



Media Contact:

Jeff Hanle, 970-379-3833, jhanle@aspensnowmass.com

For Immediate Release

The 2017 Audi FIS Ski World Cup Finals in Aspen Are Confirmed

ASPEN SNOWMASS, Colo. – June 11, 2016 – The World Cup Finals in Aspen scheduled for March 2017 were confirmed at the annual International Ski Federation (FIS) Congress on Friday. This marks the first time the event has been held in the U.S. in 20 years. The Mar. 15-19, 2017 event will feature the best men’s and women’s alpine skiing athletes in the world, competing in downhill, super G, giant slalom, slalom and a nation’s team event. It will also mark the return of the iconic America’s Downhill course. Aspen Mountain has a long history of World Cup ski racing in which the resort not only hosted the first World Championships outside of Europe in 1950, but has also been a yearly stop for the Women’s World Cup circuit.

The prestigious World Cup Finals are the season finale to the World Cup circuit with competitions in downhill, super G, giant slalom, slalom and the nation’s team event for both men and women. Aspen was selected by the FIS Council in June of 2014 to be the host for the 2017 Finals, marking the first time the Finals have been held outside Europe since 1997 and the first time the men’s tour has raced at Aspen since 2001. The Finals will be the culmination of a racing season that sees new events in Killington, Vt. and Squaw Valley, Calif..

“This is likely the biggest ski racing event ever held in Aspen, and that’s saying something,” says John Rigney, Vice President of Sales & Events, Aspen Skiing Company. “We’re excited to put on an amazing event that celebrates our incredible history and showcases the best of what Aspen has to offer.”

In the realm of ski racing, the Finals denote the last race in which the best ski racers in the world vie for the coveted crystal globes that are only presented to the overall winners in each of the four disciplines (downhill, super G, giant slalom and slalom). In addition to the individual discipline victors, the overall World Cup champion is awarded the most sought-after crystal globe in ski racing, the overall title which is decided by an accumulation of World Cup points in all four disciplines throughout the entire race season for both men and women.

“Aspen has been a remarkable partner in a very largescale project to bring the best ski racers in the world to the USA for an end of season festival of the sport,” said USSA President and CEO Tiger Shaw. “It’s an important part of our initiative to increase awareness of ski racing in America.”

The 2017 World Cup Finals in Aspen, Colo. will grant a new generation of racers the opportunity to be awarded the coveted crystal globes as they join a long lineage of ski racing legends as the best in the world. The Finals will be surrounded by a week of activities, events and festivals to celebrate the athletes and the heritage of racing in Aspen.

For event information and updates please visit www.aspensnowmass.com/

QUOTES:

Atle Skårdal, FIS chief race director for the ladies' Alpine World Cup

“There are just a lot of positive things to say about Aspen. As a race venue, we’ll have great, exciting races there. It used to be a classic downhill during the spring four years back—we had great World Cup races there for men’s downhill back in the 80s and 90s, which I think was amazing. It will be good to see the men race on that hill again. We know that—in terms of technical events—they have all the necessary requirements which will also guarantee great tech events. They have done some small changes to the hill and start area so we can guarantee a very exciting team event in the lower section. We know that Aspen is quite stable weather-wise during springtime, so if we and the organizers and everyone involved get a little lucky and have this normal Aspen weather it will be kind of a festival week in Aspen with a lot of things going on and something we definitely look forward to. We will experience there something which is very exciting for the sport, and very memorable in terms of the event program they’re going to produce.”

Mike Kaplan, President and CEO, Aspen Skiing Company

“We are very excited about hosting the World Cup Finals in 2017, this event brings us back to our roots, our very beginning as a ski town as the 1950 FIS championships really put us on the world stage for winter sports. Nearly 70 years later, we remain at the forefront of mountain sports, and a place that embodies the mountain lifestyle. This year is the 50th anniversary of the World Cup and one of its founders is our very own Bob Beattie, which gives additional meaning to this homecoming. We look forward to hosting this event and once again celebrating this place, this sport, and this way of life.”

Alice McKennis, US Ski Team Athlete

“It’s going to be really awesome to finish off the season in the U.S. And I’m even more excited to race on the hill that I grew up skiing on – it’s going to be fun to race down Ruthie’s and Aztec. I’m really looking forward to it, and I think it’s going to be an exciting race for the whole circuit. Not every World Cup athlete has raced at Aspen, so I think a lot of athletes are going to have their eyes open to what a fabulous track it is there.

Aspen has a rich ski racing heritage, dating back to the Roch Cup they used to have there, so it’s going to be cool to sort of bring that back to Aspen Mountain and bring that whole vibe back to the community. It’s going to be fun to have speed races there again, and hopefully the community will show up and there will be a good crowd. It’s going to be a great time; a really awesome spring race.”

Ted Ligety, US Ski Team Athlete

“World Cup Finals is always a highlight of the year and the best showcase of the sport, with all four events and men and women at the same location. The pressure can be even higher than the Olympics and World Champs with season titles in the balance. So, to have World Cup Finals in Aspen on home soil is awesome. To be able to have friends and family there for support – it should add to getting that little edge on the competition.”

Steven Nyman, US Ski Team Athlete

“Obviously, to finish the season in the U.S. will be special, but with the way our team is currently performing, with my performances and Travis, Andrew, Ted, David, Mikaela, Lindsey, Julia returning – I think there’s going to be a lot to celebrate at the end of the year. For me, my big goal is that downhill title. I believe I can do it, and to finish that off on home turf and I’m the first American male to ever win the downhill title, that would be a storybook ending in Aspen.

Having already run some NorAms there and knowing the hill – I think it suits my style and Travis' style quite well. There's a lot of gliding up top and some flowy sections at the bottom and a pretty demanding steep middle section on the Aztec pitch, so it's something that can favor the Americans. If the title comes down to racing on that hill, I think it could benefit us."