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# ADVENTURE RACING

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### XPD Portugal, Estoril: 6-9 December 2007

Race Reporting by Nicholas Mulder. Cascais, Portugal

## ESTORIL PORTUGAL XPD RACE 2007

A tight race at the front of Portugal XPD  
Thursday, 6 December 2007 (20h00)

A tight race has developed for the lead of the Estoril Portugal XPD race during the first day. For most of the day, up to 6 teams have found themselves within 10-minutes of the lead, with navigation playing a constant role in rotating the title of race leader. At the end of Stage 1, after completing a 94km mountain bike leg, Team Master Unit from Finland found themselves arriving in the town of Outeiro da Cabeça, just moments ahead of Salomon Navigator (Poland) and Alpine Pro / Nutrend / Merida (Czech Republic). Teams Motorola SOS Mata Atlantica (Brazil and USA), Teva - La Pinilla (Spain), Lima Salomon adventureream.si (Slovenia) and Oure (Denmark) are expected shortly in the transition shortly.



Following this morning's roller blading, Arena, the all ladies team from Russia has dropped down the field to around 10th place. They have spent most of the day in the same vicinity as Team Cyanosis of South Africa, constantly changing positions on the technical navigation of the mountain bike. Team Arena's early joint lead with Team Motorola was snatched away by Team Teva, who quickly established a small lead on the subsequent 17km coasteering leg.

This coasteering leg has featured some stunning scenery, as teams have been forced to navigate across a jagged coastline. Dense Mediterranean vegetation has forced teams to stay on the many established tracks on the slopes, as they wind their way up and over sheer cliff drops of up to 100m, with large waves dashing on boulders below.

Many of the check points have been located on the beaches of isolated coves, further increasing the toughness of the climbs, with an accumulated ascent of 890m over the 17km length. Team Sleepmothers / Inov-8 were one particular team who excelled in this section, capitalising on poor route choices of teams ahead of them to move up the field to just outside the top 10.

After a quick transition onto bikes, Team Teva soon lost their 5-minute lead when they were caught by Motorola. With Antonio de la Rosa (Teva) and Paul Romero (Motorola) having raced extensively with each other in the last few years, an easy camaraderie exists and the two teams were soon working well together. This did not prevent Team Lima Salomon from grabbing a 5-minute lead however by the middle of the stage. It will be interesting to see whether this gap was achieved by navigational excellence or physical ability, but the dense network of small tracks through the countryside and the resultant route choice options suggest the former.

By the end of the mountain biking the lead has once again changed. Master Unit, Salomon Navigator and Alpine Pro are now hurriedly accessing their food and gear boxes for the first time in the race. All three teams, as well as those chasing them, appear to have visited all optional check points so far, so it is still a head to head race. After a quick change of clothing and some much needed calories, the leading teams will head out into the darkness for a 46km trekking leg that should take them most of the night.

In the early hours of Friday morning, the teams should make their way back to Outeiro da Cabeça, before heading out on yet another loop that will feature a combination of mountain biking and trikke, downhill trikke, as well as rock climbing and abseiling. By the end of these sections, the constant changing of the leader board should have settled down and we will have a clearer indication of which teams will be challenging for overall success.

Keep updated at [www.AR.co.za](http://www.AR.co.za) for all the latest news from the Estoril Portugal XPD.

Photos can be viewed at [www.flickr.com/photos/21332583@N05/sets/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/21332583@N05/sets/)

TREKKING



ONE TEAM SEVEN CHALLENGES

"Run when you can, walk when you have to,  
crawl if you must; **just never give up**".  
Dean Karnazes  
Ultra distance runner

