

Ganbare! -頑張れ!-

The WOC 2005 Official Newsletter



Issue 4 / August 12th

ORIENTEERING
TODAY
INDEPENDENT INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE

As expected?

Middle – 11th August, 2005 – Mikawa Kogen, Bokujo

Will Gueorgiou make it three in a row or will there be somebody else taking over the reign as Middle distance king from the phenomenal Frenchman? Will Niggli be strong enough for another gold in these Champs? These were the two big questions to be answered with the Middle distance Final at Mikawa Kogen Bokujo. Compared to the day before the weather was really friendly this time with temperatures far from 30°C + of the previous days. As in all the races in Japan, again there were tough and hilly courses waiting for the athletes. This time the vague terrain and vegetation features were enriched by sprinkles of boulders.

For some of the runners this was the first Final race in the Champs, others, who had been competing the day before in the Sprint distance, already had one final race in their legs, which might have been a bit of disadvantage. However, as was proved by the Swiss Simone Niggli, nothing was impossible.

Second straight Gold for Niggli

Simone Niggli seems to be back in the winning mood we are familiar with from 2003 at the World Champs in Switzerland. There, ahead of the home crowds she managed to dominate all the races and do the impossible, winning all the disciplines. Last year in Sweden she was not as lucky, but still was able to defend her gold medal in sprint. On Wednesday she defended the title in Sprint again. And yesterday, in the Middle distance, she added one gold more to her collection.



9th place for Sandy Hott Johansen in the Middle distance was the highest ever WOC placing for a Canadian runner. Until now the best was 10th placed Ted St. Croix at WOC 1985 in Australia. (Photo: Lucie Navarová)



Minna Kauppi of Finland focusing on her start. On the day her performance was good enough for a bronze, which for her was the best individual WOC result of her carrier. (Photo: Lucie Navarová)

Race supreme

In the Middle distance Niggli was simply running, once again, in a class of her own which was emphatically demonstrated by the over 2-minute margin ahead of Jenny Johansson of Sweden who claimed silver. Johansson started out on the course two minutes ahead of the Swiss, but she was not able to keep the Swiss off her back. It was at the 10th control where the two runners came together and they did not separate much until the finish. Johansson crossed the line some 50 metres after Niggli. Yet, despite being caught up, the race was good enough for the Swede to earn her a silver medal, as Minna Kauppi in 3rd was another 50 seconds down.

Long Next

It may very well happen that today Niggli will have reasons to celebrate her third victory in the Championships as the Long distance is supposedly the one where she can actually display her full potential. The tough and long course involving lots of climbing and route-choice selections should suit her perfectly. This is a fact that should suit all the Swiss as this kind of orienteering is what most of them have grown up with.

But never say never. On the Long distance Niggli will be challenged by her compatriot on the team, the experienced Vroni König-Salmi, who had a day of rest yesterday and had already managed to beat Niggli in the Long distance earlier in the season, at the Nordics.

And there will be many other runners to watch out for. Both Johansson and Kauppi, the silver and bronze medallists from the Middle distance will be on the start line, as

well as the defending World Champion Karolina Årewang-Höjsgaard and the Norwegian Marianne Andresen who was so strong in the Qualification.

As on any other course, anything may happen and even the best runners make mistakes. It will only be at about noon when we will have the answer whether Niggli could make it three out of three.

Mission Accomplished

Thierry Gueorgiou rewrote orienteering history. He managed something no other man did before. For the second time in a row he defended a World Champion title in the Middle distance. Thus the Frenchman became the first athlete in the history of the World Orienteering Championships to claim three titles in a row in one discipline.

Again, right from the Qualification on Sunday, it was clear Gueorgiou came to Japan in great shape, fully-prepared for the challenges ahead. He won his Qualification Heat by almost a 2-minute margin ahead of Finland's Jarkko Huovila and that was, according to the Frenchman's own words, after not running the whole course at the highest speed.

In the Final Gueorgiou again showed his class and ability, which in Middle distance seems to be unmatched, at least for the last three years. "The Middle distance was again my main goal in the Championships and I'm glad I was able to add one more WOC victory in the discipline," said the 26-year-old Frenchman in the finish. Gueorgiou completed the 5 km course, with an extreme 310 metres of climb, in an amazing 33:00, which counted for an astonishing average speed of 6:36 min/km. The runner who got closest to Gueorgiou's time was Denmark's Chris Terkelsen, who was over a minute and a half behind. The bronze was claimed by Jarkko Huovila of Finland. For both Terkelsen and Huovila the silver and bronze were the first individual WOC medals in their carriers.

Long distance WOC premiere for Gueorgiou

Today Thierry Gueorgiou will make his first World Championships start in the Long distance. So far, in the World Championships, he has been competing only in Middle, Sprint and Relay.

However, it is not as though Gueorgiou will be a total newcomer to Long distance. He won the 2003 Finnish Long distance championships and he has run long races a few times in big International events too with not so bad results – 12th place at the European Champs last year was his best.

During the interview with the WOC 2005 speaker Nick Barrable after the Middle distance the Frenchman said he has no special aim for the event, just to experience it and try his best. However, it may also happen he will pocket another WOC medal, but he will have it tough as there are several other names who will be trying to do the same: the defending silver medallist Mattias Karlsson of Sweden, another Swede (and the World Champion from the Sprint distance) Emil Wingstedt, Norway's Holger Hott Johansen, Britain's Jamie Stevenson, Russia's Andrei Khramov, Finland's Jani Lakanen... or what about Marc Lauenstein, the young Swiss who ran so well in the Qualification.



Chris Terkelsen crossing the finishing line in 2nd place. For the Dane it was the first individual WOC podium in his life. He had to walk a long way and overcome many obstacles to get up there. After winning the World Cup in 1998 he overtrained and couldn't train at all for a couple of years. For some time it even seemed he won't be able to get back into this sport. Never give up! This is the message. (Photo: Lucie Navarová)

Result –Middle Distance Final-

Women

1	Simone Niggli	32:46.3	SWI
2	Jenny Johansson	34:59.7	SWE
3	Minna Kauppi	35:50.0	FIN
4	Anna Mårsell	35:58.3	SWE
5	Anni-Maija Fincke	37:03.5	FIN
6	Tatiana Ryabkina	37:49.7	RUS
7	Lea Müller	37:55.3	SWI
8	Zsuzsa Fey	38:07.8	ROM
9	Sandy Hott Johansen	38:18.5	CAN
10	Martina Fritschy	38:21.8	SWI
11	Ieva Sargautyte	38:49.6	LIT
12	Hanna Palm	39:12.5	SWE

Men

1	Thierry Gueorgiou	33:00.3	FRA
2	Chris Terkelsen	34:32.0	DEN
3	Jarkko Huovila	34:49.3	FIN
4	David Andersson	34:54.3	SWE
5	Øystein Kristiansen	35:31.2	NOR
6	Jørgen Rostrup	35:38.9	NOR
7	Simonas Krepsta	36:03.8	LIT
8	Petteri Muukkonen	36:32.1	FIN
9	Gernot Kerschbaumer	36:43.8	AUS
10	Mats Troeng	36:47.9	SWE
11	Marian Davidik	37:08.9	SVK
12	Damien Renard	37:15.1	FRA

A Bear Spotted

Most foreigners are probably not aware that there are bears in Japan. These shy animals tend to keep to the remoter mountainous areas and sightings are extremely rare in the forests around the WOC terrains. Japanese bears are much smaller than their North American cousins and do not have such a bad reputation for aggressive behaviour. Nonetheless they are considered dangerous. During the middle distance one of the runners actually reported seeing a bear. Perhaps this news will add an extra level of tension to some already nervous runners.

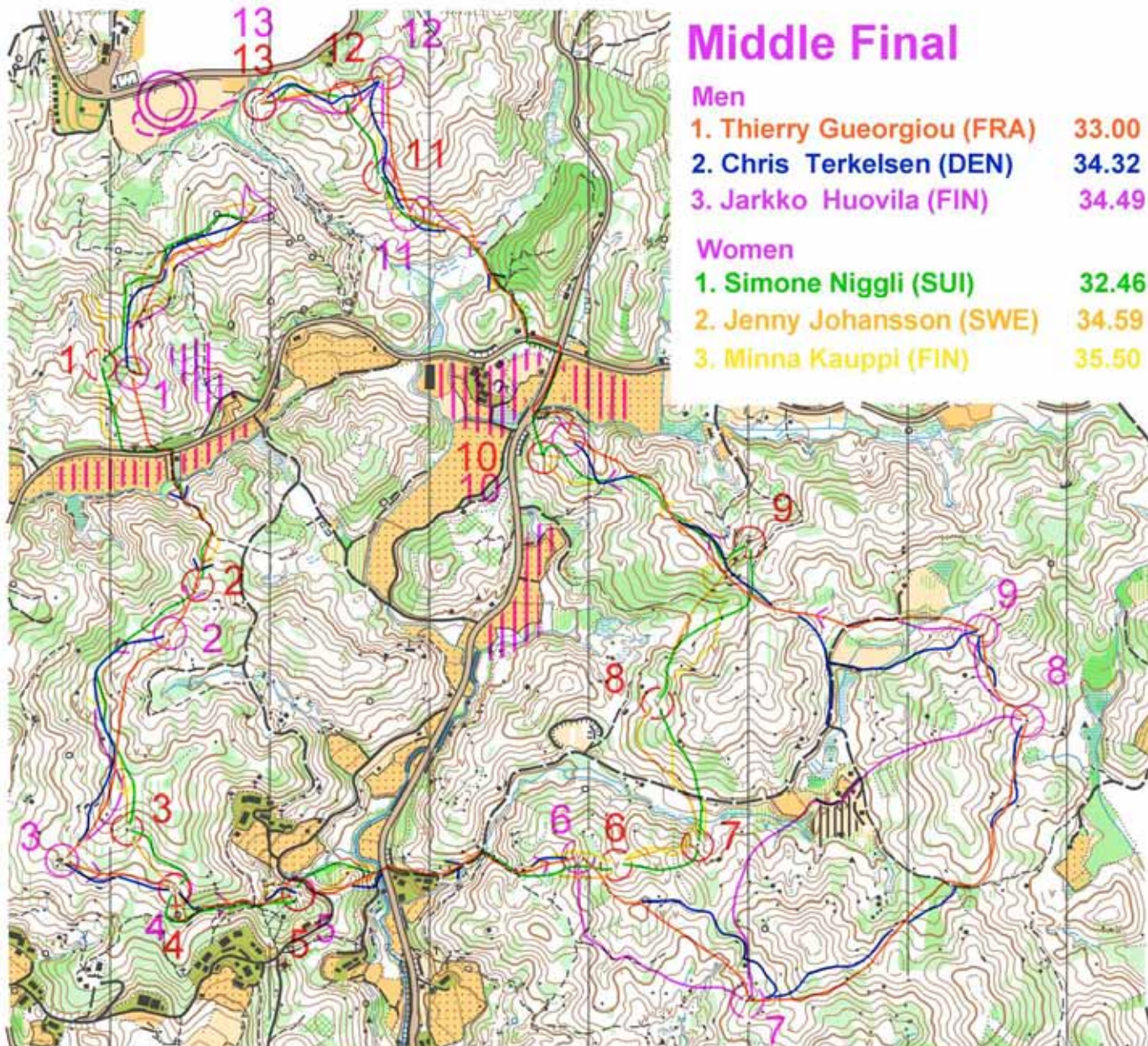
The toughest course ahead

With 12.9 km/925m for men and 8.8km/635m for women, the Long distance will definitely be the toughest course in World Champs history. The enormous climb has meant it is the shortest in the history of the World Championships and, accordingly, we can expect the km rates will also be the slowest in the history.

Beer Worth the Bet

The expected winning time in the men's class, according to the Technical Director of WOC 2005 Shin Murakoshi, should be 91 minutes or less. However, the IOF Senior Event Advisor Tony Thornley is sceptical and thinks it will be more. He bet Shin a beer. If the winner in the men's class goes under 91 minutes, Shin will get a beer from Tony Thornley; if not Shin will be the one who will have to buy the bottle.

Some minutes past noon we shall know who won the bet.



Middle Final

Men	
1. Thierry Gueorgiou (FRA)	33.00
2. Chris Terkelsen (DEN)	34.32
3. Jarkko Huovila (FIN)	34.49
Women	
1. Simone Niggli (SUI)	32.46
2. Jenny Johansson (SWE)	34.59
3. Minna Kauppi (FIN)	35.50

The WOC 2005 pages have been brought to you by:



INDEPENDENT INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE

www.orienteeringtoday.com