



Sam Pilgrim did it again!

Vienna, April 4th, 2011 – Around 70 riders from 15 nations gathered on the city square in Vienna this past weekend to try and take the throne at the 6th edition of the Vienna Air King. This year, the contest in Vienna was once again the kick-off event for the Freeride Mountain Bike (FMB) World Tour. Never has Vienna seen more high-profile riders at one competition and the level of tricks showed that during the 2011 season we can expect the bar to be raised. Once again, Sam Pilgrim (UK) prevailed against the competition and takes home the second victory in a row and third overall from the Vienna Air King. Even though Yannick Granieri (FRA/2. place) and Greg Watts (USA/3. place) tried everything to take the crown from Pilgrim – in the end nobody was able to push him off the throne. Today the first official highlight clip went live: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c1IZAoGRf1U>

About 120,000 visitors overall strolled over the city square in Vienna and were not disappointed at the first event of the FMB World Tour. During the finals on Sunday, the riders pulled tricks out of their sleeves that not only the spectators were impressed with. Judges and the riders themselves all agreed that the level of tricks was higher this year than it had ever been. Obviously, the level of tricks at a contest grows in direct relation to the jury's demands – which is why Sam Pilgrim had to give all he had to make it to the first place during the three runs out of which two counted towards the result. He showed a sick trick at every jump and was able to convince the jury with his consistently excellent performance. From underneath the Red Bull arch he shot into the line with a backflip tabletop and followed it up with a backflip nohand. Next up was a 720 and to finish up a super clean 360 tailwhip.

After Yannick Granieri only qualified for the finals because Andi Wittmann could not ride, a smooth third run won the French athlete second place. He entered the course with a truck driver off the starting tower followed by a backflip tailwhip at the second jump and the next 360 was swiftly trumped by a 360 tailwhip on the last hit. A truck driver was also Greg Watts' first trick, which he followed with a backflip barspin. Add a 360 x-up to that along with a backflip tailwhip and you have a third place – even if Greg was in pain from a banged up shoulder after crashing during the Panasonic Best Trick Competition. Martin Soderstrom, the Vienna Air King winner 2009 had to be satisfied with a fourth place this year.

The Panasonic Best Trick Competition is famous for the unbelievable tricks that the world's best riders show when they meet in Vienna once a year. And so it was that you heard the sound of jaws dropping even over the music at the things you can do with a mountain bike. In the end, Andreu Lacondeguy convinced the jury with an extremely clean double backflip that he made look completely effortless. His runs during the





qualifiers may not have gotten him into the finals but he rocked the entire Best Trick jam session and took home prize money plus a Panasonic 3D camcorder. Tyler McCaul pulled a never-seen-before 360 double downside whip out of the bag and was rewarded with second place. A 360 tailwhip at the step down landed Martin Soderstrom safely on third place.

French rookie Mehdi Gani surprised everyone this year when he rode from the pre-qualifiers straight to fifth place. At the same time he also won a wild card for the legendary Red Bull District Ride for which the first four riders already had a ticket because of their 2010 FMB World Tour ranking. Already during Friday's pre-qualifying it was clear that the riders did not hibernate over the winter months; aside from Mehdi Gani there were several other young talents. Russian Pavel Alyokihin Vishnevi is definitely one of them – which he demonstrated when he took first place for the pre-qualifiers. Sunday night then it was clear from which position the riders will start into the biking season and FMB World Tour 2011:

1. Sam Pilgrim (GBR/NS Bikes)
2. Yannick Granieri (FRA/Commencal)
3. Greg Watts (USA/Haro)
4. Martin Söderström (SWE/Specialized)
5. Mehdi Gani (FRA/Probikeshop)
6. Sam Reynolds (GBR/DMR Bikes)
7. Tomas Genon (BEL/UMF)
8. Szymon Godziek (POL/Dartmoor Bikes)
9. Bartek Obukowicz (POL/NS Bikes)
10. Pavel Vishnevi (RUS/Blackmarket Bikes)
11. Antony Rocci (FRA/Rick the World)
12. Tomas Zejda (CZE/Dartmoor Bikes)
13. Jakub Venc (CZE/Rose Versand)
14. Niki Leitner (AUT/YT Industries)
15. John Alm Högman (SWE/Scott Bikes)

Panasonic Best Trick Competition:

1. Andreu Lacondeguy (ESP/Mondraker)
2. Tyler McCaul (USA/GT Bikes)
3. Greg Watts (USA/Haro)





Finally it is safe to say that the Vienna Air King as well as the ARGUS Bike Festival was once again a complete success. Around 120,000 spectators visited the festival and enjoyed the hot weather as much as hot bike action.

For further info visit the official Vienna Air King Homepage: <http://www.vienna-air-king.at> Vienna Air King on facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/viennaairking>

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