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## Media Info – VIESSMANN FIS World Cup Cross-Country in Kuusamo/Ruka

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VIESSMANN FIS Cross-Country World Cup in Kuusamo/Ruka (FIN), Individual Start, 26th of November 2006

### **Strong Kuitunen and Roenning in Kuusamo**

Virpi Kuitunen from Finland and the Norwegian Eldar Roenning could celebrate the victory in the classic individual race on the courses in Ruka.

After a second place yesterday the 30-year old Kuitunen could manage the victory in the classic individual race over 10 km. That was the 5th single victory in her career. She finished clearly 44,1 seconds ahead of the current overall leader Marit Bjoergen from Norway. The third place went to double Olympic Champion from Turin 2006 Kristina Smigun (EST). She finished the race 49,2 seconds behind the winner while the fourth place was managed by Katerina Neumannova from Czech Republic.

Marit Bjoergen is still in the lead of the overall World cup, 78 points ahead of today's winner Kuitunen and 116 points ahead of Petra Majdic, who finished today on the 7th place. In the distance World Cup Katerina Neumannova leads with 160 points while Marit Bjoergen and Kristina Smigun share the second place with 140 points.

In the men's race over 15km the winner of the Sprint race in Duesseldorf (GER), Eldar Roenning from Norway finished first. It is his third victory in his career and the first in a distance race. The second place took the French Vincent Vittoz who was 15,9 seconds behind Roenning while Anders Soedergren from Sweden finished third, 18,3 seconds behind the winner. For both was it the first podium place this season.

During the competition at all intermediate time Vincent Vittoz was clearly in the lead but on the last downhill he felt down and lost some seconds.

In the lead of the overall World Cup is still the winner of the today's race Eldar Roenning with 232 points ahead of his team mate Tor Arne Hetland 156 points and on third place is Jens Arne Svartedal with 128 points. In the distance World Cup Eldar Roenning is in the lead together with the winner of the distance race in Gaellivare last week, the biathlete Ole

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Einar Bjoerndalen (NOR). On the third place is the Czech Lukas Bauer, who finished today on the 6th place.

spectators: 1.500

Weather: Rain, 2°C

Snow Conditions: wet

**Pictures:**

Please note that high quality action and podium pictures from today's races are available for purchase through the Internet portal offered by FIS Partner Nordic Focus at [www.menzipics.ch/info/indexfisevents.html](http://www.menzipics.ch/info/indexfisevents.html)

**Quotes:**

**Virpi Kuitunen (FIN):** "It was a little bit a surprise for me to be so clear in front. When I got the information on the last kilometres that I'm one or two kilometre in front of the others I was quite surprised. I tried to continue with my speed and I'm satisfied that I could manage the victory. It was a quite perfect race of me. The track was not icy, it was actually quite good. Our plan now was to move in some days to Les Saisie but in the middle Europe is at the moment no snow.

**Marit Bjoergen (NOR):** "I'm not in a good shape in this days so I'm satisfied that I had such a successful weekend here in Kuusamo. So I will lead this evening towards my home and we will see what we will do in the next two weeks before the next World Cup races will take place. Actually we don't now where we will have our training camp.

**Kristina Smigun (EST):** "I didn't expect to be on the podium in the today's race. The condition are good but my personal feeling is not so perfect. My tactic during the race was to ski as fast as I can but Virpi and Marit were to strong for me today. Now we will go home and than move in some day to middle Europe."

**Eldar Roenning (NOR):** "I didn't expect to win the today's race. I was a big surprise for me. I getting faster and faster during the race and it is amazing be the first. I hope I could keep my

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yellow bib but first I will ski well during the Tour de Ski and at the World Championships. Now I will go back to Norway and than maybe to Sweden or middle Europe - it depends on the snow. But for sure I will compete at the next World Cups before Christmas."

**Vincent Vittoz (FRA):** " I was disappointed after my races in Gaellivare about my results so I'm now satisfied to make the podium. In the last downhill I felt down, it was my fault - that could be happened. Maybe I lose there the victory. My next goals are to be on the top in the World Cup races in La Clusaz, my home and than for sure at Tour de Ski which is a great possibility to bring the Cross-Country sport forward."

**Anders Soedergren (SWE):** " I'm not in a 100% perfect shape. In the last two weeks I had troubles with my health so I'm quite satisfied to manage the third place. My main goals this season are the World Championships and the Tour de Ski. The Tour will be quite hard for me because of the Sprints which fit's me not so well but I will try my best.

Results are available on: [www.fis-ski.com](http://www.fis-ski.com)

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