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MARIANNE VOS BATHES IN PERFECTION IN FROZEN FIUGGI



ZACHARY SCHUSTER - JANUARY 15, 2017

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FIUGGI, Italy—Riders came into Sunday's UCI Telenet World Cup race in Fiuggi, Italy expecting an icy, muddy mess with a lot of running, and in the wooded hills, that is what they got.

Marianne Vos (WM3 Pro Cycling) survived a chaotic first lap scrum in the woods to surface at the front of the race and then put in a searing second lap attack in the frozen flats to drop Eva Lechner (Team Clif Bar).

Like a woman on a mission, Vos rode and ran each section of the course with decisive, technical precision as if she burned her turn-by-turn plan to memory, and then executed it without a glitch. Lap by lap, she grew her lead on a dominating solo ride to take home her second World Cup of her short cyclocross season.



Dutch Champion Marianne Vos continues her winning ways. 2017 Fiuggi UCI Cyclocross World Cup Women's Race. Italy. © C. Jobb / Cyclocross Magazine

Fiuggi Bruises Bodies, Egos

Fiuggi is a small town located 80km east of Rome in the foothills of the Apennine Mountains. The World Cup event, the first held in Italy since the 2013 and 2014 races in Rome, was held at the Parco Termale dell'Anticolona, which is a spa and resort. The waters of Fiuggi became famous in Italy after Michaelangelo credited them with curing his kidney stones, and they have been recognized by the Italian Health Institute for their kidney-issue curing abilities.

The course at Fiuggi was much narrower than courses fans are used to seeing for World Cups. The lower part of the course near the spa featured frequent surface changes from stone to gravel to dirt. Elevation change came in the narrow wooded section that was muddy, slick, and

technical.

Snow covered the grounds on Saturday, and although the temperature was 37 degrees at the beginning of the race, the ice from yesterday's precipitation remained beneath a layer of mud in much of the wooded section.



Kerry Werner
@kerryw24

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if you are watching [#fiuggi](#) to put perspective on the woods section.
It is like peanut butter on glass!

1:34 PM - 15 Jan 2017

7

Fiuggi might be known for its healing baths, but racers throughout the day took unwelcome head-first splashes into its injuring mud. The narrow course through the woods and the gnarly conditions on the ground created mayhem during the opening lap. Racers were forced to run most of the section throughout the day.

A Frantic Fiuggi First Lap

The narrow section in the woods meant the Fiuggi course was one where a fast start is imperative for riders with podium aspirations. Eva Lechner (Team Clif Bar) blasted out to the holeshot and Ellen Noble (Apsire Racing) joined her at the front as the riders navigated the varying surfaces of the race start.

When the riders hit the first downhill in the woods, all cyclocross hell broke loose. The narrow descents and corners would have been challenging on a dry day, but with the ice and mud, the section became a haunted forest. Nary a rider made the first trip through the "slidy section," as English announcer Anthony McCrossan called it, without slipping or crashing. Noble, sitting top five, slid into the fencing the first time through—just one of many such incidents she and most racers experienced out on the greasy course.

One unfortunate casualty of the first lap was Italian Alice Maria Arzuffi (Lensworld Zannata). She crashed over the orange snow fencing and left the race on a stretch while her bike was left dangling on the barrier. The Italian, closing out a great season, later Tweeted she went to the hospital for a back injury:

**Alice Maria Arzuffi**

@AliceArzuffi

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I'm still waiting at the hospital. I hurt bad my back. I am waiting to know more

3:57 PM - 15 Jan 2017 · Frosinone, Lazio

13

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When the first lap fracas sorted itself out, Marianne Vos and Eva Lechner emerged at the front of the race while Katerina Nash (Team Clif Bar) and Ellen Van Loy (Telenet Fidea Lions) sat 10 seconds in arrears.

Vos Says Arrivederci

Lechner's challenge to Vos and bid for glory in front of her Italian fans would be short-lived. The Italian hit the pits for a fresh bike shortly after the start of the second lap, and Vos used the opportunity to put in a mighty attack and be first in line for the baths. Within a few turns, Vos had nearly 10 second gap after the attack.

It was all the seven-time World Champ needed. With clear lines ahead of her, Vos stayed strong and upright while running through the woods and opened up a 20-second gap back to second place after the second lap. She extended her lead by five seconds or more each subsequent lap and came across the line with a 40-second victory over second-place finisher Katerina Nash.

After the race, Vos talked about staying composed in the treacherous Fiuggi woods, "Here in the woods it's like ice. You have to find some balance and shoot for your own path. I think I was able to do that when I was on my own."

She was also asked about the secret to success through the section, "First, take the good lines. I had good grip with the tires and the shoes. In the end, it's about not panicking and being able to cope with the circumstances."



Marianne Vos appears to be unstoppable in her new WM3 kit. Katerina Nash and Sophie de Boer complete the podium. 2017 Fiuggi UCI Cyclocross World Cup Women's Race. Italy.
© C. Jobb / Cyclocross Magazine

“In the end, it’s about not panicking and being able to cope with the circumstances.” -Marianne Vos

Nash is Numero Due, U23 Women Battle in a Worlds Preview

Katerina Nash, known for her mountain biking prowess, put those skills to work in the narrow confines between the trees during the second lap. She snatched second position from teammate Lechner after a brief team time trial. Within a lap, the gap back to third grew to nine seconds at the end of lap two.

As Vos rode away at the front, Nash solidified silver. She would eventually finish the race with a 19-second gap back to Sophie de Boer (Breepark).

De Boer broke into third after escaping from a chase group that included Noble and Annemarie Worst (Mijn Bad Liv/Giant Offroad Team). Heading into the last lap, De Boer appeared to have a solid grasp on the third podium position, but during the last trip about the circuit, U23 rider Worst did everything in her power to catch De Boer and grab the podium position.

Worst entered the finishing straight just meters behind De Boer, but the World Cup leader sprinted home with a powerful finishing kick to hold onto her third spot.

Worst's fourth-place finish was the highlight of a number of great finishes by U23 riders. Belgian Laura Verdonschot (Marlux-Napoleon Games) and American Ellen Noble found themselves together midway through the race in a preview of a battle fans are likely to see in Luxembourg two Sundays from now.

Verdonschot pulled away in the race-within-the-race during the last two laps and finished the afternoon in sixth. Noble finished 8th, Chiara Teocchi 9th, and Nikola Noskova 10th, foreshadowing what should be a phenomenal U23 tussle at Worlds.



Ellen Noble, your U23 World Cup leader. 2017 Fiuggi UCI Cyclocross World Cup Women's Race. Italy. © C. Jobb / Cyclocross Magazine

Courtenay McFadden (American Classic/Zones) had a strong ride in Fiuggi for the American contingent. She flirted with the top ten throughout the race and finished 11th. Britishwoman Nikki Brammeier (Boels Domans) took 12th, Colorado resident Caroline Mani (unattached, although still flying Clement logos in an old National Championship jersey) finished 14th, American Rebecca Fahringer (Amy D Foundation) took 20th, and Elle Anderson (Elle Anderson Racing) placed 29th.

De Boer Wins the World Cup

It has been said that consistency is key, and in the battle for the overall World Cup title, the old adage definitely proved true. With her third-place finish on Sunday, Sophie de Boer clinched the overall World Cup championship after winning the World Cup at Cross Vegas in September and then grabbing a second and two thirds to finish as the top rider ahead of Katerina Nash.

Noble has a nearly-secure lead in the U23 series, with a 79 point margin over Verdonschot. Only a DNF and a Verdonschot win would lose the jersey.

Next Stop, Hoogerheide

The last stop of the 2016-2017 Telenet UCI World Cup series is Sunday in Hoogerheide. *Cyclocross Magazine* will be providing coverage of this last tune-up before the World Championships in Bieles, Luxembourg.

2017 Fiuggi UCI Cyclocross World Cup Results - Elite Women

Rank	Name	Team	Result
1	VOS Marianne	WM3 PRO CYCLING TEAM	0:41:26
2	NASH Katerina	LUNA PRO TEAM	+00:40
3	DE BOER Sophie		+00:59
4	WORST Annemarie		+01:00
5	LECHNER Eva	LUNA PRO TEAM	+01:34

6	VERDONSCHOT Laura		+01:45
7	VAN LOY Ellen		+01:57
8	NOBLE Ellen	ASPIRE	+02:05
9	TEOCCHI Chiara	BIANCHI COUNTERVAIL	+02:17
10	NOSKOVA Nikola		+02:17
11	McFADDEN Courtenay	ZONES / AM CLASSIC	+02:30
12	BRAMMEIER Nikki	BOELS DOLMANS CYCLINGTEAM	+02:38
13	PETIT Marlene		+02:40
14	MANI Caroline		+02:43
15	BAKKER Manon		+02:48
16	CASASOLA Sara		+03:02
17	DEL CARMEN ALVARADO Ceylin		+03:28
18	CLAUZEL Helene		+03:39
19	KAPTHEIJNS Maud		+03:47
20	FAHRINGER Rebecca	AMY D FOUNDATION	+03:48
21	VERHESTRAETEN Karen		+03:48
22	HEIGL Nadja		+03:49
23	FRANCK Alicia		+04:06
24	SELS Loes		+04:10
25	BARONI Francesca		+04:24
26	VANDEBEEKEN Joyce		+04:31
27	NUNO PALACIO Aida		+04:34
28	BULLERI Alessia	AROMITALIA VAIANO	+04:37
29	ANDERSON Elle	ELLE ANDERSON RACING	+04:40

30	WIEL Jade		+04:48
31	KUKULOVA Martina		+05:07
32	GONZALEZ BLANCO Lucia	LOINTEK	+05:14
33	GONZALEZ BLANCO Alicia	LOINTEK	+05:17
34	GALAND Maina		+05:17
35	HENZELIN Lise-Marie		+05:25
36	VAN DER HEIJDEN Inge		+05:44
37	FEDE Nicole		+06:11
38	MUZIC Evita		+06:23
39	MEDVEDOVA Tereza	BEPINK COGEAS	+06:58
40	ERLANDSSON Asa-Maria		-1LAP
41	PERSICO Silvia	VALCAR PBM	-1LAP
42	GODART Suzie		-2LAP
	KASTELIJN Yara		DNF
	ARZUFFI Alice Maria		DNF

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