

Press Release

Laax/Switzerland, March 9th 2006



Orage European Freeski Open Laax 2006

Countdown for the Orage European Freeski Open Laax: from March 22 - 26, 2006

about 200 freeskiers compete to gain glory, titles and USD 50,000 prize money in the freestyle disciplines Slopestyle and Halfpipe on Crap Sogn Gion mountain. Off the hill both athletes and fans get going at DJ parties and the live act Culcha Candela & Famara on Saturday in the Riders Palace.

In two weeks it's time to draw the curtain for the premiere of the Orage European Freeski Open Laax. For the first time a freeski event of this dimension takes place in Europe, open for all ambitious contest freeskiers. Amateurs and newcomers will meet seeded top athletes of Europe and America. It goes without saying that this event is staged at the number one European freestyle resort Laax in Switzerland. The Orage Masters, the pendant in North America, where freeskiing has been booming for quite some time, is organised by the event sponsor Orage (a leading Canadian clothing label) and has been under the appreciation of the riders for years. Now the Orage European Freeski Open in Laax are eagerly awaited.

The combination of the resort's know-how and the level of the riders guarantee top excitement and first-class performances at this contest. The contest area at Crap Sogn Gion offers perfect conditions: the Halfpipe, show-piece of the Freestyle crew in Laax, embedded within the impressive mountain panorama and well known for its precision beyond the Swiss borders, is majestic, 160 metres in length and more than five metres high. The Slopestyle, a parcours that combines different obstacles and kickers, starts at the hub of Crap Sogn Gion mountain and leads 600 metres down towards Plaun. But the real heroes of the pipe and the park terrain, especially redesigned and shaped for the freeski event, are the riders: they prove their ability and impress with amazing tricks. Going after USD 50,000 prizemoney in the finals they will show the best they can of this young sport. The qualifications are open for all riders. In the semifinals 24 qualified riders compete with 24 invited athletes. The cream of the most successful freeskiers are already confirmed on the Invited Riders List. These North American stars won't miss the Orage European Freeski Open in Laax: from Canada, TJ Schiller, Corey Vanular, JF Houle and Sarah Burke are coming, as well as Simon Dumont, Tanner Rainville, AJ Burton, Craig Coker and Michelle Parker, representing the USA. They will be challenged by European cracks like Jon Olsson, Oscar Scherlin (both SWE), Marie Martinod, Aurelien Fournier, Laurent Favre, Loic Collomb-Patton (all from FRA), Caja Schöpf, Nico Zacek, Tobi Reindl (all from GER), Martin Misof and Florian Wieser (both AUT), and of course also by the hosting country riders, the Swiss Virginie Faivre and Mickael Deschenaux. Fresh powder runs for the crowd and athletes are additional sweeteners in-between the competitions. Plenty of snow for riding aside from Slopestyle and Pipe, can already be taken for granted.



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The supporting program will draw an international audience to the Riders Palace: this is where the action is and riders, fans and media meet at this unique location. Either for chilling after a successful day in the mountains, listening to cool DJ sounds at the bar, having a drink or rocking at the daily event parties with Round Table Knights. At the crowning finals of the event as well as at the live act with Culcha Candela & Famara in the evening – everybody get's his money worth.

Orage European Freeski Open Laax 2006 – Program:

Wednesday, March 22	9am-4pm	Slopestyle Qualifications Men & Women (80 & 20)
Thursday, March 23	9am-3:45pm	Halfpipe Qualifications Men & Women (80 & 20)
	8pm	Riders Palace plays BUZZ (Lobby)
	9:30pm-11pm	Athletes Welcome Reception
	10pm>>	DJs Round Table Knights
Friday, March 24	9am-10:15pm	Slopestyle Semi Finals Women (12)
	10:30am-2pm	Slopestyle Semi Finals Men (48)
	3pm-4pm	Slopestyle Finals Men & Women (12 & 6)
	4:30pm	Prize Giving
	10pm>>	DJs Round Table Knights
Saturday, March 25	9am-10pm	Halfpipe Semi Finals Women (12)
	10:30am-1:30pm	Halfpipe Semi Finals Men (48)
	2:45pm-3:45pm	Halfpipe Finals Men & Women (12 & 6)
	4pm	Prize Giving
	9:00pm>>	Live in concert: Culcha Candela & Famara Support DJ Erik
Sunday, March 26	>>Weather Day	

Please refer to the media service for additional media information. You will also find material on the topics "freestyle resort Laax", "Riders Palace – the design hotel" and "security in park, pipe & piste" in the event theme catalog.

We would also be pleased to welcome you personally at the event! Please use the online media accreditation on www.laax.com/freeskiopen section MEDIA/ACCREDITATION.

Communication & PR:

Astrid Nehls
Services SBC
Josef Schraffl Str.19
A-6020 Innsbruck
+43 512 56 65 65
+43 676 431 4410
info@services-sbc.com



laax.com >