



ANNA COMET CLOSER TO FINAL VICTORY IN THE EVEREST TRAIL RACE

Fifth consecutive victory for the runner of The Elements team, who tomorrow can achieve a hat-trick of victories after winning the 2014 and 2015 editions. The Spaniard Miguel Heras claims in the queen stage and finishes second after the Nepalese Suman Kulung who maintains the leadership.

The long awaited and feared queen stage has arrived for the riders of the 9th edition of the Everest Trail Race by The Elements. A total of 32 km from Phakding to Tyangboche with a positive gradient of 2,850 metres and 1,650 downhill metres. And the most important thing: more than half of the stage on the line or above 4,000 m in height. A fact that without any doubt has tested the capabilities of the participants, even more so at these heights of the race, where the forces are already in reserve and the tank almost empty.

The stage starting in the town of Phakding, with no visible marks on the terrain as has happened in the last two stages of the Everest Trail Race, has forced the riders to keep a close eye on the race Road Book and given that the organisation has taken the stage to areas with little traffic, a further factor of difficulty has been added to the day. The first challenge was the ascent to the Tibetan settlement of Kumjung. It was 1,100 metres of positive gradient for 14 km, to then face the ascent to the second checkpoint in the small village of Mong-la, which already placed the runners fully in the 4,000 metres of altitude. From that moment until the finish line the race has been maintained at this complex level where everything costs a little more. After the

second checkpoint, the participants have entered an area only traveled by porters and caravans of yaks to the third obligatory point of passage. The riders, lacking in strength due to the hardness of the stage as well as the fatigue accumulated in the previous 4 stages and the more than 17,000 metres of accumulated unevenness in their legs, have faced the last kilometres up to the finish line located in the town of Tyangboche. Almost the whole stage has gone by with some exceptional witnesses that have undoubtedly helped to overcome the hardness of the route: Everest, Lhotse, Ama Dablam, Tamsenku and Kangtega have contemplated with all their greatness the development of the stage.

Miguel Heras' spectacular recovery

The one who was second in the first stage has found his place in the 5th day and has arrived again in the second place in the queen stage. The victory for the fifth consecutive day has been signed by the local athlete Suman Kulung, who has shown the control he has on the field as it is the garden of his home in the Himalayas of Nepal. Extraordinary recovery of Miguel Heras who maintains the fourth place in the general classification. The third position of the penultimate trip of this Everest Trail Race by The Elements has been for Hanz Smedsrod. The Norwegian is fighting a nice battle with the Catalan Gerard Morales (The Elements) who was finishing just over two minutes and continues second overall.

In the female category the Catalan athlete Anna Comet (The Elements) was again the first woman to enter the finish line, but she also completed the TOP5 in the absolute general classification. The problems in the backpack suffered by Núria Domínguez (Tuga) before the start did not prevent her from reaching the finish line second, feeling very comfortable and highlighting the spectacular environment and the route. His rival Manu Vilaseca, with whom they are competing for the second final position, crossed the finish line 3 minutes later. Vilaseca declared at his arrival that the 5th stage was a day to which he had a lot of respect for the demand and because "last year I suffered a lot. This year I took it more calmly and I tried to listen to my body". The Brazilian remains second in the general classification.

On the finish line the participants couldn't contain their emotions. The tiredness in the legs is evident and also the psychological wear. Life in the camp, altitude, being away from home,

loneliness during the stage effort, uncertainty, the struggle against one's own limits, and everything that each participant carries inside, exploded at the Tyangboche finish line where some participants were moved. Tomorrow last stage of the Everest Trail Race by The Elements between Tyangboche and Lukla with 29 km of course and 4,572 meters of accumulated slope.

