

Ehrle strikes back as France's takes a one-two in U20 up and downhill mountain races



France's Basile Astier and Germany's Julia Ehrle celebrated comfortable victories in action-packed U20 up-and-downhill mountain races on the last day of the European Athletics Off-Road Championships in Ljubljana-Kamnik on Sunday (7 June).

Only three seconds after the starting gun was fired, the first dramatic scenes occurred when a group of runners stumbled and fell at the first metres of the men's U20 up and downhill mountain race.

"There is always pushing and shoving at the junior races," said Great Britain's Ewan Busfield. He was happy to get through and finished third after a very fast race out of the Kamnik streets up in the woods to the castle.

Again, the French runners dominated the field with Basile Astier securing a comfortable victory finishing the 6km race in 23:58, 39 seconds ahead of Yannick Memheld (24:37) and Busfield (24:55). "It was a good race, and I felt very strong," Astier said, wrapped up in the French tricolore with a radiant smile.

Memheld, who had already won gold in the U20 uphill race, was equally happy. "This is crazy. Four medals at my first European Championships," he summed up.

Beside his two individual medals, Memheld won another two gold medals in both team races as France extends their ascendancy on the medal table.



In the women's U20 race, Julia Ehrle from Germany struck back after her bronze medal as defending champion in the uphill race.

Ehrle finished in 28:21 minutes, 48 seconds ahead of Agota Szabo from Hungary (29:09) and Sofia Rubio (29:16). "I am really really happy with winning the gold medal today after bronze in the uphill."

The crucial section for Ehrle was the downhill. "I was in front already when we reached the peak of the course, but on the downhill I could widen the gap even more. I was flying down," added Ehrle.

Szabo and Rubio, on the other hand, were not happy with the downhill. "I like the uphill way better. The downhill was the hardest part of the race," said the individual silver medallist Szabo.

And Rubio agreed on that: "Also because I am not really good at the downhills."



Results

Men's U20 Up-and-Down Mountain Race

- 1/ Basile Astier (FRA) – 23:58
- 2/ Yannick Memheld (FRA) – 24:37
- 3/ Ewan Busfield (GBR) – 24:55

Women's U20 Up-and-Down Mountain Race

- 1/ Julia Ehrle (GER) – 28:21
- 2/ Ágota Szabó (HUN) – 29:09
- 3/ Sofia Rubio (ESP) – 29:16

Team Results

Women's U20 Team Competition

1. France
2. Spain
3. Switzerland

Men's U20 Team Competition

1. France
2. Italy
3. Great Britain

[Full Results](#)

Notes to Editors

About ITRA

The International Trail Running Association (ITRA) is a non-profit organisation dedicated to the development, promotion and ethical governance of trail running worldwide. ITRA supports athletes, races and national associations while helping safeguard the values and spirit of the sport.

About the 2026 European Off-Road Running Championships

The 2026 European Athletics Off-Road Running Championships are taking place in Ljubljana-Kamnik, Slovenia, from 5–7 June 2026. Organised by European Athletics and the local organising committee, the event will feature Europe's leading mountain and trail runners across uphill, up-and-down and trail running races.

ITRA is sharing this release in support of the official event communication. Event-specific media enquiries should be directed to the local organising committee contact below.

Official Website

<https://www.offroadrunning2026.si/>

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