

## PREVIEW MEN'S GIANT SLALOM VAL D'ISÈRE – Saturday 9 Dec 2023

### Marco Schwarz

- On 29 October, the men's season opening event of the 2023/24 World Cup event was the giant slalom in Sölden. The race got underway and 47 of the 73 skiers on the start list participated in the first of two runs, but the race got cancelled due to strong winds.
- Of the skiers who completed their first run, Austria's Marco Schwarz had set the fastest time of 51.85 seconds, 0.29s ahead of Switzerland's Marco Odermatt in second place.
- Schwarz has one World Cup giant slalom victory to his name. Schwarz emerged victorious in Palisades Tahoe on 25 February after he had set the fifth-fastest time in the first run.
- Six of the seven men's World Cup events in the 2023/24 season were cancelled. The exception was the Gurgl slalom on 18 November, in which Austria achieved a podium sweep thanks to Manuel Feller, Schwarz and Michael Matt.
- Austria swept the podium in the Gurgl slalom to claim its first 1-2-3 finish in a men's World Cup event since the Garmisch-Partenkirchen downhill in February 2015.
- Austrian men (9) have recorded the most World Cup giant slalom victories in Val d'Isère (Switzerland are next up on eight wins).

### Marco Odermatt

- Since the beginning of 2021/22, Marco Odermatt has won 12 of the 18 men's World Cup giant slalom events, including each of the last three.
- Odermatt triumphed in seven of the 10 men's World Cup giant slalom events last season. Only Ingemar Stenmark (10 in 1978/1979) managed to win as many men's World Cup giant slalom events in a single season.
- Odermatt can become the first man to win four successive World Cup giant slalom events since Marcel Hirscher set a streak of five in 2017/18 (from December to March).
- Odermatt (14) can equal Alberto Tomba (15) in joint-sixth place in the list of most men's giant slalom victories in the World Cup. Hermann Maier and Benjamin Raich claimed 14 wins as well.
- Odermatt's worst results in his last 17 giant slalom starts in the World Cup were third-place finishes in Kransjka Gora (13 March 2022) and Alta Badia (18 December 2022).
- The last men's World Cup giant slalom event in which Odermatt participated but did not finish on the podium was an 11th place in Lenzerheide in the final GS event of the 2020/21 season. **Note:** Odermatt did not start in the giant slalom event in Schladming on 25 January 2023.
- Odermatt triumphed in the Val d'Isère giant slalom in each of the last two World Cup seasons. Among men, only Marcel Hirscher (5) and Michael von

Grünigen (4) have won more than two World Cup giant slalom events at this resort.

### Other contenders

- **Henrik Kristoffersen** finished on the podium of a World Cup giant slalom event seven times last season, but never on the highest step (five second places and two third places). His worst result last season were fifth places in Val d'Isère (10 December 2022) and Schladming (25 January 2023).
- **Loïc Meillard, Marco Schwarz** and recently retired Lucas Braathen (one apiece) were the only men besides Marco Odermatt to win a World Cup giant slalom event last season.
- **Žan Kranjec** (2) hopes to equal Jure Kosir (3) on most World Cup victories among men representing Slovenia. Both WC wins by Kranjec came in giant slaloms: in Saalbach-Hinterglemm (19 December 2018) and Adelboden (11 January 2020).
- **Alexis Pinturault** has won 34 World Cup events, including four in Val-d'Isère. Pinturault triumphed in the WC giant slalom at this resort in 2016/17 and 2017/18.
- Pinturault is eyeing his first World Cup victory since 20 March 2021, when he won the giant slalom event in Lenzerheide on his 30th birthday.

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