

Marco De Gasperi sets new record for the ascent and descent of the Ortles (3,905 m) in 2 hrs 36 mins

| Six times world mountain running champion, the internationally-renowned mountain and skyrunner Marco De Gasperi has set a new record for the regular route over the Ortles (EEA – AG – III – PD +). This marks the launch of his new project, 'Boy Mountain Dreams.'

Wednesday, July 1st, Solda (BZ) - © Text and photos: BoyMountainDreams

Adding to the long history of heroic feats of mountaineering that date as far back as 1804, the Ortles can now proclaim a new record as of today, a feat achieved by Marco De Gasperi, who clocked 2 hrs 36 minutes 50 seconds for the Ortles mountain after starting and finishing in Solda.

“Since I was young, I’ve never stopped dreaming. Even today I find myself dreaming, and never more so than when the mountains capture my gaze. These dreams have always been the driving force in my life, whether I have experienced them in reality or they remain unrealised. And to be honest, these unfinished dreams tend to mirror the regrets that I have in my life.

Today I feel compelled to realise those dreams, and I’ll begin with the very first one, the one of a boy who dreamt of nothing else by racing over a mountain.

As a thirteen-year-old, I first tackled the Ortles with my cousin Michele Compagnoni. Almost immediately afterwards I began to dream of returning to the summit and running it as quickly as possible. Today means I have one fewer unfinished dreams, and one more realised one.”

The past few weeks have seen this Bormio-born athlete pay several visits to the mountain, which culminated in an initial attempt of 2 hr 49 minutes. Born in 1977, De Gasperi decided to launch his official record attempt at 8:20am on Wednesday from the church in Solda. As the drastic rise in temperatures in Northern Italy worsened the conditions on the upper part of the glacier, De Gasperi's ascent time of 1 hr 45' 30'' and descent of 50' are even more impressive.

With the route covering approximately 20 km and gaining more than 2,200 metres of altitude, here are the split times for Marco De Gasperi's new record on the Ortles:

Solda (1861 m)
Tabaretta Hut (2,556 m) 30'20 "
Payer Hut (3,029 m) 52'14 "
Lombardi bivouac (3,316 m) 1:17 a.m. '
Cima Ortles (3,905 m) 1h45'30

Cima Ortles (3,905 m)
Lombardi bivouac (3,316 m) 8 '
Payer Hut (3,029 m) 24 '
Tabaretta Hut (2,556 m) 35 '
Solda (1861 m) 51'19 "

Both the splits and the final time have been certified by an official from the ISF (International Skyrunning Federation) who was present at the event.

Upon setting a new record and returning to Solda, Marco De Gasperi said the following:

“After the time I spent assessing the route and making sure that it is the quickest possible, this has been a unique and emotional experience for me. The conditions on the upper part of the mountain were pretty tough today because of the high temperatures, which meant that the layer of snow on the glacier had melted significantly.

I feel I was able to run well and freely on both the first part of the climb and the descent, particularly between Solda and the Payer rifugio and the following technical section on the ridge where the glacier begins. For me, the crucial part was the section on the rocks where focus was demanded as I was running with the intention of achieving a time, so I had to throw caution to the wind.

However, even before I knew I had set a new record, I drew the greatest joy from the spirit of unity that has evolved around my project.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my cousin Michele Compagnoni for providing technical support, to all the staff and friends who encouraged me both along the route and from afar, to all the professionals from the Guardia di Finanza's Alpine rescue (Soccorso Alpino) in Silandro (BZ), who were led by marshall Matteo Andreoni, the guides from the Ortler Mountaineering School in Solda as well as the rifugios of Tabaretta and Payer for their hospitality. Without their input and support, I certainly wouldn't have been able to realise this first dream of mine.”