

La VolatA is golden for Lara Gut-Behrami (SUI)
Laura Pirovano best of the Italian athletes

It's Lara Gut-Behrami to celebrate today's debut of Val di Fassa in the Fis Alpine Ski World Cup. The new Super-G world champion in fact won the first of three races scheduled on the La VolatA slope in Passo San Pellegrino, a track really appreciated by all the athletes racing that has rewarded the strongest one.

For the Swiss champion this is the thirty-first victory of her career in the top international circuit, the tenth in downhill. A success that has allowed her to take the lead in the overall World Cup, held untill this morning by the Slovak Petra Vhlova, ninth today.

Lara Gut-Behrami, who started with the bib number 7, has made the difference in the upper and in the final part of the track, succeeding in keeping behind her Ramona Siebenhofer (Aut) only for 2 hundredths and the teammate Corinne Suter for 26 hundredths, this latter golden medal in downhill at the recent Cortina World Champs. Fourth ranked Kira Weidle, followed by the American Breezy Johnson, first yesterday in the second official training.

The best of the Italian team was Laura Pirovano, the athlete from Spiazzo Rendena in Trentino, who has found the right feeling on the home slope, on the race day, confirming what she had already shown throughout the whole racing season.

Elena Curtoni was out of the top ten for only 5 hundredths, eleventh at 1"17, while Nadia Delago, the athlete from South Tyrol, who on this slope had already got a victory and a second position in the 2019 European Cup, ranked sixteenth right ahead of Federica Brignone. Francesca Marsaglia finished in twenty-first position while Marta Bassino ranked twenty-ninth, all anyway gaining important points for the final standings. Roberta Melesi was thirty-fourth and Teresa Runggaldier, daughter of the great ski champion Peter, finished in the thirty-ninth position, surely a very special day for her as she was debuting in the Ski World Cup. The last Italian athlete competing today, Federica Sosio, did not finish her race as she went off in the central part of the track.

The official trainings on Wednesday and Friday had already made clear that the fight for victory would have been hard, with the first five athletes all ranked in a time gap of 36 hundredths. Today small details have made the difference, awarding one of the most talented athlete of the circuit, Lara Gut-Behrami. This strong Swiss champion, three-medal winner in the last Cortina World Champs, was able to interpret the Val di Fassa slope in the best possibile way and took another important step towards her seasonal goal, the conquest of the overall World Cup. Now she leads the overall standing with 1,047 points, 29 ahead of Petra Vhlova, with good chance to widen the gap in the next two days. In the third

position, with 836 points, Michelle Gisin, today ninth ex aequo with Petra Vhlova, while Marta Bassino is fourth with 743 points.
The downhill World Cup ranking, with two more races in calender, is still in the hands of the Italian Sofia Goggia, who leads the ranking with 480 points, 150 ahead of Corinne Suter (Sui) and Breezy Johnson (USA), both in second position with 330 points. Lara Gut-Behrami is fourth with 283 points, but she is still fighting for the trophy that she could conquer with two more victories in the two races left.
The Super-G world champion is also the favorite for tomorrow's race which will start at 11.00 a.m., live on Rai 2, Raisport and Eurosport.

Interviews

«It is an easy track to interpret - explains the winner **Lara Gut-Behram**i – but it is easy, at the same time, to loose precious tenths. Smoothness counts a lot. In short, it is necessary to find the right compromise between the lines and the ability to let the skis go as fast as possible. As a matter of fact I succeded in doing this. As for the snow, today I found it in better conditions than in the last two days, also because the sun heats the track only up to the first gate. Tomorrow we hope to find the same excellent conditions».
«I immediately had an excellent feeling with this track - says **Ramona Siebenhofer**, second in ranking – and I have alwaysbeen trying to maintain a good speed. I have good sensations also for the next races and I hope I can convert these positive feelings into a good time tomorrow. I'm happy to have another try on this track which I really like. The Italian races bring me good luck, with four podiums out of five in the World Cup in my whole career».
«I had studied the track well while training and I think I have interpreted today's race well, - declares **Corinne Suter**, third today – I knew I had to adapt to softer snow in the upper part and to a harder one in the central part of the track. I believe that tomorrow I can do even better. As for the overall downhill ranking, I honestly do not think much abouti it but I only try to ski at my best. We will see in the end. By now, I am already fully satisfied with my season».
«Today I did my best to try to finish in the top ten - explains **Laura Pirovano**, eighth and first of the Italians - and this is a great satisfaction for me. Races like this one, in which lines are not as much important as letting the skis go, do not suit my characteristics. This is also the reason why I am satisfied with the eighth position. Now we will watch and analyse my performance trying to find out how to improve for tomorrow's challenge».