



FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DE SKI  
INTERNATIONAL SKI FEDERATION  
INTERNATIONALER SKI VERBAND



CH-3653 Oberhofen (Switzerland), Tel. +41 (33) 244 61 61, Fax +41 (33) 244 61 71 [www.fis-ski.com](http://www.fis-ski.com)

SUNDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## FIS MEDIA INFO

### **FIS President: “Val d’Isère (FRA) hosted marvelous and unforgettable FIS Alpine World Ski Championships”**

Val d’Isère, February 15th, 2009/ -- “FIS is pleased about these memorable FIS Alpine World Ski Championships in Val d’Isère (FRA) that have now come to a close,” commented Gian Franco Kasper, FIS President at the official closing ceremony held in the Bellevarde finish area following the final competition on Sunday. “These championships have delivered a major contribution to skiing in France. We are very positively surprised about the great numbers of spectators who have made the trip to Val d’Isère on a daily basis, especially the remarkable 32’000 who came on a regular working day, the so-called Magic Monday on 9<sup>th</sup> February, to see the ladies’ downhill and men’s super combined. We hope that this enthusiasm will live far into the future and look optimistically towards the 2011 FIS Alpine World Ski Championships in Germany where the host nation will be defending the outstanding two gold medals it won here in Val d’Isère.”

“The success of Val d’Isère 2009 was not self-evident given the problems encountered on the way, including a major crisis just two years ago. However, the team led by the President of the Organizing Committee, Mayor of Val d’Isère Marc Bauer and OC Director General Jean-Luc Fabre, together with the French Ski Association, has done a truly outstanding job to stage these marvelous and unforgettable FIS Alpine World Ski Championships. The weather is always unpredictable and in fact, we have not had a major championship or Olympics without schedule changes since 1970. It is indeed regrettable that we lost the nations’ team event especially since the host nation France had such a good chance for a medal. However all 10 individual races were successfully carried out in excellent conditions on championship-worthy courses and our sincere thanks belong to the hundreds of volunteers who tirelessly worked to prepare the courses to help the organizing committee in the challenging conditions.”

President Kasper added: “The number of nations – 12 – on the podium goes on to show that skiing is a global sport. This is also underlined by the new record of participating nations – 70 – here at Val d’Isère 2009. To continue to grow the sport of skiing, FIS has heard the concerns expressed by the developing ski nations and will evaluate the qualification races for the technical events. In order to provide the best possible course conditions for all racers in the finals and deliver the timetable for television coverage, the number of participants in the final will still need to be restricted but could potentially be increased from the current 75 racers.”

The 2009 championships were staged in Val d’Isère 47 years after the FIS Alpine World Ski Championships were last held in France. Of the participating 70 nations – a new record, with 382 participating athletes – 12 celebrated medals, six of them gold. With a total of six medals, Switzerland won the medals ranking, followed by Austria with five and the USA with 3 medals. A total of 260’000 estimated spectators attended the 10 medal events in the

course of 13 days of competitions. The best-attended event was the men's slalom with estimated 42'000 spectators.

Mayor Marc Bauer also expressed his satisfaction with the championships and their role in reaffirming the image of Val d'Isère as a leading venue in the world for high level ski competitions. Director General of Val d'Isère 2009 Jean Luc Fabre added: "Overall we are very satisfied with the championships and are especially pleased that we have succeeded in meeting our four goals: We were able to deliver a spectacular sports program on the challenging Face-a-Face slopes, despite the changing weather conditions. We have staged a true sports festival with a record number participating nations. With the free access concept, we have averaged some 20'000 spectators a day, among them large numbers of youngsters, who had a chance to enjoy the thrill of ski sports and spend time in the snow. True to our commitment to protect the environment, we are particularly pleased that more than half of our visitors have travelled to Val d'Isère using public transportation. We thank both the Rhône-Alpes regional council and the Savoy County Council who financed the public transportation and thereby enabled this concept to thrive."

The 41st FIS Alpine World Ski Championships will be held in Garmisch-Partenkirchen (GER) from 6th-20th February 2009.

\* \* \*

### **About FIS**

Founded in 1924 during the first Olympic Games in Chamonix, France, the International Ski Federation (FIS) aims to promote the sport of skiing and snowboarding and directs the development of all ski and snowboarding activities world-wide. It administers the Olympic disciplines of Alpine Skiing, Cross-Country Skiing, Ski Jumping, Nordic Combined, Freestyle Skiing and Snowboarding, including setting the international competition rules. With the help of its 110 member nations, FIS stages more than 6'000 ski and snowboard competitions annually. FIS also makes recommendations for recreational skiing and snowboarding in the interest of all and promotes play in the snow as a healthy leisure activity for children and the youth. For more information, please visit [www.fis-ski.com](http://www.fis-ski.com).

\* \* \*

For further information, please contact  
Riikka Rakic, FIS Communications Manager, on [rakic@fisski.ch](mailto:rakic@fisski.ch) or +41 79 64 34 281