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HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc : Team Adaptive by UTMB returns for a third edition with challenges set to make trail running history

Since its launch in 2024, **Team Adaptive by UTMB** has been built on a shared conviction from **David Poletti, Boris Ghirardi and UTMB Group**: to reshape how disability is perceived and experienced in trail running. The ambition goes far beyond enabling athletes with disabilities to take the start. It is about demonstrating, through action in the field, that performance and passion know no limits — and helping to evolve the culture.



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After two standout editions, the initiative enters a new phase in 2026, with Team Adaptive athletes taking on unprecedented challenges across some of the week's most demanding races — potentially marking a turning point for disability in ultra-trail running.

This year, Team Adaptive by UTMB brings together **15 athletes from several countries** competing across HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc. With visible and invisible disabilities — physical, neurological, chronic or acquired — they embody **three core principles: normalising disability, prioritising the collective, and inspiring through action.**

Extraordinary journeys at the start of HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc races

The 2026 edition marks a new step forward for Team Adaptive by UTMB, with athletes competing across all race formats and taking on new challenges. Some return after strong performances in previous editions, aiming to go further still. Others join for the first time with ambitious projects. Team Adaptive by UTMB is no longer showing that it is possible — it is redefining what 'possible' means.



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ETC:

Spain's **María Petit Vecino**, a visually impaired athlete experienced in mountain challenges, will take the start.

MCC:

France's **Franck Derrien** — ultra-trail runner, French vice-champion in adapted sport and on the autism spectrum (Asperger's) — will line up alongside **Nicolas Ronget**, a visually impaired physiotherapist from Lyon, and **Pierre Cabon**, an advocate for inclusive sport who is paraplegic.

OCC:

Australia's **Mick Marschal**, who has a disability affecting both lower limbs, will take on the OCC alongside Spanish Paralympian **Pol Makuri Redolat**, who lives with cerebral palsy.

CCC:

French athlete **Claire Verzaux**, born with a congenital absence of one arm, will compete in the CCC — one of the event's emblematic races.

TDS:

French athlete **Guillaume Pick**, who is hearing impaired, will start the TDS, alongside **Louis Puech**, who lives with cystic fibrosis.

UTMB:

French athlete **Fanny Barbara**, who has undergone the removal of her left lung, will take on the flagship race alongside **Julien Veysseyre**, 2023 cross-triathlon world champion and below-knee amputee; **Jonathan Naboulet and his team**, following a rugby accident that left him quadriplegic; and **Yanis Debaud**, a former rugby player living with partial paralysis of the right foot following nerve damage.

This edition will also see the participation of **Sabine Galpin-Ossonce**, who lives with Lyme disease and endometriosis — reflecting the Team's growing inclusion of invisible disabilities and chronic conditions. She sums up her journey simply: *"From illness to ultra: transforming personal adversity into collective strength!"*

PTL:

South Africa's **Travis Warwick**, a below-knee amputee, will take on the PTL — the most extreme challenge of the week.

Challenges set to mark a turning point in ultra-trail running

Jonathan Naboulet: an unprecedented challenge on the UTMB

After competing in the first two editions and the CCC last year, **Jonathan Naboulet** returns in 2026 with an even more ambitious objective. Quadriplegic following a rugby accident, he will take on the **UTMB** with his joëlette team. While joëlettes have featured in certain race formats, **none has attempted an ultra-trail of this distance within the UTMB time limits.** Supported by a team of 42 people, this project represents a challenge of exceptional scale — both sporting and human.



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Travis Warwick: a historic first on the PTL

The 2026 edition could also mark history with **Travis Warwick's** participation in the **PTL (Petite Trotte à Léon)**. The South African athlete, a below-knee amputee, will take on this extreme, week-long route around Mont-Blanc. If successful, he would become **the first athlete with a disability to take part in the PTL** — a race renowned for its technical demands, autonomy and more than 300 kilometres of effort.

Julien Veysseyre: pushing the limits of ultra-endurance

A below-knee amputee and elite athlete, **Julien Veysseyre** will line up for the UTMB. Cross-triathlon world champion in 2023, he has built a strong track record in endurance sport. He will attempt to become **the first amputee athlete to complete the UTMB within the time limits** — a major sporting and human challenge on one of the world's most demanding races.

Team Adaptive by UTMB across the UTMB World Series

Ahead of HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc at the end of August, several Team Adaptive athletes will compete across the UTMB World Series. Julien Veysseyre, Fanny Barbara, Yanis Debaud and Jonathan Naboulet will line up at Trail Saint-Jacques by UTMB. Claire Verzaux and Franck Derrien will take part in Trail Grand Ventoux by UTMB, while Sabine Galpin-Ossonce will compete at Trail Alsace by UTMB.

"The point is not to adapt trail running to disability. It is to show that the sport can evolve without losing its level of challenge." **Boris Ghirardi, co-founder of Team Adaptive by UTMB**

Note to editors

About UTMB® World Series

UTMB® World Series is the trail running circuit that brings together the best athletes in the sport and amateur runners in top international events held in some of the most beautiful places on the planet. The UTMB® World Series is rooted in a passion for the mountains and respect for the environment and offers trail running enthusiasts the chance to experience the UTMB® adventure across the globe, with events taking place in Asia, Oceania, Europe, Africa and the Americas. This is the way for everyone to start their quest towards the HOKA UTMB® Mont-Blanc, where the UTMB® World Series finals take place. Launched in May 2021 with the collaboration of UTMB Group and The IRONMAN Group, the UTMB® World Series circuit brings together 64 events in 29 countries. For more information, visit <https://utmb.world> | [Press Area](#) & [Photo](#)



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