



A moto ride to a disqualification new

Written by: [Herbert Krael](#)
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After the 2015 Ironman Latin American Championships in Brazil, folks noticed a picture of a competitor on the back of a motorbike. This competitor had finished third in her age group. MundoTri.com.br in Brazil broke the story and it appears now that the athlete in question has been disqualified.

Patricia Franco Mendes is a competitor in the F25-29 group and she is from Sao Paulo, Brazil. Earlier this year at the 70.3 Latin American Championships in Brazil she won her age group with a 2:21:56 bike split and a 4:28:11 overall time. In comparison, German pro Ricarda Lisk rode 2:21:45 and race winner Helle Frederiksen rode 2:10:52. Franco Mendes' 4:28:11 overall time placed her 8th among all females. But after Ironman Brazil where Franco Mendes narrowly missed a Kona slot, folks reached out to Wagner Araújo of MundoTri to report that she was spotted with her Trek Speed Concept on the back of the motorbike of a race mechanic during the race.



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Section 5.01 (a) of the general rules of Ironman is quite clear that “all bicycles must be propelled only by human power,” and it would follow that you could therefore never get into a car or onto the back of a motorbike, unless you decided to call it a day and not finish the race (DNF). Even during the swim segment, rules prevent competitors from holding on to anything that moves. Section 4.01 (e) states that during the swim athletes may use a kayak or boat as an aid only if no forward progress is made.

“I broke my frame dropout at the 98k mark of the bike and the mechanic could not fix it. I then jumped on the motorbike and we headed to the transition area,” said Franco Mendes to Araújo when confronted with the picture. “The mechanic then received a radio call from another mechanic who told him how to fix the broken dropout. The mechanic then fixed the bike and got me back to the point where I jumped onto the moto.”

According to Araújo she also claimed that she actually rode 182km as they could not return her to the exact same spot, and she had to ride the final 80km with a single gear. Her bike split listed on Ironman.com for the race was 5:32, but the splits are no longer listed. Araújo asked Franco Mendes about her Garmin file, but she chose not to provide it. Franco Mendes apparently said that she should not have been disqualified as there was no rule violation.

2015 Results: Latin American Championship

MALE & FEMALE

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APPLY >

MEENDES

ALL

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

PATRICIA MENDES FRANCO

DIV RANK: -- OVERALL RANK: DQ

GENERAL INFO

BIB	1779
Division	F25-29
State	SAO PAULO SP
Country	BRA
Profession	

RACE SUMMARY

Swim:	--:--
Bike	--:--
Run	--:--
Overall	--:--

For clarification, Ironman Brazil features a two lap 90km bike course with several out and back sections.

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45%

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Kathy Van Houten

So, she rode on the back of a motorcycle and the best she could do was third? Wow!

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Eduardo Alves

Sorry, but the photo of the athlete was disqualified.

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Ronald Wyss · Works at PayPal

She should be banned for life, that is so chaeting!!!

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Mima Vasiljević · Glavna i neogovorna urednica at Fitness Is From Venus shocking.

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Luis Fernando De Oliveira

That's a tough one, as I'm quite sure she did it all in good faith. Still, as a top competitor, one must know the rules. It's a clear call, but that doesn't make it an easy one.

Like · Reply · Jun 22, 2015 4:19pm



Tony Farley · Castro Valley, California

People trying to defend her story, what about no outside help?

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Wagner Araújo · Publisher at MundoTRI.com.br

Guys, I'm the editor of MundoTRI.com.br, who first publish the story. The organization didn't know about this until I talked to them. Just after that they disqualified the athlete. it's important to notice that we only know about this due to some complaint we got by e-mail from some readers. Once the organizers saw the photo, they did it right and disqualified her.

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