



## **Brilliant anniversary: Val Gardena/Gröden completes 100 races**

**St. Cristina in Val Gardena/Gröden - In the South Tyrolean skiing stronghold Val Gardena/Gröden, people are looking forward to a very special edition of the Ski World Cup on the last weekend before Christmas. The best downhill skiers in the world are not only pitching their tents at the foot of the Sassolungo for the 55th time as part of the Saslong Classic - Val Gardena/Gröden is hosting races 99 and 100 on Friday, December 16 (Super-G) and Saturday, December 17 (Downhill), respectively.**

It is another milestone in the long and glorious history of the Saslong Classic: the downhill on Saturday, December 17 will be race number 100 in Val Gardena/Gröden. By reaching this mark, the Val Gardena/Gröden World Cup organizers rise to an extremely select circle. A circle that includes only the absolute elite of international skiing, such as Kitzbühel, Wengen and Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

"Countless incidents have taken place on the Saslong over the past decades. It all started in February 1969, when Jean Daniel Dätwyler won the first downhill. Just one year later, the World Championships followed, which left a lasting mark on Val Gardena/Gröden. In 1980, Uli Spieß was the first skier to jump over the camel humps. In 2004, Kristian Ghedina caused a moment of shock when he almost collided with a deer that had strayed onto the course on the finish jump. We could fill books with stories about winners - and tragic heroes," says Rainer Senoner, president of the Saslong Classic Club, about the upcoming anniversary.

### **Records, records, records**

Speaking of winners: With four triumphs in the downhill, the Austrian Franz Klammer, as well as the Italian local hero Kristian Ghedina are the record winners on the 3,446 meter long course with a 839 meters altitude difference. Aksel Lund Svindal can boast more individual victories - namely seven. Twice, the Norwegian raced to first place in the downhill, and five times he was able to celebrate the day's winning time in the super-G. Alongside Pirmin Zurbriggen (SUI), Lasse Kjus



(NOR), Michael Walchhofer (AUT) and Aleksander Aamodt Kilde (NOR), Svindal is one of five racers to have won both speed disciplines in Val Gardena/Gröden.

The 55th Saslong Classic will certainly also provide material to write new hero stories. In keeping with tradition, the South Tyrolean organizers are sticking to the tried and tested date on the last weekend before Christmas and will be hosting the super-G on Friday, December 16, and the classic downhill on Saturday, December 17. The start time for both races is set for 11:45 a.m. - just like the two training runs on Wednesday and Thursday.

#### **A marketing tool for the 2029 World Cup candidacy**

The World Cup in Val Gardena/Gröden also serves a secondary purpose this year. "It is a perfect marketing tool for us to advertise for the Alpine World Ski Championships, which we would like to host in 2029 on our existing slopes. The 100th race in Val Gardena/Gröden not only underlines our long-standing tradition, but also shows that the fire for skiing still burns within us. This passion carries us so that we can realize the dream of another World Ski Championships in Val Gardena/Gröden", adds Senoner.

The organizing committee of the Saslong Classic Club is particularly pleased that the anniversary races can be held this year in front of packed grandstands and with an exciting entertainment program. For example, an exclusive two-story VIP tent will be set up in the finish area. On the other hand, fans can experience the race action from the particularly closely situated and spectacular spectator area in the immediate vicinity of the camel humps. The parade of fan clubs that will herald the downhill on Saturday is very popular. Tickets for the Ski World Cup in Val Gardena/Gröden are available on the official website at <https://www.saslong.org/en/tickets/>.

#### **Press Contact World Cup Val Gardena/Gröden:**

Hannes Kröss

M: [hannes.kroess@saslong.org](mailto:hannes.kroess@saslong.org)

[media@saslong.org](mailto:media@saslong.org)

T: +39 333 7223248

Saslong Classic Club  
Str. Dursan 37  
I-39047 St.Christina (BZ)

T +39 0471 79 34 50  
F +39 0471 79 34 96  
[www.saslong.org](http://www.saslong.org)  
[info@saslong.org](mailto:info@saslong.org)



W: [www.saslong.org](http://www.saslong.org)

Saslong Classic Club  
Str. Dursan 37  
I-39047 St.Christina (BZ)

T +39 0471 79 34 50  
F +39 0471 79 34 96  
[www.saslong.org](http://www.saslong.org)  
[info@saslong.org](mailto:info@saslong.org)