



2015-07-03 Anybody who thought that Tugulduur Tuulkhantai was going to play it safe on the first day of the 9th Genghis Khan MTB Adventure was pretty much mistaken. In his traditional no-holds-barred style, Tugu just crushed the opposition and as such expelled the bad spirits that had plagued him on two previous occasions of this 1st stage. He arrived solo with over two minutes advantage over a trio, while Germany's Chiara Eberle took the stage win in the women's.

It is the fifth career stage win for Tuulkhantai, and for sure he is in pole position now to finally also score the overall win this weekend. However, some of his competitors still sound keen to take him to battle. Evgenii Vitmanovskii, a talented Russian mountainbiker, argued he did not have a good day despite finishing third in the sprint against Bat -Erdene Naraankhuu and last year's champion Myagmarsuren Basaankhuu. In fact, Vitmanovskii was the first rider to enter the grassland after the half a lap of Nadamu square, the traditional starting venue of the stage race. Surprised by the immediate all-out offensive of Tuulkhantai was also Thailander Jantaraboon Kiangchaipaiphana. After a crash put him down to sixth place in today's stage, almost five minutes behind the Mongolian, Kiangchaipaiphana said that bad positioning at the starting line cost him the chance to follow Tuulkhantai in the lead. Basaankhuu admitted that his compatriot was very strong today.

China's Hu Hao finished in fifth place, in what was another strong showing of the Team Specialized rider. His countryman Sun Chengyi returned to Xiwuqi after a few years of absence with a remarkable ninth place today, not so far behind Hu Hao. Wang Lidong was the best of the King of the Grasslands participants, outsprinting Piers Touzel. Those who believed Wang Lidong would have a hard time defending his crown this year have already been proven wrong.

Overall, the level of competition is very high this year. Contenders such as Fraser Young, Pierre-Arnaud le Magnan and Alexey Chaklov all failed to get into the top ten today. This morning's time trial champion, Bernard Uhl, was last of a group of seven sprinting for eighth

place.

The women's race is also much stronger than ever before and had Chiara Eberle coming out on top, just like this morning. 2012 overall champion Solongo Tserenlham was second almost six minutes behind. Wang Xueli, last year's champion, had a great ride to finish third, well ahead of 2011 winner Bitbit Baby Marites Sotto, who missed a course sign and lost valuable time. The Filipino girl may need to aim for a stage win or a powerful showing on the 100km stage on Sunday to get back into contention for the top three. Last year's runner-up Veerle Buytaert also noticed the spike in overall performance level of the race as she came in tenth today.

The 9th Genghis Khan MTB Adventure began under a blue sky, which was a great and welcome contrast to the past few wet days in Xiwuqi. There was even very little wind, which led to record-breaking times on the classic 64km long stage. Tugulduur Tuulhangai completed the distance in 1:57, and his three chasers also still managed to stay below 2 hours! The next two stages have a little more hills and obstacles in them.

Full results

[Men](#)

[Women](#)

[KOG participants](#)

Top 10 Men (provisional)

1. T. Tuulhangai (MGL - Team Chiru Magura) 1:57:15
2. B. Naraankhuu (MGL - Team Attila) 1:59:24
3. E. Vitmanovskii (RUS - Team Chain Reaction Cycles) 1:59:24
4. M. Basaankhuu (MGL - Team Attila) 1:59:24

5. H. Hao (CHN - Team Specialized) 2:01:09
6. J. Kiangchaipaiphana (THA - Team Apa) 2:02:01
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8. T. Batsaikhan (MGL - Team Aldar) 2:06:37
9. R. Regis (FRA - Team Specialized) 2:06:41
10. S. Chengyi (CHN) 2:06:43
11. F. Young (CAN - Team Chiru Magura) 2:06:43
12. A. Erdenebat (MGL - Team Attila) 2:06:44
13. P.A. Le Magnan (FRA - Team Chiru-Magura) 2:06:46
14. B. Uhl (GER - team BMW) 2:06:57
15. Z. Guibao (CHN - Team Specialized) 2:08:58

Top 6 women (provisional)

1. C. Eberle (GER) 2:16:20
2. S. Tserenlham (MGL) 2:22:06
3. W. Xueli (CHN) 2:28:34
4. Q. Yongli (CHN) 2:40:27
5. O. Batbaatar (MGL) 2:41:06
6. B. Marites Sotto (PHI) 2:42:54

