

Denmark Wins Both JEC Relay Races, Switzerland Gets the Cup

Today the Junior European Cup in Germany ended with an extremely exciting relay competition that left the decision about the winner of the nations ranking open until the very last metres. Up to ten teams fought both in the women's and in the men's classes on the final loop of the third leg for the first places on the slopes on both sides of Cunnersdorfer Bach stream. The running order of the top teams changed every minute for the duration of the whole race – again and again there were new leading runners at the radio control, at the spectator route and at the changeover making the excitement amongst competitors and spectators in the finish arena tangible till the end.

In the morning it looked like it would become a golden October day, yet shortly after the mass start of the 24 women's and 31 men's teams a fine drizzly rain was setting in that didn't stop for the whole duration of the competition. Nevertheless, the running men and women offered performances which left even the experienced speakers Andreas Haldi and Jan Birnstock using countless superlatives. Especially a steep slope with many rocks and stones in the middle part of the courses made it possible to win - or loose - valuable seconds or even minutes. Therefore, for a long time no team succeeded in breaking away from its opponents. Only at the end of the third leg, the final runners Emma Klingenberg and Søren Bobach were able to open up the decisive gap to their pursuers and thus to secure the Danish team a surprising double victory. With that, Emma Klingenberg (W18), who won three gold medals, is also the most successful athlete of the JEC weekend in Germany. Even though in the nations ranking the Danish team came very close to the best placed teams from Switzerland, Norway and Czech Republic and despite of their excellent relay results they were not able to make any changes to the rostrum places of the Junior European Cup. Because of the most homogenous team performance, this year's cup is taken home by the team from Switzerland.

Women (3 x 4.5km / 200m climb / 16C)

1st Denmark 1 (Ida Bobach, Signe Klinting, Emma Klingenberg) 1:40:03

2nd Switzerland 1 (Fiona Kirk, Isabelle Feer, Julia Gross) 1:40:29

3rd Czech Republic 1 (Tereza Novotna, Vendula Horcickova, Jana Knapova) 1:41:38

Men (3 x 6.5km / 300m climb / 20C)

1st Denmark 1 (Søren Schwartz Sørensen, Marius Thrane Ødum, Søren Bobach) 1:53:53

2nd Switzerland 1 (Niklaus Rey, Florian Howald, Matthias Kyburz) 1:55:34

3rd Norway 1 (Jo Forseth Indgaard, Hakon Westergard, Eskil Kinneberg) 1:55:45

Junior European Cup Nations Ranking

1st Switzerland 102 points

2nd Norway 133 points

3rd Czech Republic 151 points

Website: <http://jec2009.de/>