

PRESS RELEASE

ALTA BADIA

MARATONA DLES DOLOMITES-ENEL, A TASK FINALLY ACCOMPLISHED

The 34th edition of the Maratona dles Dolomites – Enel, dedicated to the topic of Art and finally back after two years, was held today. Fabio Cini and Marta Maltha won the long course of 138 kilometres and over 4,000 m altitude gain in the Ladin Dolomites.

It was supposed to be a rainy, cold, and gloomy day but at 6.30 a.m. a pale sun, which gradually became brighter and brighter, welcomed the 5,615 cyclists ready to start the 34th edition of Maratona dles Dolomites-Enel, this year dedicated to Art. A smaller number than usual, due to the reasons that we are aware of, but all perfectly monitored: all those participating and collaborating in the Maratona, including the thousands of volunteers who made the race possible and successful, had a green pass because they had either been vaccinated against Covid-19, recovered from it or received a negative test result after Thursday. The Maratona was therefore held in complete safety. This was a fundamental requirement that the organizers had strongly insisted upon when, three months ago, they decided that the race could take place in full.

Indeed, this year more than ever before, the Maratona can be compared to a work of art, starting from the magnificence of the Dolomites, this morning in all their splendour, to the installations along the route, and the riders who are veritable performers, with their rhythmic dynamism that would have delighted Balla, Boccioni, Depero and why not, Schifano: artists for whom speed was a source of inspiration.

“What is art? It is a feeling that opens us up and moves us. It is impossible not to love art, because it would mean not loving life. When people and mountain meet, silent dialogues begin. Or perhaps Socratic ones. This is art. May it be a nice artistic ride, during which we find ourselves while meeting others, pedalling up and down the passes of the Dolomites, always with a smile”.

This is the message and wish of Michil Costa, president of the Organizing committee of the Maratona and champion of a form of tourism that is less subject to the dominance of motor vehicles and more oriented towards protecting nature, that nowadays is often disfigured. And the Maratona, with the roads closed to traffic, is a concrete example of the way in which the Dolomites, and not only them, can be experienced, leaving behind the pressure of traffic, noise and intensive exploitation.

The racers, energized by the presence of the sun and by the end of an abstinence that lasted too long, started at full speed, determined to tackle the 138 kilometres of the long course and the more than four thousand meters of altitude gain with all their enthusiasm and energy.

SSD COMITATO MARATONA DLES DOLOMITES SRL

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Obviously not all racers venture on the long course since they can choose between the three courses that have characterized the Maratona dles Dolomites-Enel for years, and that wind over the legendary Campolongo, Pordoi, Sella, Gardena, Falzarego, Giau and Valparola passes of the Dolomites, all closed to traffic. In addition to the Long course of 138 km and 4,230 m altitude gain, there is a Middle course of 106 km and 3,130 m altitude gain and the Sella Ronda course, 55 km and 1,780 m altitude gain.

Once again this year the Maratona was broadcasted live on the RAI 2 TV channel that followed the race from the start to the arrival of the first athletes of the long course. From 6 a.m. to 12 p.m. images showed not only the thousands of racers on the roads of the Dolomites but also the spectacular scenario surrounding the competition that, as is often the case, was settled on the Giau pass. It was on those legendary ramps that Fabio Cini attacked the small group of the best racers, including among others the multiple winner Tommaso Elettrico, who won three times in the past, and Vincenzo Pisani, who was always one of the top race leaders. A brave move because the Falzarego and Valparola passes were still to be climbed before the finish line. But Fabio Cini did not hesitate for a moment and crossed the finish line solo, in the amazing time of 4h 31' 2", almost five minutes less than the previous winner Tommaso Elettrico. Vincenzo Pisani was second and Paolo Castelnovo third after more than five minutes.

A happy Fabio Cini declared at the finish line: *"I sprinted solo at the Giau pass and it was a long way to get here alone, with many thoughts crossing my mind, but in the end I made it. It went really well"*. It was the classic feeling of the man alone in the lead, dissolving into a big smile at the finish line. *"I handled the situation, I used my head, I behaved like a good boy as people say in Tuscany - Cini is from Colle Val d'Elsa – and now I enjoy my victory, after the second place in the last edition"*. Cini started cycling less than ten years ago and has always improved his performance, year after year. *"I started seven, eight years ago. I played soccer before. But my victory is the victory of all of us: five, six thousand people who all find the time by taking it away from their family, from their leisure time and we go back to work the following day, some of us in a factory, others in an office. This must be a joy, a joy we all share, because we are all amateurs"*.

Women racers also performed remarkable feats thanks to Marta Maltha, from the Netherlands, who finally managed to win and cross the finish line solo after finishing second three times in the past. *"This is incredible. I am more than happy. I love this race, it is so beautiful and you compete in a great place. I really wanted to win at least once"*. Her time is amazing: 5h 17' 17", five minutes less than the winner of the previous edition. *"During the last two editions the Giau pass was fatal for me but today I was determined, I told myself to continue pedalling without thinking too much and now I am here, first at the finish line"*.

The Middle course was won by Pietro Dutto, followed by Francesco Avanzo (second) and Luigi Salimbeni (third), and by Lisa De Cesare (winner) followed by Olga Cappiello (second) and Chiara Turchi (third). The winners of the Sella Ronda course are Davide Ferrari, Beniamino Desiderio and Pietro Andreoletti and Veronica Alessandrini, Elisa Della Rosa, and Vera Nicolussi Leck.

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It has been a very special edition, unthinkable until three months ago and therefore even more impressive. But now it is time to stop looking look back and start thinking about the next edition, dedicated to the flora, that certainly will bloom again under the majestic peaks of the Dolomites, UNESCO World Heritage Site.



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