

Strong Runs at the X OVER RIDE on Kitzsteinhorn Mountain

Freeride World Tour Qualifier*** in Zell am See-Kaprun (Austria) with international Riders

In bright sunshine on Kitzsteinhorn Mountain, the favourites lived up to their role on Saturday, March 24th during the Freeride World Tour Qualifier ***. They exhibited strong performances among the international starting lineup and staked their claim to participating in the next season of the Freeride World Tour. The 75 participating freeriders from 12 nations put on an exciting show in four disciplines (men's skiing and snowboarding as well as women's skiing and snowboarding) for the spectators. The start took place at Lackerschneid at approx. 2,560 metres above sea level, on a steep slope with several rocks and jumps, where the freeriders showed off their back flips and other tricks. The steep hill then merged into a wide field, where riders showed smooth but fast swings. The last section saw the slope become steep and selective again – and many participants convinced with tricks as well as high and far rock jumps again on the way to the finish line at Langwiedboden, 1,970 metres above sea level. All information and photos from the X OVER RIDE can be found at: www.x-over.at.

Kaprun, March 26th, 2012. The "face" - the technical term for a freeride hill - was perfectly suited for the various preferences and styles among the participants, who therefore showed different variations of the track in their runs. The terrain on Kitzsteinhorn Mountain, which is riddled with rocks and natural jump ramps, made lots of freestyle tricks possible. Riders of every style therefore had a chance to end up on the podium. In perfect conditions, spectators had an excellent view of the versatile run - and they got a great show. In bright sunshine, some of the top riders exhibited a fine combination of smooth rides full of tricks and high rock jumps. The X OVER RIDE was worth it for participants, spectators and organizers. „We are very happy about this more than successful freeride day. The weather made everything possible, and the riders delivered a first-class show on a challenging hill. And no injuries occurred. What more could we want?“, says organizer Chris Geissler.

International Top Three Studded with Austrians

In men's skiing, the favourite **Mathieu Bijasson (FRA)** was able to come in first, thereby earning a definite qualification for the next season of the Freeride World Tour. The French were strong, and **Leo Slémétt**, another Frenchman, took second place. **Martin Rofner** from Austria was able to win third place with a run that was rich in variety. All in all, the Austrians did extremely well among the international starting field. In men's snowboarding, **Niklas Hollsten (FIN)** convinced the judges with a smooth run and excellent high jumps. In second place came **Alexander Hoffman** from Austria, who is now on the way to qualifying for the FWT, then followed by Raphael Bullet from Switzerland. **Johannes Schwaiger** was another Austrian who exhibited a great performance with a strong run – he only qualified the week before by winning a wild card through the qualifier. In women's skiing, the strongest run was performed by **Nadine Wallner (AUT)**, followed by **Lotten Rapp (SWE)** and **Berber Semmelink** from Holland who finished second and third respectively. Australian **Amber Schuecker** prevailed in the women's snowboarding discipline, followed **Mikaela Hollsten (FIN)** and **Anouck Mouthon (FRA)**. This means that the Hollsten siblings (Niklas and Mikaela) both scored great points at the X OVER RIDE - Niklas won the men's snowboarding discipline, while Mikaela took second place in women's snowboarding.

Safety Comes First – Prime Principle Out of Bounds

Even if the freeride hills outside the regular slopes are often spectacular and inviting, safety always comes first in freeriding. Not only do the riders prepare themselves extremely well for the run to be conquered during the so-called "face checks"; they are also well-trained in avalanche awareness and search strategies. As part of the X OVER RIDE, all visitors were able to gain hands-on experience for the case of an emergency by practicing the handling of the latest avalanche victim search devices in the supervised **PIEPS avalanche search field**.



Riders Party at Baumbar

After a spectacular and adrenaline-filled day on the mountain, participants and spectators could “relax” during the Riders Party at Baumbar Kaprun. With free admission, the “rulers of the hills” were duly celebrated and rewarded for their efforts and their boldness. And the switch to summer time that weekend offered yet another reason to celebrate.

The Freeride World Qualifier Tour

The Freeride World Tour is the most important freeride tour worldwide. With a total of only 16 male skiers and 9 male snowboarders as well as 8 female skiers and 5 female snowboarders, the starting line-up is limited to the world's best riders. Qualification can be achieved through the Freeride World Qualifier Tour, where every year the three best skiers and the two best snowboarders in the ranking are chosen for the extremely elite starting line-up of the FWT. The FWQ Tour events are categorized in events from one to four stars. The higher the category, the more points can be won towards the ranking.

The detailed results of the Freeride World Tour Qualifier are available at:
http://www.x-over.at/media/press/text/XOR12_FWQ_Results.pdf

High-Resolution Images

are available at <http://www.x-over.at/pages/de/press.php> for free download for editorial use.

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