

## The competitors start off in great conditions on the Àliga slope during the first day of the World Cup Finals

**It is the first time that Andorra has hosted a men's and women's World Cup downhill race**

**The best practice times this Monday were obtained by Norway's Kjetil Jansrud and Italy's Sofia Goggia**

**Andorra la Vella, 11 March 2019.** The World Cup Finals Andorra 2019 are now underway. Today, **Monday 11 March**, the best high-speed specialists have completed the **first downhill (DH) trial** on the Àliga slope (El Tarter) on the first day of official training in this discipline. Never before in history has the country hosted a men's and women's downhill trial on the World Cup circuit and the route has passed the test with flying colours.

A total of **22 female and 22 male skiers** have completed the descent in excellent conditions. This was pointed out by the competitors, among them Germany's Kira Weidle (13th best time during training this Monday), who assured us that **'the slope is in perfect conditions, really very good and what's more, the weather's perfect, nice and sunny, so it's a pleasure to ski here.'**

In the male category, one of the favourites, Italy's **Dominik Paris** (15th best time and second in the general downhill classification), gave a **positive review of the slope, which he described as highly technical**, which may suit rivals like Switzerland's **Beat Feuz** or Austria's Hannes Reichelt. Despite everything, he proved to be convinced that he has a chance of winning and assured us that he'll give it his all.

The skiers acknowledged the work put in by the technicians at the resort. **'It's hot but the slope is incredible, which tells us that they've done a great job,'** stressed Norway's Kjetil Jansrud, who got the best time this Monday. The competitors also highlighted the challenge and appeal of competing on a new downhill route.

The Àliga DH is 2.7 kilometres long with a vertical drop of 756 metres and an average gradient of 28.2%. The most spectacular points are the "Salt del Gall", located halfway up the top part of the slope and "El Curvone", the most emblematic bend, located in the lower part.

The CEO of the Organising Committee of the World Cup Finals, **Conrad Blanch**, has assured us that the Àliga slope is in **impeccable conditions** and was very highly rated by the technicians from the International Ski Federation (FIS).

The director for women's alpine ski races in the World Cup, **Atle Skårdal**, told us that both the competitors and their teams 'are very happy' with how the first day has gone. Regarding Àliga, he says 'it's a great slope', especially for the girls, with **jumps, gradients and some very good technical features**. As far as the snow conditions are concerned, he was surprised by the excellent conditions and the fact that 'they were maintained' throughout the morning training session.

## Over 122 km/h

The first day of training has helped the competitors to get a first taste of the Àliga slope and this Monday the men have already exceeded speeds of **122 km/h** and the women **117 km/h**. In the men's category, the best time was achieved by **Kjetil Jansrud** with 1:28.36, whilst the fastest woman was Italy's **Sofia Goggia** with a time of 1:32.65.

## Logistics up and running

The first day of training for the Andorra 2019 Finals has also served to put all of the organisation and services to the test. **The television broadcasting, timing and all of the logistics of the arrivals area** at the foot of the El Tarter slopes has been successfully tested. At the same time, the main media centre has been put into action, located next to the Àliga arrivals area, where more than 390 journalists have been accredited and the Hospitality Team (competitors' areas) and the 350 volunteers are already operative. At the end of training, the award ceremony was also rehearsed, which will take place next to the finish line with the crystal globes at the centre of attention.

Regarding Tuesday's line-up, it will be dedicated to the second round of downhill training and on Wednesday the race in this discipline will take place – the 8th and final one of the season, which will have just one round, both for men and for women. In the men's category, **Feuz and Paris will be competing for the crystal globe, whilst in the women's category the battle for first place is between two Austrian skiers: Nicole Schmidhofer and Ramona Siebenhofer.**

## Side events

The World Cup Finals are a great sporting event but also a social event designed for **all the country to enjoy as well as visitors** who have travelled to Andorra to see it live. With this in mind, side events and entertainment programmes have been scheduled to round off these great festivities.

### **Opening ceremony: Tuesday 12 March at 19:30 at the Avet de Soldeu slope**

The grand opening ceremony will take place on Tuesday and can be enjoyed from the new Soldeu platform. This will involve the official presentation of the participating teams and athletes. The show will include projection mapping, fireworks and many more surprises.

The ceremony can also be seen live on the TV channel Andorra Televisió and on the giant screens set up in the square Plaça de la Rotonda in Andorra la Vella, where Andorran children's television character Piolet will be making an appearance and there will be hot chocolate on tap, together with music and endless fun. On the same screens, it will be possible to watch all of the World Cup Final races throughout the week.

### **Public draw: Saturday 16 March at 18:30 in Canillo**

The public draw on Saturday is a great opportunity to get close to the big stars of alpine skiing. It will take place in Plaça Carlemany, in front of the Comú de Canillo, in a festive act that will have parallel entertainment.

### **Après-ski from Wednesday to Sunday at L'Abarset**

The bar/restaurant L'Abarset d'El Tartar is once again the epicentre of après-ski with a daily musical entertainment programme that starts on Wednesday and keeps going through to Sunday. From 17:00 to 21:00 a wide repertoire of DJs and groups will be performing live. The grand finale will be on Sunday when the World Cup Final Party finishes off this historic week with music and entertainment.



## Village with the main brands from the world of skiing

A stone's throw from L'Abarsets, the Village will be set up from Wednesday onwards, a place where visitors can find the best brands from the world of skiing. An ideal space where the latest innovations in skiing, the best materials and trends will be brought together under the same roof. It will be open from 12:00 to 20:00.

## AGENDA

### Tuesday 12/03/2019

10:00 Slope: Àliga (El Tarter)

Men's DH training

11:00 Slope: Àliga (El Tarter)

Women's DH training

19:30 Slope: Avet (Soldeu)

Opening ceremony

[Download photos here:http://bit.ly/Entrenaments1SWCF](http://bit.ly/Entrenaments1SWCF)

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