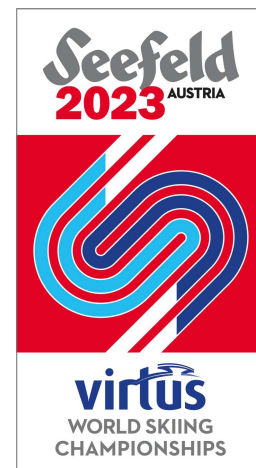


Competitive sports performance, appreciation and friendship -

Virtus World Skiing Championships 2023

From March 11 to 17, 2023, the skiing world championships for people with intellectual impairments will take place in Seefeld in Tyrol.



92 days to go until the Virtus World Skiing Championships: When joy and appreciation lead to success

With a world championship worthy warm-up programme together with Benni Raich and a review of the World Cup cross-country skiing track together with the mentors David Kreiner and Mario Stecher, the cadre athletes of the Austrian Disabled Sports Association started their preparations for the 2023 Virtus Ski World Championships in Seefeld on 8 December.

The official launch event took place in the Seefeld Sports Arena in the presence of numerous supporters and representatives of the municipality, state and federal government and the ÖBSV.

For the World Championships for people with intellectual impairment, held for the first time on Austrian soil, the athletes have high expectations and even more motivation. The first exchange at eye level with the mentors for both disciplines raises their self-esteem above all.

A lack of snow prevented classic ski training between the gate poles, so the schedule was changed at short notice to ski gymnastics and race preparation in the run-out of the ski jump. The two-time Olympic champion and alpine mentor of the World Championships, Benni Raich, was allowed to share many of his tips and tricks.

"It's all been discussed already. The tips have to remain secret, of course," says the three-time World Champion mischievously, "Michael Konrad also trains with our training group at Hochzeiger time and again. It is very, very nice to see the enthusiasm. I love this unfiltered way the most and it is a great enrichment for all of us."

After a first joint training session on the official World Cup cross-country skiing track exactly one year ago, the Nordic Director of the Austrian Ski Federation and mentor of the Virtus Ski World Championships, Mario Stecher, was once again able to exchange ideas with the Nordic athletes. "With joy you can do a lot and then success will follow!"

The two initiators of the World Championships, Paula Grameiser-Scherl (Secretary General of the World Championships) and René Schönberger (Chairman of the Competence Committee) emphasised that World Championships Ambassador Julian Hadschieff had an open ear for the idea of bringing the World Championships for people with intellectual impairment to Austria for the first time from the very beginning. The duo courageously and persistently worked their way through the approval of Seefeld as the desired venue to the official contract to host the Virtus Ski World Championships in Seefeld in Tyrol.

When the 2023 Virtus Ski World Championships open in the World Championship-tested region of Seefeld in 92 days' time, the Austrian squad, Alpine and Nordic, will not only want to use the home advantage, but also show the local fans and the sporting world that - as Johannes Grandner from Kitzbühel is convinced - you can achieve anything with 'training, training and even more training'!

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Statements

Benni Raich, mentor Alpine

I think sport brings people together and that is important for our society. I don't think we should underestimate the importance of sport here. There is regular sport, there is disabled sport, I think it is important for the people here and also for us as athletes that there are people who support it, like all of us here today, but of course also the spectators. You also get back a lot, of course you must never forget that. From that point of view, it's also a bit of a selfish thing and I have to say, I'm very, very happy to be here.

Mario Stecher, mentor Nordic

A great event, the enthusiasm of the people, above all also very, very important that the parents support and promote everything. The sparkle in their eyes is simply wonderful. A lot can be done with joy and then success will follow! All the best!

David Kreiner, mentor Nordic

For me, it's more like a seminar for enthusiasm and inspiration that spills over. I think every child starts with sport and exercise because it's fun; at some point you get lost in details and little things and here you get the unfiltered and the total joy and that inspires me too. The athletes are so authentic and when they do it like that in March, success is what follows. Especially in an environment like Seefeld. I've also always really enjoyed doing my laps on the cross-country track and going over the ski jump here. Just soaking it all up and in the race the race is important, afterwards getting to know and being with the other athletes is just as important.

Julian Hadschieff, ambassador of the world championships

Today's event is a wonderful sign that the achievements of people with disabilities, whether in sport, in professional life or in normal everyday life, are more appreciated; that we notice that not only is performance achieved here with a lot of enthusiasm, but that others say that this is a top performance and that it can be put on a par with what others do in regular sport, in Paralympic sport. It is nice that this Virtus WM exists. And it exists because many people with a lot of empathy, ambition and commitment make it possible.

René Schönberger, ÖBSV-KGM Chairman

With 92 days to go until the World Championships, I am thrilled and excited. A lot is going on around our joint Virtus Ski World Championships. There are a lot of people I would like to thank, because without their help this World Championships could not take place. First of all, Julian Hadschieff, our first supporter and main sponsor. I would especially like to thank a group of people without whom our athletes could not easily come from Carinthia, Upper Austria or Vorarlberg to a squad training in Tyrol. They can't do it on their own, it takes committed parents who travel thousands of kilometres a year with their children and young people. Thank you!

Paula Grameiser-Scherl, Secretary General Virtus World Championships

Today is just perfect - the weather, the snow has finally come and at just the right time, an insane amount of people have come here for the kick off. From the Seefeld venue to the federation and beyond, everyone is pulling together. I am grateful for that! The preparations are going very well, we currently have over a hundred registered athletes from 13 nations. I am confident that we will also get Spain and America.

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Virtus - Virtus.sport

Virtus ist die globale Organisation, die Profisport für Athlet:innen mit intellektueller Beeinträchtigung verwaltet, vertritt, organisiert und fördert.

Virtus World Intellectual Impairment Sport, "Virtus" ist der Markenname für den internationalen Verband für Athlet:innen mit intellektueller Beeinträchtigung und ist Gründungsmitglied des internationalen Paralympischen Komitees.

Gegründet 1986, ist Virtus (bis 2019: INAS) von 14 Mitgliedern auf eine Organisation mit mehr als 500 000 Athlet:innen aus mehr als 90 Nationen aus Europa, Afrika, Asien, Nord-, Zentral- und Südamerika und Ozeanien angewachsen.

2020 umfasste das Virtus Sportprogramm 15 wiederkehrende Sommer- und

Wintersportbewerbe, an denen jährlich mehr als 7000 Athlet:innen auf internationalem Niveau teilgenommen haben.

Virtus hat sich zum Ziel gesetzt, bis 2030 Inklusion im Sport soweit zu fördern, dass Athlet:innen mit intellektueller Beeinträchtigung auf professionellem, internationalem Leistungsniveau trainieren und wettkämpfen können.



Österreichischer Behindertensportverband (ÖBSV) - Obsv.at

Unserer Mission: Welche Behinderung du auch hast, ob du Anfänger oder Profi, alt oder jung bist – der ÖBSV hilft dir, deinen Sport und deinen Verein zu finden. Denn Sport und Bewegung machen dich mobiler und halten dich fit und gesund.

Unser Sportangebot: Breitensport steht beim ÖBSV an oberster Stelle. Durch viel Basis-Arbeit unter professioneller Anleitung unserer Trainerinnen und Trainer können wir unseren 6.000 Mitgliedern die allerbeste Unterstützung bieten. Der ÖBSV organisiert jedes Jahr über 150 Veranstaltungen: Meisterschaften, Sportwochen und Trainingskurse. Wer den Schritt vom Hobby- zum Spitzensportler/zur Spitzensportlerin machen will, ist bei uns richtig. Jedes Jahr senden wir rund 25 Sportler zu Europa- oder Weltmeisterschaften, organisieren die Vorbereitungen und auch die Finanzierung.

Seefeld „Tirols Hochplateau“ - Seefeld.com

Mit einer beeindruckenden Naturkulisse zwischen Wettersteingebirge und Karwendel und einem abwechslungsreichen Freizeitangebot begeistert Tirols Hochplateau als Urlaubsparadies inmitten der Tiroler Alpen. Die Ganzjahresdestination mit den fünf Orten Seefeld, Leutasch, Mösern, Reith und Scharnitz begrüßt Wintersportler, denen eine breite Vielfalt an Freizeitaktivitäten zur Wahl stehen. Dank der ausgezeichneten Infrastruktur, der leichten Erreichbarkeit aus allen Himmelsrichtungen sowie dem erstklassigen Angebot vor Ort ist Tirols Hochplateau international als Sportdestination bekannt. Bedingt durch die besondere Lage auf dem nach Süden hin geöffneten Hochplateau auf 1.200 Metern Seehöhe, ist die Region außerdem sehr schneesicher und daher auch ideal für Wintersportevents, darunter die Virtus Ski-Weltmeisterschaften 2023.

Gemeldete Verbände

Sport Inclusion Australia, Australien

Fapa Bulgaria, Bulgarien

Czech Association for Athletes with Intellectual Impairment, Tschechien

Estonian Mental Handicap People Sport Organization, Estland

Finnish Paralympic Committee, Finnland

Fédération Française du Sport Adapté, Frankreich

FISDIR Italy, Italien

Japan Para-Ski Federation, Japan

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ZSS Sprawni-Razem, Polen

Russian Sport Federation of Persons with Intellectual Impairment, Russland

Swedish Paraspport Federation, Schweden

TOSSFED - Turkish Special Athletes Sports Federation, Türkei

Österreichischer Behindertensportverband, Österreich

Veranstalter

Veranstaltender Verband: ÖBSV

Durchführender Verein (LOC): Ski-Club Seefeld

Offizielle Kanäle

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