

2008 UCI Mountain Bike Marathon World Championships in South Tyrol

14th Suedtirol Dolomiti Superbike

Bozen/Bolzano, 29.02.2008 – Today the UCI MTB Marathon World Championships 2008 as well as the 14th edition of the Suedtirol Dolomiti Superbike in Niederdorf / Hochpustertal were presented at a press conference in Bozen/Bolzano (South Tyrol). Besides the numerous representatives from the world of economy and politics, also the 1997 MTB CC World Champion and now Technical Director of the Italian cycling association FCI Hubert Pallhuber as well as Italian Marathon Champion Alexandra Hober were present at the press conference.

South Tyrol hosts one more international mega event in 2008. On Saturday 5th July 2008 the 6th UCI Mountain Bike Marathon World Championships take place in Niederdorf – Hochpustertal. On Sunday 6th July on the other hand, the 14th edition of the classic Suedtirol Dolomiti Superbike is on schedule. Around 3,500 athletes are expected at the most popular MTB marathon in Italy. The World Championships, which count as an important test in regards of the Olympic Games in Peking, will be officially inaugurated at the main square of Niederdorf on Thursday 3rd July. The organizers have taken care of a colourful entertainment programme.

As preparation for these World Championships the OC Suedtirol Dolomiti Superbike has organized two top-class World Cup events in 2006 and 2007. "The World Championships are the result of a long and intensive process", says the chief of the organizing committee Kurt Ploner. "The event will bring international popularity and leads to a strong integration of South Tyrol, Hochpustertal and of Suedtirol Dolomiti Superbike in the international sports world." Ploner emphasizes that the OC started planning the event only after financial support has been assured by the government of South Tyrol, sponsors and the tourist region Hochpustertal / Alta Pusteria. Around 5,000 people are expected in Hochpustertal during the week of the races. The president of the Tourist Association of Hochpustertal Alfred Prenn says: "We are expecting that our hotel capacities will be booked by 100%."

The International Cycling Union (UCI) has assigned the MTB World Championships to South Tyrol in Holland in 2006. Suedtirol Dolomiti Superbike has been successful against three other candidates; these were Cortina D'Ampezzo (I), Kirchzarten (D) und Madrid (SPA). The main factors for the decision were the successful proven courses, the fascinating scenery of the Dolomites, the excellent organisation and emergency management, the positive feedbacks from athletes as well as the extensive infrastructures.

The course of the World Championships will be 119.9 km for the men respectively 88.6 km for the women and runs in anti-clockwise direction like it was in 2006. In this way the first long climb leads to "Plaetzwiese", this usually has been the last and often race deciding climb. The shortened course of the women leads straight to Toblach and leaves out the first ascent to "Plaetzwiese". As in previous years the start takes place on the main road by the central square of Niederdorf. The duration of the race is estimated at 4.5 hours.

The riders of the 14th Suedtirol Dolomiti Superbike can cover the 119.9 km distance on the next day too. They will be additionally motivated by the two Mountain Prizes (GPM) at "Hauonld" in Innichen and at "Rotwandwiese" in Sexten. The short distance of the Suedtirol Dolomiti Superbike measures 56.9 kilometres and its altitude difference amounts to 1,688 metres. For the short distance the Mountain Prize at "Plaetzwiese" and the Sprint Prize in Toblach will be awarded.