



17th Südtirol Dolomiti Superbike 9 July 2011

Südtirol Dolomiti Superbike 2011

Mirko Celestino: „I have come to win!“

but also Debertolis, Huber and Lakata are pushing for a win...

Niederdorf 8 July 2011 - Tomorrow at 7:30 am marks the start of the 17th Südtirol Dolomiti Superbike. 3600 athletes from 30 nations are registered. Contestants have two routes to choose from; the longer distance of 110 km at 3357 meters, or the shorter course of 60 km at 1591 meters altitude.

The favourites are present and in excellent shape on the eve of the classic MTB Marathon race to be held in Alta Pusteria Dolomites. For many, the Südtirol Dolomiti Superbike is the highlight of the season. Here are the opinions of some of the top athletes.

Mirko Celestino (aged 37 from Italy): Second in 2010, first on the UCI World rankings. "I am in excellent condition. Although on Sunday I was plagued with doubt as to whether I should participate in the Dolomiti Superbike. My fall on Saturday at the Sella Ronda Hero gave me more problems than I anticipated. I had a swollen knee, neck problems and did not feel particularly good. Now I feel better and all my doubts are dispelled. The training is going well; I'm on the bike between 4-5 hours, but at a lower intensity in order to conserve energy as last year's second place at the Dolomiti Superbike has tampered me because I was unlucky to lose. On the last climb I struggled with cramps. I hope this does not happen to me this year. It would please me to win this year's event. The Dolomiti Superbike is one of the most famous races in the world! I have come to win! "

Alban Lakata, (aged 32 from Austria), former world champion: "I feel good now even though I expected more from the Marathon World Championships (6th place). My form was in good shape, but I just couldn't cope with the warm weather. At the Kitzalp bike last week, I noticed my legs rotated well on the mountain.

I hope it works for me this time in Niederdorf. Earlier at the World Cup for example, I was far too nervous as many fans had come from Lienz which lies only a few kilometres away, to cheer me on along the route. Now I have it in grip and hope to give a good show.

Celestino will be a very tough opponent. He's definitely the biggest challenger. I still have an open account to settle with him concerning the World Cup where I expected a medal. Mirko does not have the entire team behind him at the Dolomiti Superbike and that would be to an advantage. All have the same playing field.

The distance is likely to play an important role because it leads to a natural thinning out. The race

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goes over five hours, but the true decisive factor lies in the skill over the mountains. Whoever holds out on the hills or controls the pace, will win. It should not come to a sprint finish as in 2008. I will try it on the climb. Either you get through it or you don't."

Massimo Debortolis (aged 36 from Italy): Two-time winner of the SDSB: "This year, the Dolomiti Superbike revolves in clockwise direction as in my two previous victories of 2009 and 2007. I have not hidden the fact that I want to win this year's event again even though Mirko Celestino is in impressive form as he proved last Saturday. I am also in good form, I could get both my back pain under control as well as solve the technical problems. I've also changed teams, which motivates me further. The Dolomiti Superbike is one of the finest long-distance races in the world. I've not only taken the race in my heart because of my victories. When one wins the Dolomiti Superbike, then the season is complete even if other races go awry. I compare the MTB-Marathon Street Classic with the classic Paris-Roubaix or the Tour of Flanders. "

Urs Huber (aged 25 from Switzerland), two-time winner SDSB: "I think my condition is quite as bad as suggested by my results in recent weeks. It was more a mental problem at the World Cup and the Kitzalp bike. The Dolomiti Superbike will motivate me and give me confidence for a comeback at the right time. The Dolomiti Superbike is very emotional for me. I could accelerate my career here significantly with my World Cup medal. This race is superbly organized, the people are very friendly and enthusiastic, and the very impressive natural scenery. The Dolomiti Superbike is for me without question a major highlight of each season.

I think the Italians with Celestino and Debortolis are certainly the strongest contenders. The hard route can also be accommodated by others and you certainly may not underestimate other cyclists. My goal is to give my best and to stand on the podium at the end. I think patience is the key to success. The final climb to Prato Piazza will decide the outcome of the race where one should have as many reserves as possible."

Jukka Vastaranta (aged 27 from Finland): I didn't know I was number 2 on the rankings list. I've been feeling quite tired as I took part in 3 races over the past week. I'm hoping for something positive to happen tonight like a good night's sleep. I normally go to bed at 10 and rise at 5. I trained along the last 10 km of the long course today. As a junior I was very involved in skiing and biking. According to Urs Huber, Jukka is a strong contender for tomorrow's race.

Katrin Schwing (aged 39 from Germany) Winner of the SDSB 2009: "I was sick before the Frammersbach marathon two weeks ago, but I recovered very well and won the Stella Ronda Hero last week. This indicates to me that I have regained the necessary sparkle. It's the third marathon in a row and I have to see if I can cope with the set task. The race is hard and brutal. I have this week off, so I'm not under too much pressure ... A good start is important. You have to divide your energy well and tactically go as far as possible, especially along the flat sections where the wind sometimes comes up."

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