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# Shimla cyclist David Kumar retains King of Shivalik title

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SHIMLA: Shimla cyclist David Kumar on Sunday retained the seventh edition of the Hero MTB (mountain biking) Himalaya - Shimla race that saw Indian and foreign participants, the event organisers said.

"David is the overall winner of the event, while Ashish Sherpa and Rakesh Rana stood second and third respectively," Mohit Sood, president of the Himalayan Adventure Sports and Tourism Promotion Association (HASTPA), the local event organising club, said.

He said 23-year-old Kumar retained his King of Shivalik title.

German Sarah Appelt, 28, who rides for Hero Action Team, made it three on the trot and retained her Queen of Shivaliks title.

David completed the race in five hours 59 minutes, while his nearest rival Sherpa took 16 minutes more to end the race. Rana was third in the race, just 48 seconds behind Sherpa.

"I purchased a mountain bike three years ago just for fun. As I started cycling on forest trails and unmetalled rural roads in and around Shimla, I developed my passion for MTB. My journey for MTB Shimla started in 2016," Kumar said.

Likewise, Sherpa, the second winner, had developed his passion for MTB one year back.

"This time I was not hopeful of becoming the overall second winner as I had just recovered from my backbone injury," Sherpa, who barely finished his class XII exams, said.

HASPTA organises Hero MTB Himalaya, billed as the third toughest mountain biking event in the world after the Trans-Alps Challenge (Europe) and the Trans-Rockies (Canada), every year.

A total of 89 riders from seven countries - India, Nepal, the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the Czech Republic - participated.