



Ringer and Vrzalova win CrossAttack in Salzburg

Richard Ringer from Germany and Simona Vrzalova from Czech Republic are the winners of Wyndham CrossAttack in Salzburg, the first ever European Athletics Cross Country Permit Meeting in Austria. With the European Cross Country Championships in Samorin, Slovakia, on 10 December coming up, many runners seized the opportunity to speed up their game on a diverse course with some natural obstacles. Austria staged its European trials here which led to a fine national participation in the event that was held on the grounds of University Sports Centre of Salzburg-Rif.

In the men's race over 8.74 km Richard Ringer put in a decisive surge in the final stages to win in 26:35 minutes, 15 seconds ahead of David Nilsson from Sweden. The German has Bronze medals from the European Indoor Championships 2017 over 3,000 m and the European Outdoor Championships 2016 over 5,000 m to his credit and is ready to secure his spot on the German team for Samorin with a good race next weekend in Tilburg. "When I upped the pace, a gap developed quickly. I was able to hold on to the finish. It was a very good test for me", the 28-year-old said. Ringer was joined by David Nilsson as well as Austrians Andreas Vojta and Valentin Pfeil in the first half of the race. Nilsson, a two time participant in World Championship marathons, matched strides with Ringer until the last lap. He can build upon his performance in Salzburg to go all-in for another strong performance at the European Cross Country Championships where finished tenth in 2015. Austrian former Olympian and middle distance runner Andreas Vojta was happy with his third place in 27:07. He held off Jakub Zemanik (CZE / 27:10) and Elmar Engholm (SWE / 27:12) and currently top Austrian marathon runner Valentin Pfeil (27:17) by a few seconds.

From the beginning on Austrian Nada Pauer pushed the pace in the women's race over 6.49 km. A thrilling three-way fight emerged with Czech runner Simona Vrzalova and Sandrina Illes, another Austrian, following Pauer's steps. It was only at the finishing straight that 1,500 m specialist Vrzalova could gain some advantage. A World Championships participant in London 2017, the 29-year-old applied her track speed to take the victory in 22:47 minutes. "It was a great competition for all of us. I knew that I will be strong at the finish", she said. Pauer clocked 22:50 just ahead of her compatriot Illes, who finished third in 22:53.

Men's junior race over 6.49 km was won by Austrian Albert Kokaly in 20:34 minutes who clearly beat Hungarians Istvan Palkovits (21:05) and Marcell-Andras Kovacs (21:10). Lili-Anna Toth (16:08), Boglarka Mogor (16:48) and Tira Pavuk (17:00) celebrated an all Hungarian podium in the women's junior race over 4 km.

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