



THE 2021 HERO DOLOMITES: THE FAVOURITES OF THE TOUGHEST MOUNTAIN BIKE MARATHON IN THE WORLD

On 12 June 2021, the eleventh edition of the much-awaited BMW HERO Südtirol Dolomites will kick off. Some of the most renowned off-road marathon names will take part, including world champion Leonardo Paez, Alban Lakata and Urs Huber as well as Ariane Lühti, Blaza Pintaric and Katazina Sosna.

Hashtag: #MTBMarathonSeries #HERO #HEROSeries #HERODolomites

Less than a week to go: the eleventh edition of the **2021 BMW HERO Südtirol Dolomites** is just around the corner. The toughest mountain bike marathon in the world will feature the crème de la crème on **12 June**: an edition which represents new beginnings and which will take place in line with all the measures required by the times we live in.

Prepare to see some of the best athletes of the international off-road cycling scene take place on the starting line on the second Saturday of June in Selva di Val Gardena.



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The favourites: the men's starting line

The men will race on the now iconic 86 km and 4,500 hm route. **Leonardo Paez (Colombia), Giant Polimedical Team**, knows this route well. The 2019 and 2020 World Marathon Champion also won the BMW HERO Südtirol Dolomites six times, and was the first to have gone down in history as the winner of the debut edition of the 2020 HERO Dubai, a stage part of the international HERO Series circuit. Another marathon aficionado is **42-year-old Alban Lakata (Austria), Team Bulls**: a three-time World Marathon Champion, winning his second title in 2015 in the Dolomites during the HERO's edition hosting the World

Championships. On top of that, he also boasts a further four silver medals at the World Championships.



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Urs Huber (Switzerland), Team Bulls flag bearer, is the winner of the Andalusia Bike Race on 17 May 2021, the opening stage of the UCI Mountain Bike Marathon Series of which the BMW HERO Südtirol Dolomites will be the second stage. He returns to the HERO, as he stepped onto the HERO Dolomites podium three times (2014, 2018, and 2019) but never placed first.

Germany is also someone to look out for: **Team Bulls, represented by Martin Frey and Simon Schneller**. The latter is currently ranked third in the UCI Marathon Series 2021 world ranking with 537 points. And then **Daniel Gesimayr**,

Team Union RV Dornbirn, Diego Alfonso Arias Cuervo, Team Giant Polimedical and Paez' teammate. Italy is also well represented, counting on the presence of **Tony Longo, Top Race Team ASD**, and **Samuele Porro, Team Easy Infinity, who won a bronze medal at the 2019 World Marathon Championships 2019**, and who debuted this season by placing fifth during the Mediterranean Epic in Spain.

The favourites: the women's starting line

An amazing starting line among the women who will compete for the title of HERO 2021 on the 60 km and 3,200 hm route.

Switzerland has a long-standing tradition in off-road cycling, and it shows:

Ariane Lühti, Team Salusmed, won the bronze medal at the 2020 Marathon World Championships and is the current leader of the UCI MTB Marathon Series world ranking.

However, she will have to watch out, because **Blaza Pintaric (Slovenia)** is hot on her heels, aiming for the top step on the podium after her third place at the 2018 BMW HERO Südtirol Dolomites and fourth in 2019. Just like Paez, Pintaric won the first edition of the 2020 HERO Dubai.

Katuzina Sosna, born in Lithuania but now an Italian citizen, is full of determination. Representing the **Torpedo Südtirol International MT Team**, she is currently third in the UCI MTB Marathon Series world ranking and aims to be first.

Ramona Forchini is conspicuous by her absence. She is the current World Champion and will not be able to take part in the grid at the HERO Dolomite as she will be busy competing at the UCI XCO World Cup in Austria. However, she has already confirmed her attendance on 29 October 2021 at the 2021 HERO Dubai.

An international edition

The A-list of off-road which will catapult the 2021 BMW HERO Südtirol Dolomites to an international level. This visibility will be highlighted during the live broadcast of the HERO **across the globe in 53 countries and 5 continents** and on the most important cycling websites such as Global Cycling Network and Pinkbike.

For further information visit www.herodolomites.com

Organising Committee

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