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FIS MEDIA INFO

FIS to launch new Cross Country Tour

FIS revealed their plans for a new Cross Country "XC-Tour" on a press conference in Oberstdorf (GER) on 21 February in connection with the FIS Nordic World Ski Championships.

In order to strengthen the identity of Cross-Country skiing across Europe and the rest of the world, FIS are discussing the launch of the "XC-Tour" which will start in 2007 and take place from 5th – 14th of January. The idea behind the project is not only to increase the focus on cross-country skiing but also to fulfill the real potential of the sport by "unifying the cross-country family" (that is, finding an overall winner for such disciplines as time trial, pursuit, sprint, mass start, etc)

The XC-Tour is set to provide Cross Country skiing with a clear profile as it is arranged over a limited period of time and consequently results and competitions should be easy to understand and follow for everybody over the ten-day period which will see eight stages take place in various cities across central Europe.

Athletes taking part in the XC-Tour, which is aiming to fill a gap in the overall sports calendar, need to participate in all stages of the tour if they are to compete for the overall title and all stages will offer points for the FIS Cross Country World Cup standings. In line with what would be the Tour de France of cross-country skiing the overall leader would wear a yellow bib, the best sprinter a green bib, and the best climber would wear a polka-dotted bib.

According to current planning the Tour would start on 5th January, 2007 with a prologue at the Olympic Park in Munich (GER) with a 2 athletes' team time trial the next day in Reit im Winkl (AUT) and then pursuits in Oberstdorf (GER). The skiers would then visit Zurich og Berne (SUI) with sprints on 8th January and Davos (SUI) two days later with a "King of the Mountain" time trial. After sprints in Val di Fiemme (ITA) on 12th January and a mass start in the same Italian resort on 13th January, the Tour would conclude 14th January with a pivotal long-distance stage between Toblach (AUT) and Cortina (ITA).

Through this event structure FIS is hoping not only to create a strong brand identity around the tour and cross-country skiing in general but also to optimize TV rights as well as commercial rights.

The plans for the 1.XC-Tour are subject to approval by the FIS Council in connection with the FIS Calendar Conference in Amsterdam between 5th-8th May.