

## FACTS & FIGURES – Men's Slalom World Championships, Saalbach

- **Men's Slalom World Championship gold medals by nation:** Austria (16), France (6), Norway (5), Switzerland (5), Sweden (4), Italy (4), Germany (3), Croatia (1), Luxembourg (1), Finland (1), Spain (1)
- Reigning Slalom world champion **Henrik Kristoffersen (NOR/Van Deer)** can match Marcel Hirscher as the only men to win back-to-back titles since Ingemar Stenmark (SWE) claimed three titles in a row, 1978-1982.
- Hirscher and Stenmark lead the way with three Slalom world golds, but Kristoffersen can join Rudi Rominger (SUI), Anton Seelos (AUT), Jean-Baptiste Grange (FRA) and Mario Matt (AUT) as the only men with two titles.
- Norwegians have claimed both the past two golds, with Sebastian Foss-Solevaag (NOR/Salomon) winning in 2021.
- If Kristoffersen is to win a third gold in succession for Norway, he will need to find a first victory on Austrian snow since winning in Schladming in January 2020.
- Kristoffersen currently tops the World Cup Slalom season standings, after a win, three podiums and a further four top-10 finishes.
- Reigning Olympic Slalom champion **Clement Noël (FRA/Dynastar)** is chasing a first medal at his fourth world championships.
- The Frenchman has won four World Cup Slalom races this season, two more than his nearest rival, Timon Haugan (NOR/Van Deer).
- Jean-Baptiste Grange was the last French Slalom world champion, triumphing in 2011 and 2015.
- Noël's best result to date in a world championships was 4th in the Slalom in 2023.
- No Swiss skier has won world championship Slalom gold for 75 years, since Georges Schneider (SUI) took gold in 1950.
- **Loic Meillard (SUI/Rossignol)** is well-placed to end that drought, given his great record in Saalbach.
- So far, Meillard has won a world championship gold (Team Combined) and bronze (Giant Slalom) plus claimed a World Cup GS win and three second places (one in Slalom, in 2018) in Saalbach.
- Meillard has just one career Slalom World Cup victory, in Aspen just under a year ago. But this season he has finished 2nd twice and 3rd twice in the Slalom on the World Cup circuit.
- Statistically, **Timon Haugan (NOR/Van Deer)** could arguably be the favorite for gold on Sunday. The Norwegian won the most recent World Cup Slalom (in Schladming) and won the most recent World Cup Slalom in Saalbach (2024 World Cup Finals).
- Haugan is somewhat of a 'feast or famine' Slalom skier. In his last 10 World Cup slaloms, he has three wins, a second, and no other finish higher than 8th.
- Haugan won Parallel bronze and Team Parallel silver at the 2023 World Championships.

- Like his compatriot, **Atle Lie McGrath (NOR/Head)** has enjoyed a successful Slalom season on the World Cup tour, winning once (Wengen) and finishing on the podium a further three times.
- McGrath is yet to finish better than 5th (Alpine Combined in 2023) in five world championship races.
- By a margin of 10 golds, Austria is the most successful nation in the men's Slalom at world championships. **Manuel Feller (AUT/Atomic)** may offer the best chance of adding to their 16 gold medals.
- The 2017 Slalom silver medallist, finished 2nd the last time the men raced Slalom in Saalbach (2024 World Cup Finals).
- Since those 2024 World Cup Finals, Feller has finished on the podium just once, coming 2nd last time out in Schladming.
- Crowned 2023/24 Slalom World Cup champion, Feller won four times last season.
- Compatriot **Marco Schwarz (AUT/Atomic)** offers Austria another hope.
- Just one of Schwarz's seven world championship medals came in the Slalom, when he took bronze in 2019.
- His last Slalom World Cup podium finish came in December 2023, when he won in Madonna di Campiglio.
- **Lucas Pinheiro Braathen (BRA/Atomic)** could become the first Brazilian to win a world championship medal.
- He is already the first Brazilian to finish on a World Cup Slalom and Giant Slalom podium.
- Pinheiro Braathen has reached 10 World Cup Slalom podiums. Three of his first four podiums were wins (when racing for Norway), but none of the six since have been on the top step.
- Pinheiro Braathen's best result so far at a world championships was 7th in the Slalom in 2023.
- **Linus Strasser (GER/Rossignol)** could become Germany's first Slalom men's champion for 38 years.
- If the 32-year-old did win, he would become the oldest men's Slalom world champion, over-taking the 31-year-old Manfred Pranger (AUT), the 2009 champion.
- Strasser was 3rd in the Slalom in Saalbach at the 2024 World Cup Finals.
- Three of his four World Cup Slalom wins have come on Austrian snow (Schladming 2023 and 2024 and Kitzbühel 2024).
- **Alex Vinatzer (ITA/Atomic)** could become Italy's first Slalom champion since Alberto Tomba (ITA) won in 1996.
- Vinatzer claimed bronze two years ago.
- Since then he has finished on the World Cup podium just once, coming 2nd in Kitzbühel in January.