
Ice Climbing World Cup & European Youth Championships 2010 in Saas-Fee

The world's finest meet up once again in the glacier village of Saas-Fee

The world's finest ice climbers will again gather in the glacier village of Saas-Fee from 15 to 23 January 2010! In a new development this year, one whole week will be entirely devoted to ice climbing: from presentations by Ueli Steck and Ines Papert about the European Ice Climbing Youth Championships, right down to the annual World Cup and the Swiss Masters. One week of pure action!

The legendary ice climbing competitions will captivate athletes and fans alike for a full week in January 2010. For the first time, the programme of supporting events has been expanded to include presentations by top climbers such as Ueli Steck and Ines Papert, a European Ice Climbing Youth Championship, a climb for young people with instruction by professionals, and a night-time ski touring race. The newly revamped programme promises plenty of excitement, variety and all kinds of action for fans of ice climbing both young and old. Of course the legendary parties on Friday and Saturday evening (22 and 23 January) in Saas-Fee's multi-storey car park have not been omitted either!

Ice Climbing World Cup & Swiss Masters

The Ice Climbing World Championships in Saas-Fee's multi-storey car park are a fantastic opportunity to get up close and personal with top class athletes and experience the exuberant atmosphere of the ice climbing scene! The competitions take place in a unique location that is very unlikely to be replicated elsewhere. The 10-storey car park in Saas-Fee can also be used as a venue for staging the competitions in bad weather. Its round tower acts as a spectacular grandstand for spectators. So every year a good

2,000 spectators can follow all the action live and up close from each storey of the spiralling ramp in the car park. At the same time the first guests can already step out onto the dance floor deep down in the party zone and celebrate the dazzling performances of the athletes to the full. Plenty of refreshments are on hand, too. A wide choice of drinks as well as snacks both big and small is available in the marquee and at the bar.

This year the organisers are once again expecting a good 100 athletes from 14 nations who will take part in the UIAA World Cup and the Swiss Masters in ice climbing. As last year, 2010 will begin with both "lead" and "speed" disciplines.

"Lead" involves a long, taxing climb with a safety rope during which climbers can reach a height of up to 35 metres. The victor is the person who can cover the greatest distance in the allotted time. Amongst other things, a tally is made of the number of carabines into which the climber has been able to hook the rope. Speed climbing, as the name suggests, involves climbing as quickly as possible up an approx. 15 metre vertical ice wall. Top athletes can climb it in around 13 seconds.

Legendary parties

Evenings mark the start of the legendary ice climbing parties in the basement of the P10 car park in Saas-Fee, at the foot of the competition's ice wall. And of course the party wouldn't be complete without the climbers putting on a great show! Climbing holds and grips have been attached to the party zone ceiling especially for this spectacle. The later it gets and the wilder the mood becomes, the more the athletes attempt once more to display their courage and skills as to master this highly special course upside down.

What's more, the competitions will be relayed live on a big screen in the party zone throughout the evening, with the best scenes being shown again at the end. On both days there will also be a live band providing musical entertainment.

European Ice Climbing Youth Championships

For the first time in the history of ice climbing in the Saas Valley there will be a European Ice Climbing Youth Championship in Saas-Grund one week before the World Cup. Competitors will also battle it out in the "lead" and "speed" disciplines in this championship.

Sunday's agenda then includes ice climbing for young people with instruction by professional climbers. Along with Ines Papert (multi World Cup winning climber and four-time female World Champion) and Urs Odermatt (World Cup winner), aspiring young climbers between the ages of 12 and 18 will tackle the ice wall and learn valuable tips and tricks.

And there is still more on the agenda...

And there is more besides! As well as the exciting competitions for younger and older ice acrobats, Ueli Steck and Ines Papert are this year inviting any interested parties along to their presentations. Ueli Steck's presentation takes place on 15 January as part of the Ice Climbing competitions in Saas-Fee, although it will be held in the Simplon Hall in Brig. Ines Papert welcomes people to attend her presentation on Sunday 17 January in the Saas-Fee sports hall. Admittance in each case is from 19:00, with the presentation starting at 20:00. Entry is 20 CHF for each presentation. Children up to 16 years pay 10 CHF.

If the ice climbing competitions do not provide enough action, there will also be a night-time ski touring race on Wednesday 20 January. The race will start and finish in the village in Saas-Fee. The course for the "Race" category takes competitors across the Längfluh to the Panoramaplatz, to Morenia and back into the village. Additional categories with shorter routes: "Fun & Nostalgia" (Village, Gletschergrotte restaurant, grosser Stein, Village - also possible with snowshoes), and "Kids" (Village, Kalbermatten sports pitch, Hinter den Zäunen, Staffelwald lower terminus, Village - only with snowshoes). The races get going from 18:00 onwards.

Schedule

- 15/01: Presentation by Ueli Steck, Brig
- 16/01: European Ice Climbing Youth
Championships, Saas-Grund
- 17/01: Ice climbing for young people, with
instruction by professional climbers,
Saas Grund
Presentation by Ines Papert, Saas-Fee
- 20/01: Night-time ski touring race, Saas-Fee
- 21/01: UIAA Ice Climbing World Cup,
Starting number distribution, Saas-Fee
- 22/01: UIAA Ice Climbing World Cup & Swiss
Masters, Saas-Fee
- 23/01: UIAA Ice Climbing World Cup & Swiss
Masters, Saas-Fee

Additional information available from:
www.iceclimbingworldcup.ch or www.saas-fee.ch.
ar/sf

Text freely available for re-use.
Text length: 6084 characters excluding title

For further information please contact:
IWC Organisation, Kurt Arnold (OC president)
+41 79 433 15 64 or:
arnold.kurt@moutain-life.ch
Saas-Fee/Saastal Tourismus, Anja Roy
027 958 18 67, events@saas-fee.com or visit
www.saas-fee.ch

Photos: www.photopress.ch/image/saas-fee
Live stream (only during the event):
www.saas-fee.ch