

Ski & Golf Championships: Great Austrian success / Host nation dominated in the third World Championships in Zell am See and Kaprun

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For five days, from 17th to 21st May 2006, everything in the 'Europa-Sportregion Zell am See-Kaprun' was about putting and carving on the highest possible level. Now they have finally been found - the new champions of the renowned 'Ski & Golf World Championships'. The tournament, which took place for the third consecutive time this year, has once again spellbound its spectators as well as its participants. The great challenge constitutes the special lure of the competitions. Only athletes who can smoothly curve around the elastic gates in the giant slalom on the glacier of Kitzsteinhorn and then also prove to possess a steady hand on the green of the championship golf courses of Zell am See stand a chance of winning in the 'Ski & Golf World Championships'.

More sports enthusiasts than ever before took up this challenge this year: with about 180 participants from eight different countries, the unusual world championships managed to equal their own record from previous years. And famous athletes from various countries also decided on having a go on the green and white courses of the 'Europa-Sportregion'. Austria's world-class skier Reinfried Herbst and golf pro Stephan Wittkop from Germany were just two of the great names who had mingled with the field of starters. But others were to be the champions.

It was mainly the athletes from the host nation who eventually won the competitions in the three different age groups. The Austrian Christoph Spora was one of those who ended up in the top place on the winners' rostrum. He won the men's general age group (1966 - 1983 birth cohorts). The pro from Zell am See managed to stay five under par at golf - a nearly unequalled achievement in the third 'Ski & Golf World Championships'. And at only 33.78 seconds in the giant slalom on the glacier, he was also one of the front runners.

Claudia Wolf cut a fine figure in the women's competition. At 326.83 points, the Austrian player from Golf Club Innsbruck left the entire field far behind. A success which the local heroine Petra Schlechter and Alexander Blaesi of the PGA of Suisse also managed to achieve: they secured the gold medals in the AK1 group (1956 to 1965 birth cohorts) for themselves. Apart from the Swiss Blaesi, the German Gisela Mayer was the only athlete to break into the Austrian phalanx. She gathered 361.44 points in the senior competition and won first place there. 311.44 points secured the title in the men's competition for Georg Fiala (AUT).

For more information, pictures, and detailed lists of results of the 'Ski & Golf World Championships' please go to

www.skigolfwm.com on the Internet.

General Information:

With 13,500 beds and two million overnight stays per year, the 'Europa-Sportregion Zell am See - Kaprun' is one of the most important tourism centres in Austria. In winter as in summer, guests find all kinds of leisure activities to choose from. For ski fans there are 130 kilometres of finest pistes in thick powder snow. In the summer months Zell am See and Kaprun captivate with ideal conditions for more than 40 different kinds of sports - from hiking and golfing, cycling and all water sports to extreme sports like canyoning and, last not least, summer skiing on the glacier of Kitzsteinhorn. In recent years the region has also hosted many races of the Mountain Bike World.

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