

33rd Inferno Half Marathon & 29th Relay Race

The male winner Paul Machoka and the female winner Valentine Rutto from Kenya agree, that the hellish part of the Inferno Half Marathon begins at the 13 km mark. On the men's podium, Kevin Kibet of Kenya claimed second place, with Germany's David Reichl rounding out the top three. The women's podium was completed by Victoria Kreuzer from Fiesch and Rea Iseli from Bern.

Thrilling race until the Höhenlücke

Right up to the Höhenlücke, the two Kenyans, Paul Machoka and Kevin Kibet, were locked in a neck-and-neck race. Over the final six kilometres, the winner, Paul Machoka, managed to build up a lead of 3:10 and crossed the line in 2:01:28, just slightly above the course record. David Reichl from Germany took third place on the podium, finishing 7:01 behind. He also managed to maintain a comfortable lead over his closest rival, Marco Wildhaber from Switzerland, right to the finish line.

Speaking to our partner newspaper, Plattform J, Machoka said he was happy to have completed the race. He said the first 12 kilometres had been easy, but from kilometre 13 onwards it had become very difficult, as it was almost like climbing. However, he had tried to push himself to the finish line, which he obviously managed to do.

For Marco Wildhaber, taking part in the Inferno Half Marathon is part of a bigger challenge: the Jungfrau Triple. The next stage of this challenge took place today. He finished in an excellent 4th place (both overall and in his age group), just as he did in the Eiger Ultra. That leaves just the third and final race: the Jungfrau Marathon on 5 September 2026.

Start-Finish Podium

The order on the women's podium was already taking shape at Grütschalp and became more certain as the race progressed towards the finish line. Valentine Rutto from Kenya followed in the footsteps of her compatriots and dominated the race. After a time of 2:27:48, she crossed the finish line on the Schilthorn 4:30 ahead of Victoria Kreuzer from Switzerland. Switzerland's Rea Iseli completed the podium, finishing 6:10 behind the winner. A total of seven Swiss women finished in the top 10.

Michèle Fischer is at the fourth place, the top senior, followed by Nadin Wälti, the top junior.

After the race, Rutto was already looking ahead to next year. She told Plattform J that she would be returning to marvel at the beauty of the Swiss Alps. For her, this sport is all about enjoying the natural landscape.

Relay race

Women and men

Three relay teams in each category battled it out for their places on the podium. Whilst the men's race saw the 'Bärner Bäre' and the 'Bergziegen' from Germany locked in a fierce battle, the 'Flachlandgemschi' from Switzerland came out on top in the women's race.

After 3:21:42, the Swiss 'Flachlandgemschi' team – Sandra and Melanie Messerli, along with Monika Steiner – reached the summit. 14 minutes later, the 'Vamos Chicas' from Switzerland followed, made up of Marija Cirkovic, Naomi Egli and Larissa Setz. In the 'Solina Power' team, Andrea Lisa Gerber tackled the first two stages and was then relieved by Corinne Saurer, who had served on the organising committee for INFERNO for many years.

Nick Papritz, Silvan Gafner and Flynn Kröpfl finished as the 'Bärner Bäre' in a time of 2:56:04. They secured a 14:10 lead over the 'Bergziegen Weilheim Teck e.V.' team – Sebastian Riedel, Sebastian Liebler and Rainer Heilemann from Germany. In third place were the 'Blitz-Drei' – Manuel Hallwyler, Andrea Luca Zarotti and Loris Häusler.

Mixed

The relay team's name, 'Eiger, Mönch and Carla', is a reference to the 'Bernese Alpine Trio'. Of all the relay teams, they were the overall winners with a time of just 2:31:43. Behind them, 'ProjectArnold' from the Upper Valais, comprising Celine, Ismael Johan and Lorenz Raphael Arnold, took second place. Just 6.5 minutes later came Carmen and Andreas Steiner, along with Mirjam Krebs, as the 'Wohlen Runners'.

After the applause, the rain was hammering down

The half-marathon runners enjoyed the 2,175 metres of elevation gain in glorious weather. The high temperatures meant they were sweating not only during the race, but also at the prize-giving ceremony. The rain shower that followed provided a welcome cooling off.

Of the 575 registered solo runners, 498 took part, and of the 18 registered relay teams, 16 competed. Compared to 2025, over 50 per cent more running enthusiasts, young and old alike, set off this year to enjoy the breathtaking views from the Schilthorn...

Captions

Image 1: Half-marathon start, photo by Damiano Moser

Image 2: Paul Machoka, photo by Mathias Wälti

Image 3: Kevin Kibet, photo by Beat Uebersax

Image 4: David Reichl, photo by Mathias Wälti

Image 5: Marco Wildhaber, photo by Mathias Wälti

Image 6: Valentine Rutto, photo by Mathias Wälti

Image 7: Victoria Kreuzer, photo by Mathias Wälti

Image 8: Rea Iseli, photo by Mathias Wälti

Image 9: Michèle Fischer, photo by Mathias Wälti

Image 10: Nadin Wälti, photo by Mathias Wälti

Image 11: Participants of all ages, photo by Manuel...