

Prettau (IT), 07<sup>th</sup> September 2010

## Stage Results, Day 4: Neukirchen /Austria– Prettau / Italy

### Across the High Divide in a Hurry



Today was not the day to hang back and enjoy the vistas. The racers awoke to a slight drizzle and the rain and overcast conditions continued throughout the day. The stage turned out to provide quite a few other challenges but also some

distinct highlights. Next to the weather, the biggest trial of the day was certainly Birnlücke Pass (2,667m), the highest elevation the racers have to negotiate during the 2010 GORE-TEX® TRANSALPINE-RUN. Significant snow banks in the high alpine arguably made it pretty rough going today. On the bright side, the racers had a chance to claim yet another marathon on their resumé as today's distance covered just over 43 kilometers – not counting the 1,967 meters of vertical. Other news race participants rejoiced in was the halfway point of the competition as they passed Prettau Kees Glacier within a mere stone's throw. There are only four more stages to go and the race seems more manageable to most at this point.

British racers Andrew Symonds and Tom Owens (TEAM SALOMON TRAIL MEN) certainly seem to manage the race quite well at this point. For the fourth consecutive day, they were able to ditch the competition arriving at the finish line after a mere 04:14.22 hours. However, Matthias Dippacher and Christian Stork of ORTHOMOL SPORT TEAM were not to be outdone by the knee-deep snow either. The two Germans arrived 18 minutes after the leaders with a time of 04:32.22, handily claiming second place. Alaskans Brenton Knight and Brandon Newbould (TEAM SKINNY RAVEN, 04:34.28) also seem to enjoy the flower ceremony associated with podium position as they have consistently run to third place to date. As such, today's performances didn't change the overall ranking in the Men's category.

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## Masters Leaders enjoy fresh set of leader jerseys each day



New jerseys every day – that’s better than laundry service and something to get used to! The fourth fastest time across the High Divide and, thus, first place in the Masters category was claimed – once again - by Dr. Thomas Miksch and Anton Philipp (BLT LAUFSPORT

SAUKEL-HAGLÖFS, 04:35.46) who seem quite at ease by now with an overall two-hour-plus lead over their immediate competition. So much so, that they felt comfortable granting an interview even before reaching the finish line in Prettau. Thomas shared that “the first 28 kilometers were hard. I had to lead a lot on account of headwinds, snow and foggy conditions. But we love this stuff and look forward to the remaining four stages”.

TEAM BUFF around Chemari Rodriguez Bustillo und Juanjo Checa Alonso also appeared in good spirits at the finish line although they handed the German dominators ahead of them time a 46-minute lead with their time of 05:22.19 hours. The third team on the podium were rookies to this position – Spaniards Valentin Prados Predegal and Jose Colomina Pallares (PENANSANTA-PIZZERIA PAROLAZZI) ran a formidable stage through adverse conditions in a time of 05:23.28 hours.

### Mixed leaders true to their colors

Angela Mudge and Chunky Liston of SALOMON TRAIL TEAM MIXED (04:48.08) also seem to have grown fond of their leader jerseys. Enough so, to be motivated to charge to the front of the pack each day of the 2010 GORE-TEX® TRANSALPINE-RUN and claim the top spot on the podium at night. Running a safe and sound stage across the High Divide were also Ilona Robertson and Casey Morgan of British TEAM TPC FREIGHT MANAGEMENT who almost delivered a photo finish with TEAM SALOMON (Gaby Steigmeier and Seppi Neuhauser). A little more than a minute was all that separated the Swiss-Austrian racers from their British competitors – still fast enough for podium position though. Gaby revealed that it “it hadn’t been her day today” and that the first ten kilometers

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were hard on her. They “were able to make up some time on the uphill mostly on account of her partner’s great legs”. Apparently, conditions were unfavorable to South Africans Linda Doke and Ryan Sanders of SALOMON VELOCITY SPORTS LAB who have always been good to shake up the ranks among the top teams over the last few days. They arrived in fourth place today but are clearly still within reach of a podium placement.

**WOMEN teams settling into routine**

Italians Martina Pfeifhofer and Elisabeth Egarter (TEAM SEXTEN SALOMON) seem eager to get home now that the weather turned for the worse. The two arrived in their home province with a huge lead over second-placing Germans Gitti Schiebel and Eva Übelhör of TEAM MOUNTAIN HEROES (06:02.54) who, in turn, keep delivering very consistent and remarkable performances. TEAM NORDIC SPORTS WOMEN, Stefanie Felgenhauer and Regina Lingl, also rejoiced being back on the podium (06:05.26) trailing less than three minutes behind their most immediate competitors. Similarly to the top-ranked teams in the Mixed Category, the overall podium positions still seem up for grabs – apart from the seemingly untouchable leaders in each category. There are several teams that deservedly hold high hopes for a podium ranking and probably will be good for some very exciting competition these next few days.

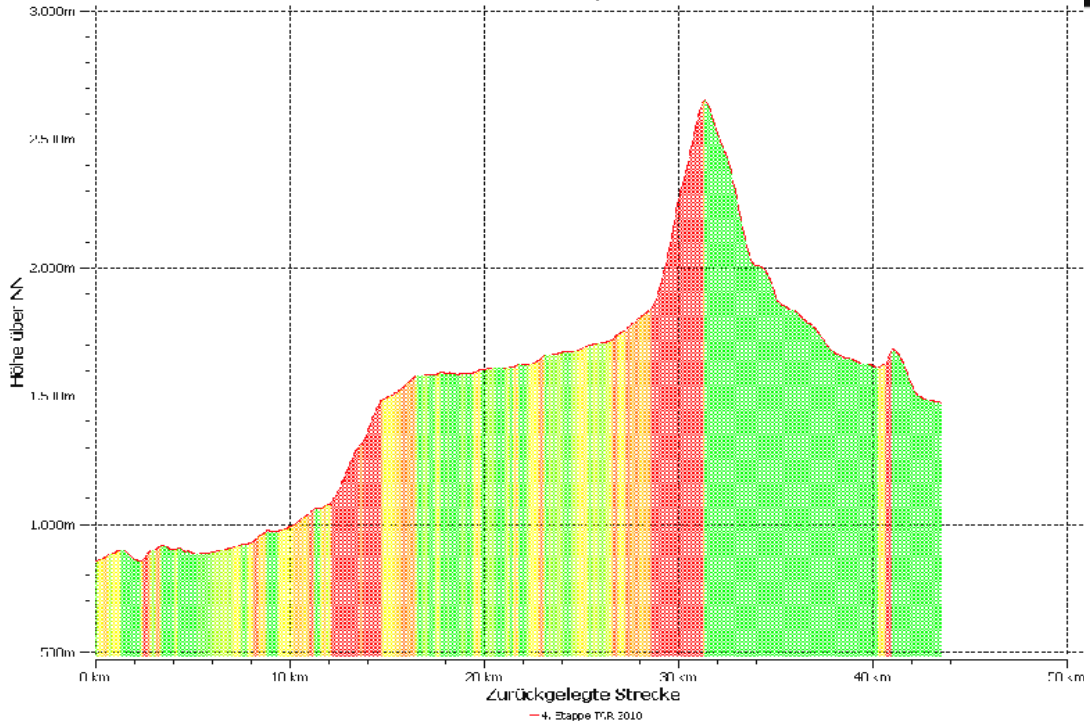
**Today’s Trails:**

Horizontal distance: 43.90 km, vertical gain: 1,967 m, vertical descent: 1,377 m.

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