



WONG HO CHUNG & LARA REYNOLDS WIN THE THIRD RACE IN THE 2018 4 DESERTS CHAMPIONSHIP IN ATACAMA DESERT OF CHILE

The 14th edition of the gruelling **250km / 155 mile Atacama Crossing** ultramarathon finished in the main square of San Pedro de Atacama in northern Chile. This is the third leg of the 2018 4 Deserts Ultramarathon Series which will conclude in Antarctica at The Last Desert in November.

Wong Ho Chung, a fireman from Hong Kong, was the overall winner in an impressive time of 24 hours and 20 minutes, **an incredible 5 hours ahead of second place** Takuya Wakaoka, 34, from **Japan**. Wong missed the course record, which was set in 2012, by less than one hour. Third place went to Christophe Santini from **France**. Notably, there were **nine nationalities represented in the Top 10** (Japan, France, Switzerland, New Zealand, Poland, Holland, Romania and Canada as well as Hong Kong) at this **truly international race**.

TOP 10 MEN

RANK	BIB	NAME	COUNTRY	AGE	TIME
1	107	WONG, Ho Chung	Hong Kong	31	24:20:56
2	100	WAKAOKA, Takuya	Japan	34	29:12:46
3	86	SANTINI, Christophe	France	47	30:51:53
4	7	BECKER, Maik	Switzerland	48	32:51:19
5	83	ROADLEY, Greg	New Zealand	44	33:42:19
6	27	DAOUDI, Sifedine	France	39	35:10:41
7	34	GAWRON, Michal	Poland	39	35:27:35
8	98	VAN SCHILT, Bart	Holland	40	35:39:08
9	35	GLIGOR, Andrei	Romania	41	35:55:48
10	41	HARRISON, Jamie	Canada	43	36:35:42

It was a hard fought race among the women with the leader changing nearly every stage. In the end it was **South African** Lara Reynolds who won the race after an impressive run on the Long March. Second place went to Victoria Connelly from the **United Kingdom** and 3rd place to Le Ping (Denise) from **China**. Among the Top 5 women, five countries were represented. 1st place team was from **Korea**.

TOP 5 WOMEN

RANK – Women	BIB	NAME	COUNTRY	AGE	TIME
1	82	REYNOLDS, Lara	South Africa	48	39:29:07
2	26	CONNELLY, Victoria	United Kingdom	37	40:07:29
3	61	LE, Ping (Denise)	China	39	41:33:32
4	68	LUBICS, Szilvia	Hungary	44	41:49:13
5	9	BELL, Jacquel	Australia	23	41:54:50



For Wong and Wakaoka, as well as thirteen others, the Atacama Crossing was another milestone in their bid to complete the **4 Deserts Grand Slam** in 2018 (running all 4 Deserts Ultramarathons in one year).

They will also be hoping for a chance to be crowned the 4 Deserts Champion 2018. The racer who has the lowest cumulative rank from each of the 4 Deserts Ultramarathons when they complete The Last Desert is crowned the 4 Deserts Champion. Wong's recent win in the Atacama Crossing, coupled with a win at the Gobi March and 2nd place at the Namib Race earlier this year, gives him 4 points and puts him as the **favourite to become the 4 Deserts Champion 2018** going into the race in Antarctica. His 2nd place rival in northern Chile, Wakaoka from Japan, is his closest competitor for the title.

First held in 2004, the Atacama Crossing 2018 was the 14th edition of the race on a nearly unchanged course. The six-stage race began on 30 September and over the past week, competitors from 36 countries endured intense heat, freezing nights and harsh terrain including water up to their thighs, salt flats that are like walking on coral, climbing soft sand dunes and long flat sections going on beyond the horizon in the driest desert in the world. They also had the Long March on Stage 5 which was a 79km / 49 mile stage! However, racers were rewarded with **stunning desert landscapes, running through narrow canyons** and **spectacular starry skies**.

For more information on the Atacama Crossing, have a look at: [RESULTS, PHOTOS, VIDEOS & BLOGS](#)

You can follow the final leg of the 4 Deserts Ultramarathon Series in Antarctica on 23 November. www.4deserts.com/thelastdesert

About [RacingThePlanet & the 4 Deserts Ultramarathon Series](#)

The Atacama Crossing is part of RacingThePlanet's 4 Deserts Ultramarathon Series which is the most prestigious footrace series in the world, ranked by TIME Magazine as the "World's Top Endurance Races" and profiled on BBC, ESPN, NatGeo, CNN, ABC, and NBC Sports. A unique collection of world-class races that take place over 7 days and 250 kilometres / 155 miles in the largest and most forbidding deserts on the planet. Elite and non-elite individuals and teams race self-supported in the most inhospitable climates and formidable landscapes, they must carry all their own equipment and food but are provided with drinking water and a place in a tent each night to rest. The series comprises the Atacama Crossing in Chile, the Gobi March in China / Mongolia, the Namib Race in Namibia and The Last Desert in Antarctica. Learn more at www.racingtheplanet.com