

Fréjus, October 6th 2023

Du 4 au 8 octobre 2023

ROC D'AZUR 2023

GERMANY'S ANDREAS SEEWALD AND LITHUANIA'S KATAŽINA SOSNA REIGN SUPREME IN THE FORD ROC MARATHON

Key points for today:

- German Andreas Seewald storms to his second triumph in the Ford Roc Marathon
- Lithuanian Katažina Sosna seals the treble in her swansong
- Axel Roudil-Cortinat (fourth) and Tatiana Tournut (second) fly the flag for France in the Ford Roc Marathon
- Esterel Massif dazzles the riders in several MTB, e-MTB and gravel recreational rides

Highlights of tomorrow:

- Canyon Gravel Roc attracts the increasingly numerous fans of a booming discipline
- Roc d'Azur trail runners set out to tame the breathtaking trails of Roquebrune-sur-Argens
- A family fun day with the Kid Roc for children and a wide range of recreational rides for cyclists of all levels

ANDREAS SEEWALD ON THE DOUBLE

After one last push and one last glance back to make sure his rivals were still behind him, the German **Andreas Seewald** raised his arms in triumph as he crossed the finish line of the [Ford Roc Marathon](#). It took him less than four hours (3 h 59'01") to complete the 91.3 km course of the Ford Roc Marathon, which featured an elevation gain of 2,300 m, and repeat his victorious exploit from 2021 (third last year). The 32-year-old, tenth in the last World Marathon Championships, edged out the Colombian **Héctor Leonardo Páez León** (fifth in the Worlds and also a regular in the Roc d'Azur) by 18" and the Italian **Samuele Porro** (winner in 2018) by nearly two minutes. "I dug deep in the first part of the race to stick to the front", explained the German, who bagged his second national title two weeks ago. "I knew I was in good shape, so I just had to avoid crashes or mechanical issues. I always try to go all out, although it's been a long season. I was confident and played my cards well. I'd thought of entering the Canyon Gravel Roc on Saturday, but I'm feeling great, so instead of that I'll try to recuperate and refocus for Sunday."

FRENCHMAN AXEL ROUDIL-CORTINAT JUST OUTSIDE THE PODIUM

Sporting his French marathon champion jersey, the young **Axel Roudil-Cortinat** (third in 2021) was the top French rider, just outside the podium. "I came with high hopes because it was the last race of the year", explained the Frenchman. "I was aiming for a podium spot, but I ended up fourth. That's how it goes. The race was decided around kilometre 70. We were in a big group of about fifteen and, unfortunately, I was at the back. I pushed hard to close the gap, but no-one backed me up and I ended up paying for it at the end. It's still a solid result and it was a great chance to show off the *tricolore* jersey before the break. The Roc d'Azur is special. We come here to see our partners, mingle with people and party with our mates."

Hard blow of the day: **Hugo Drechou**, who sprinted to victory last year, saw his title defence hopes dashed just 30 metres into the race, when his chain snapped under the strain of his first pedal strokes.

LITHUANIAN KATAŽINA SOSNA SCORES A HAT-TRICK AS TWO FRENCH RIDERS STAND ON THE PODIUM

The Lithuanian **Katažina Sosna**, who had already clinched the longest event of the Roc d'Azur in 2019 and 2021, left the competition in the dust in the women's race. The former road racing star (five starts in the Giro Donne and a Lithuanian time trial champion) seized the lead from the beginning and never looked back. She finished in 4 h 58'10" to secure a third title fraught with emotion. "Honestly, I think the Roc d'Azur is the most beautiful race in the world", she cooed. "I've been coming here for years on end and hold this race very close to my heart. This victory was tough because the weather was quite hot. But it was also very special because it's my last Roc d'Azur, since I'm retiring in a few days at almost

33 years old. On Sunday, the start of the classic [Roc d'Azur](#) race will be electric, and I obviously dream of bringing down the curtain on this wonderful story with a win."

The French rider **Tatiana Tournut**, a two-time junior French champion at the tender age of 19, put in a superb performance to finish second, a shade over two minutes behind the winner. "We started very fast", pointed out the young girl from Franche-Comté, who had already raced in the XCO World Cup but was tackling her first marathon. The Lithuanian broke away right off the bat and we did our own race behind her. Estelle [**Estelle Morel**, third] dropped me on the first climb, but she had a flat tyre. I overtook her without even noticing. From then on, it was all about holding on. I was going flat out because I was terrified that Estelle would catch up. It's an awesome way to wrap up a season that's had its share of difficult moments. Especially here. I've been coming to the Roc ever since I was a little girl. My parents used to participate in the tandem race and I took up the torch with a win in the Junior category three years ago and a runner-up spot in O15. It was my first marathon. It was long, of course, but I loved it."

The [Ford Roc Marathon](#) also doubled as the third of the five legs of the [Roc Trophy](#) (cumulative ranking in five races until Sunday). The leaders of the competition after the first two rounds, the Belgian **Jarne Vandersteen** and the Swiss **Ilona Chavailleaz**, padded their advantage.

View the full results [here](#).

THE MAJESTIC ESTEREL MASSIF HOSTS SEVERAL RECREATIONAL RIDES FOR THE SECOND TIME

A series of recreational rides on courses ranging from 24 to 56 km long took participants through the heart of the Esterel Massif. Pushing the pedals on tracks with no technical challenges, the participants in the MTB, e-MTB and gravel rides got to choose their distance on the go. One thing is for sure: the mild weather and, especially, the outstanding landscapes, jaw-dropping panoramas of the Mediterranean and the ochre rocks of the massif persuaded quite a few riders to keep going for just a bit longer!

GRAVEL, MOUNTAIN BIKE AND TRAIL RIDES TO KICK OFF THE WEEKEND

This Saturday, gravel enthusiasts - a fast-growing discipline halfway between mountain biking and road biking that has been part of the Roc d'Azur programme since 2016 - will be the first to set off at 7.30am for the [Canyon Gravel Roc](#), a 67.5km adventure to the Bergerie campsite in Roquebrune-sur-Argens.

The day will also be marked by a wide range of rides: [Rando déguisée](#) (17.9 km), [Rando Famille](#) (8 km), [Shimano Rando Noire Électrique](#) (48.7 km), [Alltricks.com Rando Noire](#) (48.7 km), [Kid Roc](#) (from 2 to 8 km depending on age) and even [Kid Roc Draisienne](#) (150 m, from 2 years).

A large part of the day will be devoted to the [trail](#). On courses of 16, 22, 32 and 43 km, runners will discover the magnificent Rocher de Roquebrune as they stride along. Having joined the Roc family last year, the [trail](#) was a big hit with nature sports enthusiasts. There's no doubt they'll once again be amazed by the routes on offer.

It's the perfect programme to give everyone a great time in sublime Mediterranean scenery and plenty of sunshine!

PROGRAMME Highlights of tomorrow

7:30 am: Canyon Gravel Roc
9 am: Rando Déguisée
9:30 am: Roc Trail
11 am: Shimano Rando Noire Électrique
11:40 am: Alltricks.com Rando Noire
11:30 am: Kid Roc Draisienne
3 pm: Kid Roc

View the full programme [here](#).

PRESS KIT

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PRESS ACCREDITATION

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