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Mt. FUJI 100 2026 Concludes as a Record Number of Runners Experience the Mt. Fuji Foothills

— Top Athletes Reflect on Epic Battles at the Awards Ceremonies, Inaugural "SAKUYA" Race a Resounding Success —



The Mt. FUJI 100 international trail running event concluded its three-day festival on Sunday, April 26. The event officially came to a close at 2:30 PM, when the final cutoff time was reached for the flagship 165km "FUJI100mi" race.

This year's event, part of the World Trail Majors series, marked a new era with the introduction of an inaugural prize money system and welcomed a record-breaking 4,470 entrants from around 47 countries. Under the newly implemented prize money system, prize money was awarded to the top 1 to 5 overall men and women in the "FUJI100mi" and "ASUMI40k" races (1st: 300,000 JPY, 2nd: 200,000 JPY, 3rd: 150,000 JPY, 4th: 100,000 JPY, 5th: 80,000 JPY, totaling 3.32 million JPY). With these prizes and series ranking points on the line, each race

witnessed historic and fiercely competitive performances, despite tough conditions featuring dense fog during the first night.

FUJI100mi Awards Ceremony: Elites Reflect on a Historic Dead Heat

At 2:00 PM on the final day, the FUJI100mi awards ceremony was held on the stage at Fuji Hokuroku Park. The top athletes, who delivered dramas worthy of a prize-money race—including a dead heat lasting dozens of kilometers and a dramatic comeback past the 100km mark—shared their joy and behind-the-scenes stories.

Men's Champion **Chris MYERS** (USA) smiled and remarked, "Running side-by-side with Jiaju was insane. It really pushed me, and I was able to give everything I had. My secret to strength is eating a lot and knowing you can keep eating even when you don't want to." He added, "I want to keep traveling and racing against amazing competitors around the world." Runner-up **Jiaju ZHAO** (CHN) reflected, "Overcoming struggles and hardships gives me the drive to achieve my goals; that strong mindset is my strength."



Women's Champion **Ying LI** (CHN), who won her very first 100-miler, expressed her deep emotion: "The dense fog at night was the most difficult part. But my best memory is interacting with the Japanese runners on the course. Even though we couldn't understand each other's languages, we encouraged each other, and 'Xie xie' (Thank you) was the one word we both understood. I spent the last two months preparing specifically for the Mt. Fuji 100 miles, which led to this victory." **Kaytlyn GERBIN** (USA), who made a stellar comeback to take second place after a major injury and childbirth, said, "I'm just so happy to be able to run right now. I'm grateful for the amazing support from the local community and volunteers."

Additionally, **Yuya KAWASAKI** (JPN), who boldly challenged the international elites to secure 3rd place overall (top Japanese), shared his fulfillment: "I had the best practice volume in March thanks to my supportive family environment. As I age, my experience in this distance really matters. I'd like to challenge myself in even bigger global races in the future."

KAI70k Awards Ceremony: US and Japanese Top Athletes Share Smiles and Mutual Respect

Earlier at noon, the awards ceremony for the "KAI70k" took place. Women's Champion **Klaire RHODES** (USA) beamed, saying, "My legs are very tired. It's hard to walk around, but I'm really happy to be done and that was a really fun adventure out there." Men's Champion **Tracen KNOPP** (USA) also praised the experience: "It was amazing. I was so happy to be able to make that beautiful loop underneath Mount Fuji. And everybody here in Japan has been so welcoming." **Takamaru KAWASAKI** (JPN), who finished 2nd in the men's race, expressed deep satisfaction: "FUJI100mi, KAI70k, and this year's ASUMI40k, I've stood on this podium for three consecutive years. It was truly my goal, so I am incredibly happy."

Inaugural "SAKUYA" Race Opens a New Door for Trail Running

At 9:00 AM on the final day, the newly established "SAKUYA 9k" and "SAKUYA U-20 6k" open races took place. Focusing on runnable forest roads rather than steep alpine trails, the races attracted beginners and young next-generation athletes.

In the SAKUYA 9k, **Naoto MIZUGUCHI** (JPN) claimed the men's title in 31:44, and **Hyunji KANG** (KOR) won the women's race in 35:36. In the U-20 6k, highlighting the next generation

of trail runners, **Yuta MURAKI** (JPN) and **Yu IWAI** (JPN) took the men's and women's victories, respectively. This crossover successfully showcased the expanding appeal of trail running.

Message from the Organizers: A Miracle and a New Phase

Concluding the event, Tsuyoshi KABURAKI, Chairman of Mt. FUJI 100 Organizing Committee summarized the weekend:

"It feels like a miracle that runners from across borders, races, and languages gathered here to put everything into one shared goal despite the difficult global situation. Every single piece—the runners, supporters, volunteers, and staff—came together to complete this event. On this 15th anniversary milestone, I want to express my deepest gratitude to everyone."



(For the full final results of each category, please visit the official website)

【Race Results】

SAKUYA 9k Men

1. Naoto MIZUGUCHI (JPN) 0:31:44
2. Shinya SHIMIZU (JPN) 0:35:10
3. Shudai YATA (JPN) 0:35:40
4. Shunsuke MORIYAMA (JPN) 0:35:44
5. Youji ARITA (JPN) 0:37:42
6. Hiroaki MATSUNAGA (JPN) 0:37:52
7. Maksim FROLOV (RUS) 0:39:46
8. Tomohiro SUZUKI (JPN) 0:40:45
9. Shun AKAO (JPN) 0:41:00
10. Reiji TSUBOI (JPN) 0:41:03

SAKUYA 9k Women

1. Hyunji KANG (KOR) 0:35:36
2. Ayaka UEDA (JPN) 0:36:05
3. Hyunjin NOH (KOR) 0:39:03
4. Joanna MOCKFORD (GBR) 0:39:55
5. Yuka TOKI (JPN) 0:45:52
6. Asami ENDO (JPN) 0:46:40
7. Encarna PASTOR (ESP) 0:47:06
8. Wenxiu YAO (TPE) 0:47:40
9. Oraina KUMAGAI (JPN) 0:47:43
10. Tomoko IWATSUKI (JPN) 0:49:43

SAKUYA U-20 6k Men (5 Participants)

1. Yuta MURAKI (JPN) 0:24:17
2. Raiki KAITO (JPN) 0:27:05
3. Aoi OZAWA (JPN) 0:27:16
4. Hotaka KOIDE (JPN) 0:31:21
5. Kakeru NAKANO (JPN) 0:39:31

SAKUYA U-20 6k Women (2 Participants)

1. Yu IWAI (JPN) 0:31:18
2. Rin IWAI (JPN) 0:33:22

(Note: For the list of award-winning athletes (overall, by age group, and New Hero Award) including FUJI100mi, KAI70k, and ASUMI40k, please refer to [the separate document.](#))

(Note: The final results of all participants in each category will be published on the official website.)

■ Contact Information

Mt. FUJI100 Organizing Committee Secretariat
955-1 Shuzenji, Izu City, Shizuoka 410-2416, Japan
Tel: +81-90-1981-1478
Fax: +81-558-80-9207
E-mail : press@mtfuji100.com

Official Website : <https://mtfuji100.com>
Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/Mt.FUJI100/>
X : <https://x.com/MtFUJI100>
Instagram : <https://www.instagram.com/mt.fuji100/>
YouTube : <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYTG7HNLx89OeaOsknc6mTg/featured>

*For past press releases, please visit : <https://mtfuji100.com/press/>
For access to official race photos for press use, please contact the Secretariat above.*