 seconds gap: impressive the last two round Neff’s rounds, the fastest in the race! The immediate followers were increasingly distant, more than one minute from the summit. Victory marks **Jolanda Neff'**s great return to the main stage after the season's first injury.

**Belomoina** follows at secnod place with 21 seconds of gap. The podium is completed by **Maja Wloszczowska** at 1:09 who eliminates Kalentieva (+1: 20) on the last lap, but the **Danish Langvad** finished fifth at 1:43. **Canadian Pendrel**, protagonist of the early stages of the race, will end in twelfth position (+3: 54). The UCI MTB World Cup XCO was already closed, with Yana Belomoina winner with a round of advance, second and third Maja Wloszczowska and Annika Langvad.

The **elite men** race started at 14:45 with 86 athletes from 26 nations represented. The first round is headed by **Nino Schurter** ahead of the transalpine pair composed by **Titouan Caroud** and **Jordan Sarrou**, with the great revival of Czech **Jaroslav Kuhlavy** and Frenchman **Stephane Tempier**. Quickly a new pair formed by Schurter and an arrembante Tempier. The duel between the Switzerland and France riders was the main motive of the race, along with the second between a returned **Julien Absalon** and the Czech Kulhavy for the lowest step of the podium.

The last lap was the decisive one for two clashes at the top: **Schurter** stretched on the last ramp before the final descent closing with a Safe margin of 4 seconds on Tempier. The Absalon compatriot (+47) overcame Kulhavy and the other Swiss Lars Forster, who reached 53 and 54 seconds, respectively. Great result for Luca Braidot, new to 1:49. **Gerhard Kerschbaumer**'s run-off, sunk down to 71st due to a mechanical failure in the first races, stopped at 40th place at 4:58 pm. With the win in Val di Sole, Swiss **Nino Schurter** consolidates cup leadership, ahead of Frenchman **Stephane Tempier**, who joins the compatriot **Maxime Marotte** in the last round, only 17th in Val di Sole.

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