The final day of biathlon at the Winter Youth Olympic Games Lausanne 2020 provided plenty of plot twists as Italy sprang a late surprise on the dominant Russian team.

They beat Russia to the top of the podium, and a stellar final exchange meant the French went home with bronze from Les Tuffes Nordic Centre.

Oleg Domichek of Russia held a lead of more than 25 seconds after the final exchange and looked set to power his side to the finish. Italian anchor Marco Barale, however, had other ideas.

The 16-year-old was error-free through two rounds of shooting and knew he almost had gold in the bag.

The men’s 12.5km individual champion, Domicheck, posted a dismal final round of shooting and was forced to ski a penalty loop.

It meant the Italian quartet crossed the line first in the mixed relay in 1:10.55.3 seconds.

There was no hint of the drama to come as the race began relatively sedately. 17-year-old Martina Trabucchi, led off for the Italians leaving them just outside the medals in fourth after the first leg.

She handed over to another 17-year-old, Linda Zingerle, who enjoyed a storming cross country skiing leg. Her shooting let down but such was her speed on skis, Zingerle still took Italy into the lead at the handover to Nicolo Betemps.
The 16-year old relinquished that lead but only by just under a second. Marco Barale, who is 16, anchored his team home to victory, thanks largely to a faultless display with the rifle. Barale suffered no shooting penalties. Such was the advantage, he even had time to look back before crossing the finish line, using his ski poles as a telescope, with no opponent in sight.

In Biathlon Mixed Relay a team is composed of two women and two men from the same National Olympic Committee (NOC). The race order is woman-woman-man-man. The distance covered by each woman will be 6km and by each man 7.5km. A simultaneous start is used for the Mixed Team Relay. Biathletes use the free technique for skiing and then shoot a small-bore rifle - .22 calibre (5.6mm) - alternating between the prone and standing position.

Lausanne 2020 is the third edition of the Winter YOG, bringing together the world’s best young athletes between the ages of 15 and 18. For the first time in Winter Olympic history the Games will have gender equality, with equal numbers of male and female competitors in the 81 medal events. 1,872 athletes from 79 NOCs will be in action in Lausanne, 12 of those NOCs for the first time at a Youth Olympic Games - Albania, Azerbaijan, Ecuador, Haiti, Hong Kong, Kosovo, Pakistan, Qatar, Singapore, Thailand, Turkmenistan and Trinidad & Tobago.

As well as the brand new sport of Ski Mountaineering, Lausanne 2020 features five new events, Women’s Nordic Combined, Individual Normal Hill/4km, Women’s Doubles Luge, Mixed NOC 3x3 Ice Hockey, Freeski Big Air, Snowboard Big Air.

The first Winter Youth Olympic Games took place in Innsbruck, Austria, in 2012. The second edition was held in the Norwegian city of Lillehammer in 2016.

SHOTLIST:
00:05 Italy’s Marco Barale crosses the finish line and is greeted by his teammates
00:32 Team Italy on podium at Mascot Ceremony
00:56 Team Russia (left), Team Italy (centre) and Team France (right) pose for pictures at Mascot Ceremony

01:02 SOUNDBYTE: Marco Barale, Italy, Gold medallist in Biathlon Mixed Team Relay (Italian Language).
“I realised I won the goal medal when I hit the last target and I saw the Russian athlete took a lap around the penalty loop. The last lap was something fantastic because we already knew we would win the gold medal unless I fell down. So I enjoyed it and when I saw my teammates we celebrated all together.”

01:28 Marco Barale celebrates with his teammates

01:34 SOUNDBYTE: Linda Zingerle, Italy, Gold medallist in Biathlon Mixed Team Relay (Italian Language).
“We had a great chance to win here because we were always second or third. Nicolo did well, he was second, Marco was doing a good race as well, so I thought we could win today.”
01:57 Team Italy hold national flag and pose for pictures

02:00 **SOUNDBITE:** Martina Trabucchi, Italy, Gold medallist in Biathlon Mixed Team Relay (Italian Language).

"Being on the top of the podium is a weird feeling, but of course exciting. It means had great team work and that we did a great job."

02:19 Marco Barale being congratulated by teammate

02:26 **SOUNDBITE:** Nicolo Betemps, Italy, Gold medallist in Biathlon Mixed Team Relay (Italian Language).

"When Marco did the last lap, I was on the top of the hill with Fabio, our coach, and when we saw he did a clean shooting I almost cried because I was so thrilled and at that point I realised I won the gold medal."

02:40 Various shots of medal ceremony at Lausanne Medal Plaza

-- ENDS --

© IOC-VNRs are for bona fide news reporting purposes only and all rights required for their production have been cleared. Terms and Conditions of the [IOC Newsroom](https://www.olympic.org) and [Olympic.org](https://www.olympic.org) apply. This IOC-VNR shall be used in accordance with the News Access Rules for Lausanne 2020 available [here](https://www.olympic.org), in particular in respect to the Amount of YOG Content, Amount per News Programme, Airing after broadcast by RHBs only, Duration of Use, No use of Olympic Properties, No Commercial Association, On-screen Courtesy Credit ("Courtesy of The International Olympic Committee"), Infringements & Monitoring, etc.

For more information, please contact the IOC Media Relations Team: Tel: +41 21 621 6000, email: pressoffice@olympic.org, or visit our web site at [www.olympic.org](https://www.olympic.org).