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22-28 AUGUST 2022

**SOMMET MONDIAL
DU TRAIL RUNNING**



A new record, a new victory for Jornet and gripping racing: The UTMB 2022 has kept all its promises

Kilian Jornet won the 19th edition of the UTMB in the early afternoon, his 4th personal victory in the event, being the first athlete to break the 20-hour mark, in 19 hours, 49 minutes and 30 seconds. He finished just 5 minutes ahead of Mathieu Blanchard, (3rd in 2021) who confirmed his talent today with an impressive race and also finished in under 20 hours (19 hours, 54 minutes and 50 seconds). The Briton Tom Evans completes the podium, finishing in 20 hours, 34 minutes and 35 seconds. The women's race was won by the American Katie Schide.

It all started last night for the more than 2.300 runners who set off under light rain from the place du Triangle de l'Amitié in Chamonix, for this, the 19th edition of the UTMB. The start of the race was very quick, the best time estimates were comfortably exceeded on the first intermediate times, led by Pau Capell in particular.

Starting more cautiously than usual, the American Jim Walmsley, the sole favourite to wear long running trousers, livened up the night of the race. As we all took note of the premature retirements of Aurélien Dunand-Pallaz (10th km), and Benoît Girondel (50th km), the American runner was the first to reach Courmayeur (km 70). As he left the Italian refreshment point, Kilian Jornet arrived, just 5 minutes behind him. But Walmsley's solo run came to an end about fifty kilometres further. Having moved to Beaufortain to prepare specifically for this race, Walmsley went to pieces on the climb to La Giète, no longer able to eat. At La Giète, he was 18 minutes behind the leading duo now made up of Kilian Jornet and Mathieu Blanchard, then 20 minutes behind at Trient.



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The end of the race was going to be epic, with Kilian Jornet having overtaken Mathieu Blanchard after the refreshment point at Trient and tailed the Frenchman over the last 30 kilometres of the race. The two runners made the climb to Les Tseppes together, and the descent to Vallorcine (km 153). The Frenchman and the Catalan spent a good minute at this refreshment point, before bolting from the tent almost simultaneously, and taking on the big climb towards the Tête aux Vents. A few hundred metres after the refreshment point, Kilian Jornet quickly gained ground over Mathieu Blanchard, who had passed the Col des Montets about 2 minutes later. After a big effort during the last climb of the trail, Jornet was 8 minutes ahead of Mathieu Blanchard at La Tête aux Vents. The race was decided, and Kilian was heading for his 4th victory in the UTMB, joining his ex-teammate François d'Haene at the top of the Chamonix standings!

Mathieu Blanchard glimpsed victory in this 2022 season race he aimed to win, before losing to Jornet. *"At one point in the race, I saw Kilian in the distance. He was no longer advancing. I even apologised for overtaking him, I wished him good luck and sprinted on, but he hung on",* said Mathieu with a smile at the finish line. *"So suddenly, together we went on the 'Jim hunt'. We pushed each other to the end, and eventually we succeeded in this thrilling race. I wanted to finish in 21 hours, I never imagined finishing it in under 20! Alone, it would have been impossible but together, battling it out, it became possible. When we are competing, we forget all about the watch. I did not expect such a great result".*

Behind, while Jim Walmsley struggled to limit the damage, Tom Evans was having a very different race compared to the American. He had let go of his companion Zach Miller who had suffered hypoglycaemia and with whom he had run many kilometres during the night and morning, before overtaking Jim Walmsley, to end up with 3rd place in the final, in 20 hours, 34 minutes and 35 seconds. Walmsley gave it his all and obtained his best yet, 4th place on this event, in 21 hours and 12 minutes. The Top 5 was completed by another American, Zach Miller. Two places in the Top 5 for the Americans, but still no men's victory in the history of the UTMB!



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If victory has been denied to the Americans, it has been awarded for several years to their female compatriots. In the absence of defending champion Courtney Dauwalter (USA), Katie Schide took over, winning the race in 23 hours and 15 minutes. The 31-year-old American, who lives in France with her partner Germain Grangier, had a roller coaster of a race. *"I got off to a fast start, quickly ahead of my opponents,"* explained the trained geologist. *"I was more than 15 minutes in the lead arriving in Courmayeur. It wasn't really the plan, but in previous years I had started too slowly."* At La Fouly, the American lost her strength, as is often the case in this kind of race. Katie Schide had to "let the storm pass" by putting on a jacket and walking. It was then that a bitter duel ensued with the Canadian Marianne Hogan, who had been gaining on Katie Schide and eventually overtook her. But the gap could still be bridged. *"I started to come back on the climb of Champex. I told myself that a new race was starting, and that there were still three big challenges on the programme, so there was still a chance that I could come back"*. And this is what Katie Schide manage to do, to regain the lead in the climb of the Bovine pastures, overtake the Canadian, and sail into her first victory, after a 6th place in 2019 and an 8th place in 2021 on the UTMB.

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