



REBECCA HENDERSON AND BEN OLIVER WIN THE FIRST EDITION OF THE HERO ABU DHABI HUDAYRIYAT ISLAND

The Cross-Country Olympic race was one to remember, not only because it was the final race of the 2024 HERO Abu Dhabi Hudayriyat Island, but also because of the amazing performances seen on the track – including those of the winners, the Australian Rebecca Henderson and the New Zealander Ben Oliver. The starting line saw athletes from over 47 countries sprint off in what was the only UCI race in the Arab Peninsula. It also represented the start of the off-road season which will end with a bang at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris.

Hashtag: #heroabudhabihudayriyatisland #abudhabi #hudayriyatisland #hero #heroseries



HERO Abu Dhabi Hudayriyat Island 2024 - The winner Ben Oliver and Rebecca Henderson Photo by shotmotion_ph

Abu Dhabi (UAE), 11 February 2024 – The first edition of the HERO Abu Dhabi Hudayriyat Island passed its debut with flying colours. The event's last race took place today – the XCO Class 1, the only UCI race in the Arab Peninsula.

The starting line featured the crème de la crème of the discipline, who travelled from all over the world for the first qualifying race to the 2024 Paris Olympic Games.

The winners of the Trail X of the Hudayriyat Island sports facilities were **Rebecca Henderson** and **Ben Oliver**.

THE MEN'S PODIUM



HERO Abu Dhabi Hudayriyat Island 2024 - Ben Oliver and Thomas Litscher - Photo by Action Media Production - www.actionmpro.com

The winner of the Men's race was **Ben Oliver** from team Denver Disruptors at 1:17:43. A clear win over **Thomas Litscher** from team LAPIERRE MAVIC UNITY, with a difference of 28 seconds. The third place went to **David List** from LEXWARE MOUNTAINBIKE TEAM who finished the race at 1:18:24.

"It was a high intensity race from the start, on an extremely fast course," Oliver commented, *"and I waited for the last few laps to see who could hold out. And I think I can say I started the season."*

Expected at the start was Peter Sagan, who after three of the seven laps of the Hudayriyat circuit did not keep up with the pace of the front runners and finished in 24th place, also due to a crash without physical consequences. Italian champion Luca Braidot was forced to retire due to a contracture in his left leg.

THE WOMEN'S PODIUM

The winner was **Recca Henderson** from team Primaflor Mondraker with a time of 1:17:41. Just behind her, **Noëlle Buri** from team LAPIERRE MAVIC UNITY at 1:17:46, followed by **Martina Berta** from Santacruz RockShox Pro Team, who crossed the finish line at 1:17:47.

"I played a lot of tactics early on, but there was never a moment's relaxation, always full throttle," said Henderson. *"I didn't know what physical condition I was in and this is the best start to the year I could expect."*



HERO Abu Dhabi Hudayriyat Island 2024 - Rebecca Henderson attacking - Photo by Action Media Production - www.actionmpro.com

Amateur races

The amateurs competed on Saturday on the very same trail on Hudayriyat Island. Among the Men, **Benjamin Willeit** won, while **Rachael Delaunay** triumphed in the Women's race.

RANKINGS

XCO Class 1 HERO Abu Dhabi Hudayriyat Island, Women

1. Rebecca HENDERSON – NZL – Primaflor Mondraker – 1:17:41
2. Noëlle BURI – SUI – LAPIERRE MAVIC UNITY – 1:17:46
3. Martina BERTA – ITA – Santacruz RockShox Pro Team – 1:17:47
4. Giada SPECIA – ITA – WILIER-VITTORIA FACTORY TEAM XCO – 1:17:53

5. Sofie Heby PEDERSEN – DEN – WILIER-VITTORIA FACTORY TEAM XCO – 1:17:53

XCO Class 1 HERO Abu Dhabi Hudayriyat Island, Men

1. Ben OLIVER – NZL – Denver Disruptors 1:17:43
2. Thomas LITSCHER – SUI – LAPIERRE MAVIC UNITY 1:18:12
3. David LIST – GER – LEXWARE MOUNTAINBIKE TEAM 1:18:24
4. Ethan ROSE – NZL – Trek Future Racing 1:18:51
5. Simone AVONDETTO – ITA – WILIER-VITTORIA FACTORY TEAM XCO 1:18:57

Full rankings available on myraceresults.com



HERO Abu Dhabi Hudayriyat Island 2024 - The female podium and the male podium - Photo by Action Media Production - www.actionpro.com

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