

## UTMB 2003

This year we had an unusually warm and sunny summer, hardly any days of rain: Ideal for any kind of outdoor activities (except maybe for kayaking or canyoning). I did a lot of running, some mountain biking and some rock climbing. Running went very well this summer, even though I picked the only days of this summer which were horribly cold and rainy for my biggest two competitions. Nevertheless, on the 70k Traunsee Marathon in July I improved more than 30 minutes on last year's time and end of August I participated in the Ultratrail du Mont Blanc with 153k and >7000m (approx. 24000 ft) of climb. In the latter there were 700 participants, 500 of which had registered for the full distance. After some stomach problems after around 50k which caused me to throw up and to spend some 10 minutes on the toilet everything improved and from the 60k mark onwards, I kept overtaking people, while not being overtaken myself by nobody for long. My sister and family who spent their holidays in nearby Switzerland had come and coached me from k70 onwards. Before the race I had figured out that if everything went well I might finish within 24 hours. However in previous 100 milers it took me about 2 hours more than my pre-race optimistic schedules. This time I was right on track for most of the race and moved up through the ranks. From k100 to 130 I dropped somewhat back, but could pick up my pace again on the last 20k, finishing in 23:37, 4th overall and 1st in my age group as well as first European runner (well behind a Nepali and 2 Americans). Thanks to my turning 40 this November I could run in the V1 age group (birth year 1963 and before) already in August. This was the first time ever I won anything in a race - isn't it good to turn older??

I'll attach the article of our local newspaper on the race, knowing that some of you have some German they might like to test! the others might just look at the pictures.

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