

Hong Kong's Wong Ho Chung and Canadian Isabelle Sauve win The Last Desert Ultramarathon in Antarctica!

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Antarctica's only multi-stage race -- RacingThePlanet's The Last Desert -- concluded today. Hong Kong ultrarunner Wong Ho Chung, 31, won the race completing 250km over five stages in his first race in the snow! **This is Wong's third win this year** -- the physical fitness instructor for Hong Kong's Fire Services Department also won the Gobi March (Mongolia) and the Atacama Crossing (Chile). Combined with his second-place finish in the Namib Race (Namibia) 2018, this makes Wong the **4 Deserts Ultramarathon Series Champion** for 2018!

In the women's competition, **Canadian Isabelle Sauve**, 42, won both The Last Desert and the 4 Deserts Ultramarathon Series ladies' championship. Sauve, a police officer with the Ontario Provincial Police, was the leading lady in both the Atacama Crossing (Chile) 2016 and this year's Namib Race, while she finished second lady at the Gobi March (Mongolia) 2018.

Wong, who completed 251.28km over the course of the race, was followed across the finish line by **Romania's Iulian Rotariu**, who completed 244.48km in the same time. Third overall was **France's Christophe Santini** with 217.2km completed.

Belgium's Ann Verhaeghe was second in the ladies' competition with 175.06km completed -- 20km behind the leader. The race for 3rd place was exciting as three of the women were all within 10 km of the podium, but was won by **Australian Jacqueline Bell**, who completed 152.06km. At age 23, **Bell is now the youngest female competitor to have completed the 4 Deserts Grand Slam** -- running all four of the races in the 4 Deserts Ultramarathon Series in one calendar year. Bell is one of 12 competitors who completed this year's Grand Slam.

The final fifth stage of the race took place on Mikkelsen Harbour. The short stage was largely ceremonial with Wong having reached the 250km distance the day before. Sauve, too, proved to be unbeatable having led the competition throughout all five stages, and the winners and finishers were awarded their race medals surrounded by penguin colonies and with an avalanche in the background.

The **decisive Stage 4 took place in Dorian Bay**. High winds and fog delayed the start, but once competitors were able to disembark The Last Desert expedition ship, they had nearly seven hours of running under rain, snow and high winds. Wong ran 67.2km to reach the 250km mark just before the stage finished, with rival Rotariu completing 62.4km putting him in 2nd place, just 7km behind Wong.

*"I knew there was a good chance Stage 4 would be the last day so I really wanted to do my best and reach 250km. I had 7 hours to run 67km. I wanted to get it done and I knew everyone was cheering for me. I felt appreciated and motivated by the others runners and staff. **I reached the 250km goal and it was perfect!** I want to say a big thank you to everyone that has supported me," says Wong Ho Chung.*

This year's edition of The Last Desert was also notable for some of the many achievements by its competitors:

- **Rebecca Walker, an emergency physician, guided blind competitor Vladmi Virgilio Dos Santos throughout the race.** Walker has both been a competitor and part of RacingThePlanet's medical team, while Dos Santos is an experienced marathoner and ultramarathoner who joined the 4 Deserts Club as he completed his sixth RacingThePlanet / 4 Deserts Ultramarathon Series race. It was Walker's first time guiding Dos Santos, with the pair having met at the Atacama Crossing back in 2014. Walker herself has also completed a number of RacingThePlanet / 4 Deserts Ultramarathons.
- There were also plenty of celebrations for competitor Camel Fung - the **65-year old Fung is an amputee having lost his left leg in a road accident 30 years ago.** The Last Desert was Fung's third 4 Deserts Ultramarathon, having previously completed the Atacama Crossing (Chile) 2015 and the Gobi March (2016). Fung's wife Chong Bing Ying and Raymond Chak, Fung's loyal friend and supporter, have completed these races with him. Chak's finish saw him join the 4 Deserts Club. Together the three competitors ran to support local Hong Kong charity Zheng Sheng College and Youth Run from RunOurCity.
- **History was made** by Ramiro Alfaro from **Guatemala**, Iulian Rotariu and Andrei Gligor from **Romania**, William Chew from **Malaysia**, Ann Verhaeghe, Joost Muyelle and Kurt Masellis from **Belgium**, Hichame Moubarak living in **Qatar**, Annastiina Hintsu from **Finland** and Bart Van Schilt from **Holland** as it was the **first time these countries were represented at The Last Desert (Antarctica) and the 4 Deserts Club!**

Mary Gadams, founder of RacingThePlanet concluded: *"It's been another incredible edition of The Last Desert (Antarctica). We are so impressed that many of the racers have run more than 200 km in tough conditions of snow, wind, freezing temperatures and deep snow. We are privileged to be able to host the race in such a beautiful location. Antarctica is truly the Final Frontier on Earth."*

Having experienced a week of calm and rough seas, challenging race conditions including blizzards and high winds, but also sunshine and blue skies, competitors posed for photographs with their medals prior to leaving Antarctica behind and return back to their home countries having being part of an unforgettable race full of memories that will last a lifetime.

Find out more:

- **LIVE Page:** <http://www.4deserts.com/thelastdesert/live>
- **Results:** <http://www.4deserts.com/thelastdesert/results>
- **Photos:** <http://www.4deserts.com/thelastdesert/photos>
- **Videos:** <http://www.4deserts.com/thelastdesert/videos>
- **Stage Updates:** http://www.4deserts.com/thelastdesert/stage_updates
- **Blogs:** <http://www.4deserts.com/thelastdesert/blogs>
- As well as our social media - [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) and [Instagram](#).

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About The Last Desert (Antarctica), [RacingThePlanet & the 4 Deserts Ultramarathon Series](#)



The Last Desert (Antarctica) 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 ultramarathon series comprises the Atacama Crossing in Chile, the Gobi March in Mongolia, the Namib Race in Namibia and The Last Desert in Antarctica. Learn more at www.racingtheplanet.com

