

Preparations for the Audi FIS World Cup 2021 in Jasná complicated by pandemic

Covid manager of the World Cup in Jasná: "The skiers themselves pay attention to the strict observance of the bubble"

JASNÁ (9 January 2021) - The women's Audi FIS Alpine Ski World Cup in the Low-Tatras Jasná resort is irresistibly approaching and the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic still significantly complicates the work of the organisers of the prestigious event in Liptov. During the first weekend in March, the current leader of the World Cup, Petra Vlhová, will also present herself on domestic snow, and will face her opponents from all over the world in a fight for important points. All competitors have significantly different conditions in the current season at particular events compared to previous competition years

Up to three Alpine Ski World Cup races could take place in Jasná at the beginning of March.

During the Audi FIS World Cup in Jasná, according to the original program, slalom and giant slalom races should take place on Saturday and Sunday, March 6 and 7. However, it is possible that there will also be a fight for points in the overall evaluation on Friday 5 March. The members of the organising committee sent a request to the International Ski Federation (FIS) for the compensation of the giant slalom in Semmering, Austria. If the FIS complied with Jasná's request, the competition would therefore take place the day before the original program.

Pandemic situation requires several solutions

Due to the ever-evolving situation around the pandemic, the organising team has to prepare for several options. *"So far, we work with some two or three alternatives of the area. The current situation allows us the strictest, i.e. an enclosed space and only people who come and have a negative test for COVID-19 would be let in. They get an accreditation and will be able to move only directly within the resort,"* informs the organisers' deputy Peter Pukalovič, who works as a Covid manager. The organisers in Jasná must meet all the conditions of the International Ski Federation (FIS), the most important is the creation of the so-called red bubbles for racers and their teams.

"This is a basic rule; we have to create a zone of movement for them without contact with other people. Even the service staff who will take care of them in the hotel, i.e. people in the kitchen or maids, will live there with them all the time," explains Peter Pukalovič. The World Cup series has been running in European countries since mid-October, and, so far, COVID-19 has temporarily eliminated only a minimum of competitors. It is the result of an extremely responsible approach of the skiers. *"It's not that we have to guard them and make sure they don't leave the bubble. On the contrary, they want*

to follow it strictly. Even beyond the rules. For example, when eating, restaurants have the option of using the serving window where they don't come in contact with the staff. However, they prefer to eat in rooms," Peter Pukalovič describes the situation at individual World Cup stops.

Fan participation in the World Cup

For many months now, the possible participation of fans in the Audi FIS World Cup in Jasná has been a big question mark. *"At this time, it's more science fiction than reality. However, the great wish of the whole organising team is that as many people as possible enjoy the World Cup, albeit under strict measures. It will certainly not be possible to prepare it as it was five years ago. However, I think people are used to the measures today and have no problem with that, and we will try to prepare it so that they can enjoy it as much as possible,"* said the Covid manager of the event in Jasná.



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