



Sulden (ITA) sets scene for Snowboard camp

A large number of snowboarders from all parts of the world are set to benefit long into the future from the guidance they received when the first FIS Snowboard training camp of the year was staged in Sulden (ITA) from December 8th-17th 2004.

20 athletes from 10 different nations took part in the camp which was basically focused around Parallel Giant Slalom and Parallel Slalom while some elements of Snowboard Cross also featured in the program that was organised by experienced coaches Alex Andreis, Carlo Dal Molin and Christian Hrab. The idea behind the camp was to help the athletes correct technical mistakes and provide them with a full "package" of useful training exercises for the winter season. During the ten-day camp, the athletes were given instruction within bindings, jumps, body position on the board and choosing the right line on the piste. At the same time the performances of all athletes during the camp were video-taped in order to improve their technical maneuvers.

In the final days of the camp, which was highly praised by all participants, the athletes were invited to take part in the FIS PSL and PGS Snowboard competitions in Innichen (ITA) where Brazil's Riccardo Moruzzi produced the best overall performance of the camp participants.

First FIS Alpine World Cup event in Croatia

For the first time in history, Croatia will host an event within the FIS Alpine World Cup calendar. Indeed on 20 January the elite of the Ladies' Alpine Skiing will head for

Zagreb-Sljerne for the Ladies' 6th World Cup Slalom competition of the year. With Zagreb having suffered extensively from the armed conflict within the Balkan regions, a tremendous effort has gone into rebuilding the infrastructure so the city may today present itself from its most attractive side as it welcomes the prime of Ladies' skiing. With local hero Janica Kostelic looking to get another World Cup win under her belt, Croatian supporters are expected to turn up in huge numbers for the night event which will prompt authorities to take extra security precautions. Finland's Tanja Poutianen is currently leading the Ladies' World Cup slalom rankings with 260 points ahead of Kostelic (160 points), however much could change with two more Slalom races scheduled in Semmering (AUT) and Bertsgaden (GER) before the showdown in Zagreb.

Inexperienced Ghanaian dreams of Turin Olympics

While the likes of Hermann Maier, Janne Ahonen and Estonia's Kristina Smigun are almost sure to capture the headlines of the 2006 Winter Olympics, Ghanaian skier Kwame Nkrumah-Acheampong will be thrilled just to qualify for the Games. On a quest triggering memories of Eddie "the Eagle" and the Jamaican bobsleigh team, Nkrumah-Acheampong, is determined to put Ghana on the world skiing map. 30-year old Nkrumah-Acheampong, who was introduced to the sport only three years ago at the indoor slope of Milton Keynes Xcape Snowzone (GBR), will need at least 140 points to qualify for the Slalom or Giant Slalom.

The courageous Ghanaian, whose parents returned to their mother country from Glasgow when Nkrumah-Acheampong was

one, has now moved on to Meribel (FRA) in order to intensify his training which, however, hasn't been without occasional mishaps. "I once got lost and ended up in someone's chalet", he said. "I am trying to get my head around the mountains. They are so different from the narrow slope of the indoor centre. The mountains are huge and high and there are trees and shadows and lumps of ice and everything." Nkrumah-Acheampong was soon labeled "the snow leopard" in Milton Keynes and is now having special suit designed around the animal, complete with ears, for the special occasion in Turin. The Ski Association of Ghana was provisionally affiliated by the FIS Council as an associate member of the International Ski Federation in November 2003.

FIS Facts and Figures

With the New Year around the corner here are some interesting statistics to illustrate the activities of of FIS and its National Ski Associations growing popularity of the FIS disciplines and notably the work done behind the scenes to stage the events. More than 1900 FIS Technical Delegates and Judges will officiate at around 5000 competitions published in the FIS calendar during the season 2004-2005. To date a total of 109 sites have hosted 216 FIS World Cup competitions in a season which has still not reached the halfway mark.

Dear Friends of FIS,

You have received the third edition of the newly-introduced "FIS Newsflash". Should you have any feedback, comments, you are most welcome to send them to me at: frandsen@fisski.ch. If you no longer wish to receive this Newsflash please inform FIS (E-mail: mail@fisski.ch) and you will be removed from our e-mail distribution list. "FIS Newsflash" will not only be distributed via e-mail but also be published in the News section of the FIS Website. May I take the opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year!

Best regards

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