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42 km of Mont-Blanc: a spectacular finale for Davide Magnini and Joyline Chepngeno + *Duo étoilé*

Newsletter June 29 2025

This Sunday morning, the legendary 42 km of the Mont-Blanc Marathon delivered a breathtaking conclusion to three exceptional days of trail running in Chamonix. Regarded as one of the most demanding and beautiful mountain marathons in the world, it gathered some of the sport's biggest names at the starting line, ready to take on a stunning course. At 6:45 a.m., the elite women kicked things off, followed at 7:15 a.m. by the men and the rest of the 2,250 participants. An early start for a tough challenge: a rolling section through the Chamonix valley, followed by the climb to the Aiguillette des Posettes, then a technical section between Vallorcine and La Flégère, and finally, the descent into the heart of Chamonix

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In the men's race... Davide Magnini's comeback, Raoul Raus surprises all

The men's race delivered a suspenseful storyline. Ukrainian road specialist **Vitaliy Shafar** set a strong early pace, leading up to the Aiguillette des Posettes before being overtaken by a trio: **Ezekiel Rutto (KEN)**, **Thomas Roach**, and **Thomas Cardin**.

After Vallorcine, **Rutto** looked headed for victory. 5th in 2024, familiar with the terrain, he attacked confidently. But the climb to La Flégère proved too much: he cracked, started walking, and left the door open.

Enter **Belgian Raoul Raus**. Unknown to the public and not among the favorites, he shook up the global hierarchy. He steadily passed his rivals, even taking the lead at La Flégère. Despite a **heavy fall** and a **bleeding head injury**, he courageously held onto second place on the descent.

But the masterstroke belonged to **Davide Magnini**. Sitting **6th in Vallorcine with a 4-minute delay**, the Italian launched a textbook comeback. A winner here in 2019, he knew every turn. He overtook the field after La Flégère and blazed down the final descent to claim victory in **3H42'55"** (11.9 km/h average), **with over 3 minutes to spare**—a triumphant return after two injury-plagued years, greeted at the finish by 90 km winner **Théo Detienne**, champagne in hand. Both deliver a double win for the event's new title partner, New Balance!

Frenchman Thomas Cardin took 3rd, continuing his rise. Winner of the **23 km in 2024**, he now earns a podium on the main event. Rutto, despite a dramatic fall, bravely finishes 4th.

Podium reactions

Davide Magnini (ITA) – 1st:

"It was really tough from the start. My legs were sore, the first section was too fast for me, and the descent to Vallorcine was a nightmare. I was far behind but managed to come back. I stuck to my pace, listened to my body. During the climb to La Flégère, I started closing the gap. I couldn't even stop to drink at the stream, but I found the strength to descend well. I twisted my ankle, but giving up 3 km from the finish was out of the question. I crossed the line completely empty, but so happy. Winning again after 2019 is such a joy. Time to recover now!"

Raoul Raus (BEL) – 2nd:

"The goal was to finish among the top, but 2nd was unexpected—I wasn't considered a contender. I knew I was in good shape, but wasn't sure I could handle a full marathon. I don't train much, and with this heat, I had doubts. We all suffered, especially on the last climb to La Flégère—everyone was almost at a standstill. I fell at the start of the downhill and had lots of cramps in that section. I'm happy with my race, though not fully satisfied. I was leading at La Flégère, and normally, downhill is my strength. This gives me strong motivation to come back next year for revenge."

Thomas Cardin (FRA) – 3rd:

"No frustration at all, I'm really proud of my performance. Of course, you aim to win, but I managed despite struggling in the second half, due to heat-induced cramps. I kept hydrating and cooling off in streams. It's rare to run at this intensity in such heat—your body pays the price. But I held on, managed the pain, and finished when at one point I thought of giving up. That's why we come to Chamonix—to push ourselves, just like thousands of amateurs do. After years on 40 km formats, I'm now tempted to go longer—maybe try the 90 km next year."

Men's Rankings

1. **Davide MAGNINI** (ITA), 03:42:55 – New Balance
2. **Raoul RAUS** (BEL), 03:46:00 – New Balance
3. **Thomas CARDIN** (FRA), 03:46:29 – Kiprun
4. **Ezekiel RUTTO** (KEN), 03:50:25 – Milimani Runners Salomon
5. **Valentin MARCHON** (SUI), 03:51:17 – Salomon DACH

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In the women's race... Joyline Chepngeno dominates, Judith Wyder rockets down



From the early kilometers, Kenya's **Joyline Chepngeno** set the pace. She opened a 5-minute gap on her pursuers, **Naomi Lang** and **Fabiola Conti**, and kept the lead through Aiguillette des Posettes—although the descent slightly narrowed the margin.

Mid-race, Conti surged back with a smooth rhythm but faded in the final sections. On the Béchar climb, Lang reclaimed second place. Meanwhile, 2024 winner **Judith Wyder** of Switzerland, lurking behind, was preparing her charge.

At La Flégère, Chepngeno led by over 7 minutes. But Wyder launched an attack on the final descent. On this technical terrain, she flew, slicing the gap with incredible ease. She finished just 1 minute and 8 seconds behind Chepngeno—a legendary finale. Remarkably, both women share a touching detail: each is a mother of two. Naomi Lang, second most of the race, was passed in the final kilometers but completed a beautiful podium.

The reactions on the podium

Joyline Chepngeno (KEN) – 1st:

"The race was very hard, but I gave everything! At the beginning, I didn't want to go out front—it was my first 42 km race, a long distance. I knew I could manage the first 30 km, but following Judith, last year's winner, wasn't smart. So I stayed in the pack to observe. Around the 13th km, I felt the pace was too slow, so I went for it while still feeling strong. I never thought I could win. I'm very happy!"

Judith Wyder (SUI) – 2nd:

"It was an intense day. I've had a hamstring issue lately and felt pain early on. I kept questioning whether I should continue—I was always on edge. But I thought of my daughters (5 and 7), waiting at La Flégère. That gave me a huge boost to keep going. Once there, I knew a long descent followed—my specialty (if my legs held!). I had no idea where the others were, so I gave it my all. No regrets—Joyline was stronger today. I'm

proud of my race, it was a great battle. I also love the atmosphere here in Chamonix—it's such a beautiful place, accessible by train, with a strong community vibe. I can come with my family, and the event feels both iconic and welcoming. The organization is top-notch."

Naomi Lang (ENG) – 3rd:

"Honestly, I didn't expect this. It wasn't a clear goal, but I've been working on getting into rhythm from the start. That feeling of being in the race early it was a first for me. I felt good at the start, lifted by the atmosphere. I was here to enjoy the experience, and I think I performed really well. That gives me confidence moving forward. The climb to La Flégère was tough, especially in the heat, which I don't handle well. The technical terrain required full focus, but those challenges push me. Before the race, many advised me to be patient—not to go out too fast—and that really helped. I managed to keep my pace in the last climbs, and I still had speed at the end. It was hard, but I loved going all out until the finish."

Women's Rankings

1. **Joyline CHEPNGENO** (KEN), 04:15:20 – Milimani Runners Salomon
2. **Judith WYDER** (SUI), 04:16:28 – Hoka / Redbull
3. **Naomi LANG** (ENG), 04:17:43 – Salomon
4. **Rosa LARA FELIU** (ESP), 04:18:33 – Compressport
5. **Fabiola CONTI** (ITA), 04:18:53 – Otso / Mud&Snow

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A word from Fred Comte, Director of the Chamonix Sports Club

A thrilling edition, live broadcasts, and youth in the spotlight

The 2025 Mont-Blanc Marathon concluded with a spectacular 42 km race under ideal but very hot weather. A field packed with elite athletes and dramatic twists delivered a thrilling finale.

"The 42 km was the climax of these three days. An intense battle, magnificent podiums—we've rarely seen such excitement over this distance."

A major shift this year was the introduction of **live broadcasting**, with top races streamed on official platforms, and for the first time, the marathon aired on **L'Équipe TV**.

"Our goal was to make the event accessible to as many people as possible."

This success also reflects collective commitment—especially from the **1,000 volunteers**, the backbone of the event, and partners like **New Balance**, now the title sponsor:

"Everything aligned perfectly this year. I want to thank everyone who supported us."

Another highlight was **The Young Race**, a new course for U18 and U20 runners, created with New Balance to showcase the future of trail running.

"We aimed to create a benchmark race for youth. The level was outstanding, with an international podium: a Spanish win for the men, and a British win for the women."

Duo Étoilé : Under the stars, side by side in the shadow of Mont-Blanc



At 7:30 p.m., as the evening cooled, **670 duos** set off from Place du Triangle de l'Amitié. The **1,340 trail runners** faced 21 km and 1,450 m of elevation gain/loss on a tough course that starts straight with the climb to Montenvers.

No time to warm up—the effort is immediate, legs burning early. Fortunately, the sunset over Mont-Blanc and cheering fans boost morale. At the Signal summit, the pace stabilizes as the runners traverse to Plan de l'Aiguille. The winding, technical descent then reshuffles the deck. The goal: stay sharp until the end.

Team “Couzinzins” (Baptiste Coatentiec & Roman Gallois) crossed the finish line first in 2h10'12”:

"It was an amazing race. We were in front row at the start and lucky to run in cooler conditions. The pace was fast from the start. What a privilege to run such a beautiful and technical course!"

Among the participants were **Marine Lorphelin** (Miss France 2013) and her partner **Stan Gruau**, finishing in 3h27'33”:

"We don't have the same level, Stan really pushed me. I'm happy I managed to keep up. The descent was very technical—some falls, shoes snagging on roots and rocks. The course was incredible. What's really sweet is that many of the runners are couples. You feel a lot of love and kindness among the participants—it adds a special layer to the experience."

Duo Rankings

Men's:

1. “Couzinzins” – Baptiste Coatentiec & Roman Gallois – 02:10:12

2. "Coco Sesam" – Mathias Bellaton & Martin Guyon – 02:16:57
3. "Eclopés" – Camille Ferre & Benjamin Levieux – 02:17:01

Women's:

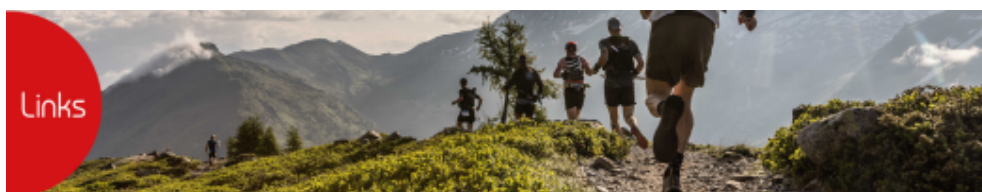
1. "Fringale" – Clara Gauthier & Anaïs Leroy – 02:43:54
2. "Fofolle" – Pascale Chambon & Eva Chambon – 03:20:32
3. "CorkEl" – Eloise Spowers & Cordelia Sears – 03:23:24

Mixed:

1. "Aixois" – Maxime Rueda & Valentine Bourgeois – 02:30:53
2. "Vifallure" – Louis Andrieux & Thibaut Herbet – 02:35:23
3. "Hugo & Marie" – Marie Genay & Hugo Jacquot – 02:43:13

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