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22-28 AUGUST 2022

**SOMMET MONDIAL
DU TRAIL RUNNING**

**Start of the PTL and finish of the MCC,
the UTMB Mont Blanc is well underway!**



It was in the coolness of late August in Chamonix that the PTL runners set off this morning at 8 a.m. 105 teams of 2 or 3 runners took the start of the most mountainous event of the week of the Sommet Mondial du Trail with a programme covering 300km and 26,000 metres of ascent to be completed in a maximum of 151 hours. Not only the crowds were there to welcome the runners, but also the media already gathered along the starting line. Next up for the runners was the MCC in Martigny-Combe, with a distance of 42km and 2550m of ascent instead of 2300. The trail was lengthened by 2km and 250 metres of ascent due to overflow of waterways along the route. The runners instead headed to Trient on a portion of the OCC® then ascended to the Col de Balme at 2200 metres for the most technical stretch of the event. The times, though a little longer, are still astounding, with Ludvik Fernandes claiming victory in 3 hours and 54 minutes, following Anthony Fleber, winner of the past edition in 3 hours and 39 minutes. The French runner was unable to hide his satisfaction at the finish:

"Last year I finished 8th, completely breaking down in the last part of the race. My two preparatory races over 30km were far from ideal. Until the Col de la Forclaz, I was managing well. Then, I found myself with Baptiste in the second part of the climb and ran my race, without worrying about the others and it went wonderfully. Knowing that the last part of the race would suit me rather well. I did a season of cross-country, so I was able to sustain a good pace. Either way, I still can't believe it. It is truly a dream to arrive at this legendary finish."

The Chamonix runner Baptiste Ellmenreich came in second. A fan of ski mountaineering, he finished in 4 hours and 8 minutes, welcomed by the race director and the announcer, Ludovic Collet.

Another extraordinary performance was the 10th place, in the general classification, achieved by Candice Fertin the young 24-year-old athlete based in Haute-Savoie. Recently turned professional she caught the eye of the French trail running team and its trainer, Adrien Séguret. Finishing the race in tears, she was keen to do well after her recent failures:

"I did not finish the Mont-Blanc Marathon and I was only thinking about the finish line. I am lucky that it started with a climb of 8km and 1000 metres of ascent. Climbing is my strong point and I love to climb. So, when we have a good start, it helps for the parts that we find harder. With my parents, I was always hiking or cycling in the mountains with backpacks. It was when I went away to study that I started running (...) in the mountains. Adrien Séguret has been following me for 2 months, things are going very well, we communicate a lot and I need that. I dream of running for the French team."

The TDS begins tonight at midnight, the race with the highest kilometre/ascent ratio of the 8 events of the UTMB Mont-Blanc, with 1000 metres of ascent every 15.9 km. The line-up promises to be magnificent with the winner of the UTMB 2016, Ludovic Pommeret (UTMB Index 874), the recent winner and record holder of the Mozart 100 and the German Janosch Kowalczyk (UTMB index 883). Among the women, the line-up is just as impressive as that of the men with the Spaniard Claudia Tremps (UTMB index 724), 9th in the UTMB in 2021, and also the Italian Martina Valmassoi (UTMB Index 724) who is on great form at the moment, claiming three victories in 2 months.

The TDS can be followed on live.utmb.world with images and videos taken in the field and shared on social networks. The winners are expected from 6 p.m. onwards on Tuesday in Chamonix and the first ladies from 8 p.m. Who will replace Erik-Sebastian Krovig and Manon Bahord? You will have to follow the race to find out.

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