



WEDNESDAY 11, PORTUGAL: Leaving the Atlantic coast behind, teams racing in the Estoril Portugal XPD Race and vying for the adventure racing world title have resumed action deep inside central Portugal's mountainous region. Competitors invaded the Schist Villages, aiming their weary legs at Serra da Estrela., with the Nordic Teams leading the pack so far.

After the Estoril coast, Sintra and Cascais, 59 teams from 25 countries have been regrouped at the Village of Lousã in order to resume action. There will be no more stops in this unusual competition, with about 900 kilometers to complete within the next 120 hours.

Proper management of effort as well as that of sleep (or lack of it) and most of all strategy - not to mention physical performance - are the key factors for deciding this year's World Champions.

At the morning's start line, all eyes were set on the Lundhags Adventure Swedish team - leading the pack after the first stage of this year's . Even so, team captain Mattias Nystrom sounded immune to the mounting pressure: "I believe we are in the lead due to our vast experience in short races, but we know how little that means. We will have to keep calm and manage our resting times properly in order not to compromise our final objective - Top Five."

Australia's entrant, Team Blackheart led by Outer Edge contributor Rob Preston, is sitting, according to the teams update on their [website](#) , in a top ten placing, possibly as high as fifth, despite a navigation mishap in the prologue.

During the coming day teams will race mostly on foot and mountain bike, with some intense pauses for a rappel and a surprising canyoning section, spreading the teams over mountains and valleys approaching the country's highest peak. During the night, with increasing navigation difficulties, the cold will also be the enemy that teams must fight.

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