



Red Bull Jungfrau Stafette 2008

Athletes and weather gods reign over 2008

Not a dull moment was had as athletes and weather gods reigned over the 2008 Red Bull Jungfrau Stafette. The lengthy 500 km relay race resulted in surprisingly close finishes as Sven Riederer grabbed a victory for the Swiss Bulls, followed second by the Global Bulls and third by the Subaru Uri 1.

The weather gods don't hold back at the Red Bull Jungfrau Stafette. They fill the skies with everything from rain to hail, snowstorms and strong winds – and an interlude or two of sunshine – providing a real twist to the already contrasting route of the relay race which begins at the Rhine Falls, crosses over the Jungfrauoch, Aletsch Glacier and Eggishorn, runs down through Wallis and the Midlands, before ending in Dübendorf. One thing is clear: these gods still have the last word, just as they did during the original 1930s Jungfrau Stafette.

Starting signal sounds at the Rhine Falls

The starting signal can be heard above the roar of the Rhine Falls as 33 cyclists storm up a flight of 275 stairs leading Schloss Laufen [Laufen's castle], where they take off on their bikes. Pro cyclists Markus Zberg (Subaru Uri 1) and Patrick Calgagni (Win Team) quickly take the lead. They're joined by Sandro Späh (Swiss Bulls) and Bernhard Eisel (Global Bulls) as they head into the Lindau region of the Canton of Zurich. Here, the runners start the next leg of the race, as Manfred Jauch (Subaru Uri 1) and Bruno Heuberger (Swiss Bulls) gain the lead in the 9.5 km to the Dübendorf Airfield.

Strong rain fall keeps the vintage airplanes on the ground. There are also reports of heavy snow fall and 77 km/h winds coming from Jungfrauoch – conditions that make it too risky to go forward with the ski leg of the route over the Aletsch glacier. The interim ranking list drawn in Dübendorf has now moved the originally planned start for the Alpine runners on the Eggishorn [where paragliders are now forced to remain grounded], to the starting line for the downhill mountain bikers along the Fiescher Alp. These runners come cascading down the mountain toward the village of Fiesch, seemingly oblivious to the fog, snow and slush.

High suspense in Wallis

Thanks to Alpine runner, André Marti, the team from Uri assumes the lead up to the start of downhill biking. Former pro biker, Claudio Caluori (Swiss Bulls), and world class junior, Jo Smith (Global Bulls), quickly turn things around here. In quick succession, they pass to the motorcyclists who are raring to go on their vintage motorbikes. They manage to reach the kayakers' starting line in Stalden on schedule. Olympic athlete, Mike Kurt (Swiss Bulls), plunges through the waters of the Vispa River to sail ahead of World Cup athlete, Vavrinec Hradilek (Global Bulls), turning a 7-second lead over the Global Bulls



into 53. His team's old timer is then sent off on a spectacular round through the Val d'Anniviers toward Sion. The vintage race and sports cars are also required to keep a scheduled time, but times are not kept for the airplane leg of the race. These guys are just here to look good and 'pass the baton' on to the next stage of the race.

The final stretch

The time intervals are picked back up as the runners head into the final stretch. Sven Riederer (Swiss Bulls) starts out 53 seconds ahead of Jonas Colting (Global Bulls), world champion in the double ironman challenge. In third is Manfred Jauch, the tireless Uri team member, making him not only the first amateur among those running in the final stage but also the first to have already run the morning leg of the race. The final stretch sends runners across the landing field and twice around the Fliegermuseum [Aviator Museum] to the finishing line. Riederer manages to hold on to his lead position while the other athletes maintain their's as well. «It's great to finish the season with a team victory,» says Sven Riederer. «I'll head for vacation a happy man on Tuesday.» Third place winner, Manfred Jauch, is also satisfied with the results: «Of course, we were aiming to win, but we're a team of non-competitive athletes, so I'd say we really held our own out there.»

Media Red Bull Communications
 Nathalie Lüthi
 Tel. +41 41 766 36 22
 Mobile +41 79 467 22 60
 nathalie.luethi@ch.redbull.com

TV Smaragd Medien
 Köhler Patrick
 Tel. +49 172 847 50 06
 patrick@smaragdmedia.tv

Photos Keystone
 www.redbull-photofiles.com

Ranking www.datasport.com
Lists

Website www.redbulljungfraustafette.com