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Kenyan victories in the 23 km of Mont-Blanc: "the historic race" since 1979 & Vertical Kilometer

Marathon of the Mont-Blanc 2025

Results, pictures, report

Newsletter June 28, 2025

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The iconic race of the Marathon: the 23 km of Mont-Blanc



Kiplimo and Kiplagat, the Kenyans from far away shaking up the mountain scene

Just a few days ago, they were virtually unknown - and for good reason: Nashon Kiplimo and Faith Kiplagat had never left their home country. Members of the Milimani Runners training group supported by Julien Lyon and the Salomon team, they were finally granted a visa, after two rejections, thanks to the persistence and support of their team, along with help from the Marathon of the Mont-Blanc organizers.

Nothing had prepared them for what they were about to discover: snow, mountain tunnels, alpine peaks, and even... flying in an airplane. Faith Kiplagat had only ever raced once before arriving in Chamonix. Both runners came into completely unfamiliar territory, but with talent waiting to be revealed. And the results speak for themselves !

In the Alpine setting, they showcased their climbing ability and ease on technical terrain. Kiplimo claimed a commanding victory in the men's 23 km of Mont-Blanc race, while Faith Kiplagat dominated the women's race in style.

Men's Race Recap

At the start, Dylan Ribeiro took charge and set a strong pace up to Montroc, where a lead group of six athletes emerged. After the Béchar descent, the selection began: only four remained at the front — Ribeiro, Simon Paccard, Thomas Butez, and Nashon Kiplimo.

At that point, Kiplimo made his move, dropping his breakaway companions and soaring into the lead. Behind him, Butez and Paccard kept up the chase, while Dylan Ribeiro and Alberto Varela lurked just behind the leading trio.

It was near La Flégère that Simon Paccard launched a decisive acceleration, breaking away from Butez and securing second place. From there, the podium was set: Kiplimo crossed the finish line solo with an impressive average speed of **11.9 km/h**, followed by the ever-solid Paccard and Butez in third.

Women's Race Recap

The women's race played out with remarkable clarity. Faith Kiplagat took control from the opening kilometers. Only one runner managed to keep her pace: South African Bianca Tarboton, who held on to a strong second place all the way to the finish, limiting the time gap.

Behind the leading duo, the fight for third unfolded later in the race. It was in the climb toward La Flégère, after kilometer 15, that Spain's Greta Garcia Moran made her move. She overtook her rivals and secured the final step on the podium.

Top 3 – Men's 23 km

1. **Nashon KIPLIMO** – 2h02'41"
2. **Simon PACCARD** – 2h04'21"
3. **Thomas BUTEZ** – 2h05'12"

Top 3 – Women's 23 km

1. **Faith KIPLAGAT** – 2h28'09"
2. **Bianca TARBOTON** – 2h31'46"
3. **Greta GARCIA MORAN** – 2h40'04"

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A shot of verticality with the Vertical Kilometer



At just 3.8 km, it's the shortest race of the weekend... and yet it delivered plenty of surprises for the 700 runners who took off from the Place du Triangle de l'Amitié in a time trial format. While the course began relatively gently, it quickly reared up under the Planpraz gondola, culminating in a final third that was steep, exposed, and equipped with cables and ladders — a dramatic finish just before the summit.

It was Italian runner **Thedy Daniel** who triumphed, clocking **36 minutes and 54 seconds**, nearly a full minute ahead of his closest competitors. **Lucien Mermillon** and **Stéphane Tempier** finished just 10 seconds apart — though they never raced head-to-head, due to the staggered start format.

In the women's race, France's **Christel Dewalle**, a Vertical Kilometer specialist and the defending champion, claimed victory in **42'31"**, finishing 5'37" behind Thedy. A strong second place went to **Hillary Gerardi**, the Chamonix-based American runner. Known for her Mont-Blanc speed ascent record in 2023 and her role as a live commentator during this year's Marathon du Mont-Blanc, Hillary couldn't resist toeing the line for one of the races herself!

Top 3 – Men

1. **Thedy DANIEL** – 36'54"
2. **Lucien MERMILLON** – 37'45"
3. **Stéphane TEMPIER** – 37'55"

Top 3 – Women

1. **Christel DEWALLE** – 42'31"
2. **Hillary GERARDI** – 44'41"
3. **Laia MONTROYA GARCIA** – 45'38"

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