



FIS NEWSFLASH

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Fédération Internationale de Ski

International Ski Federation

Internationaler Ski Verband

Medals up for grabs as FIS Alpine Ski World Championship fever sets in!

Judging from statistics Austria are certainly set to claim their share of the cake when silverware is distributed at the upcoming FIS Alpine Ski World Championships which take place in Bormio and Santa Caterina from 29 January until 13 February. With no less than 32 medals to show for their efforts in the Mens' and Ladies' previous competitions over the last three FIS Alpine Ski World Championships, Austria enjoy a comfortable lead in the race for medals. However, going into the championships, their discouraged opponents may take heart from the fact that the Austrians' medal harvest have been gradually decreasing over the past three World Championships and during the last event in St.Moritz 2003, the proud alp nation were limited to getting 9 athletes on the podium.

Norway will head into the championships desperately aiming to recapture the position they have previously enjoyed among the alpine giants in respect to their World Championship performances in Vail (USA) 1999, St. Anton (AUT) 2001 and St. Moritz (SUI) 2003 – a position which today have been taken over by USA who claimed 6 medals during the championships in St.Moritz. In total 14 nations have split the medals in between themselves in 30 competitions for men and ladies over the past three World Championships which have been clearly dominated by Europe over the rest of the world (of 90 possible medals Europe have claimed no less than 80!). In Bormio all nations will have an additional chance to get a share of the limelight as the new Nations Team Event will be introduced for the first time.

Pragelato (ITA) on track for 2006 Olympic Winter Games

Despite having to cope with strong winds, the Italian winter resort Pragelato revealed its' potential to become a spectacular venue for the Cross Country competitions of the 2006 Winter Olympic Games in Turin (ITA), when the intimate and idyllic village set the scene for four competitions within the Mens' and Ladies' FIS Cross Country World Cup calendar on January 22nd and 23rd..

Under the leadership of TOROC's Cross Country Sports Manager Alessandro Vanoi, former top athlete and coach of the Italian Ski Team, the Organizers have been hard at work to develop a challenging set of tracks within a confined rectangular space just outside the city measuring only 400m times 1.6 km. In addition the local stadium has undergone heavy reconstruction to widen facilities for the competitions and measures have been taken to develop a media centre that will be able to cope with the massive demand from journalists when the 2006 Olympic Games take place from 11-26 February 2006. Stadium facilities worked to absolute satisfaction over the weekend which especially displayed the Italians' expertise in developing profile tracks as well as providing artificial snow for the competitions. The local Italian organisers will now be targeting the FIS Nordic Combined and the FIS Ski Jumping World Cup events on 11th and 12th February as they continue to fine-polish their preparations for the 2006 Olympic Winter Games. Pragelato will host a total of 18 competitions of Cross Country, Ski Jumping and Nordic Combined disciplines during the Games. You may find the complete results of the test event here: http://www.fis-ski.com/uk/604/1228.html?event_id=15515&cal_suchsector=CC

Wet Whistler fails to foil snowboard success

In spite of continuous rain throughout the week (January 15th to 22nd), the 2005 FIS Snowboard World Championships rang out as a huge success as more than 500 athletes and coaches from 37 countries around the world gathered at Whistler Mountain (CAN) to compete in five disciplines (Parallel Slalom, Parallel Giant Slalom, Snowboardcross, Halfpipe and Big Air).

The event marked the first time the FIS Snowboard World Championships in its ten-year history was staged in North America and organizers can be applauded for their determination in making it a memorable occasion. Indeed more than 20 snowmaking guns using 20 million gallons of water worked overtime to produce the championship-calibre snow required, while close to \$500,000 in slope improvements were made to the world-famous facility to host the championships, including a new permanent Halfpipe at the Base II area of the mountain that will serve as a legacy training facility for teams and athletes for years to come. The championships attracted more than 100 million viewers through 150 hours of international broadcast. Previously the competition has been held in Lienz (AUT) 1996, San Candido, (ITA) 1997, Berchtesgaden, (GER) 1999, Madonna di Campiglio, (ITA) 2001 and Kreischberg, (AUT) 2003. The complete results from Whistler may be found here: http://www.fis-ski.com/uk/604/1228.html?event_id=15246&cal_suchsector=SB

Dear Friends of FIS,

Should you have any feedback, comments, you are most welcome to send them to me at: frandsen@fisski.ch. "FIS Newsflash" will not only be distributed via e-mail but also be published in the News section of the FIS Website.

Best regards

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