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## Worlds: Pride and passion collide at the colorful men's GS qualifier

By Eric Williams

Thursday, 12 February 2009

The first qualification race of the 2009 World Championships was run today in Val d'Isere, France. The men's giant slalom qualifier saw 105 competitors from 57 countries vie for the final 25 starting spots in tomorrow's championship race.

Russian Alexandr Horoshilov took the top spot with a time of 2:34.70 after two runs. Croatian Danko Marinelli finished second, a little more than a second off the pace, and Great Brittan's David Ryding finished third.

Athletes came from far and wide to the event, as it plays an integral part in many of their roads to next year's Olympics in Vancouver. Jackets reading Iran, Mexico, Nepal and Brazil, to name a few, roamed the finish area.

A strong sense of camaraderie between the "small countries" was apparent, as cut-throat competition took a back seat to cheering each other on.

Mexican representative, 50-year-old Hubertus Von Hoehenlohe brought some color to the event with a custom-made suit complete with painted on side arms. "I'm having fun, this is great. We have this hotel up in the ClubMed with 45 nations. I've never seen so many nations in my life and we can discuss our problems and make a difference to change something," said Von Hoehenlohe. "It's even good for the children in front of the TV, if they have so many countries they will learn where they all are. I have to get out a map sometimes."

Racers and coaches alike beamed with the pride of representing their countries on one of ski racing's biggest stages. The racers smiling faces out shined the third-hand helmets and shabby suits that many of the athletes happily donned.

While all the championship races, including today's women's GS, are being held in the main Val d'Isere area, the aspiring men GS racers were pushed two kilometers down the road to the O.K course finishing in the neighboring village of La Daille.

Most of the racers arrived on a free shuttle from the main base of the resort, walking past the twin Dodge duleys with New Hampshire plates that pull American Bode Miller's trailers, plastered with his image.

Nepal's ski team was in attendance with two young racers from the country's warrior caste. Shyam Kumar-Dhakal, who was selected to the team thanks in part to balance skills learned through kickboxing, finished 55th of the 61 total finishers. "It's wonderful for them to be in the World Championship along side so many other nations and for their nation to be here and properly represented," said Richard Morley the Nepal Ski Team's team manager. "I think any sporting achievement allows a country to have some self-respect. I think this is very important for poor nations who feel very much the forgotten people of the world."

Saturday's slalom qualifier will be Kumar-Dhakal's first slalom race. Today was the third day Kumar-Dhakal and teammate Khatri Subash skied on their new skis from Dynastar.

Brazilian Jhonatan Longhi was ten hundredths of a second from rubbing elbows with the big boys in 26th place. "I am happy to represent Brazil because it's a big nation, but there are only three or four racers from Brazil and I want to have a great World Championships here," said the 20-year-old racer who winters in Alta Badia, Italy.

It wasn't all smiles and rainbows at the base of the hill. Senegal Skiing Federation president Lamine Gueye openly confronted International Ski Federation (FIS) president, Gian-Franco Kasper for all the media to hear. Gueye fired a laundry list of complaints at Kasper concerning what he saw as unfair treatment of smaller countries by "big ski racing."

"It's not the world championships anymore, it's just the big countries feasting in the sumptuous dining room of Bellevarde while the small nations eat a sandwich in the kitchen," Gueye told Reuters. "In 1992, Val d'Isere gave brilliant proof that it was possible to hold a great ski festival on Bellevarde with 133 skiers at the start. It was again the case in Bormio at the worlds in 2005 with 120 skiers involved."

The 48-year-old former racer was the first black Winter Olympic skier in 1984 at the Sarajevo Games.

Kasper defended the organization's stance, telling Gueye that his frustrations go beyond the World Cup outsiders. "It's the same for the big nations, the money is not in the industry anymore," said Kasper. "I can think of many of the top nations that have the same problems with financing, but we still have so called qualification races at the World Championships on the same ranking list. I think this is very important for the athletes. Our obligation is to give the best athletes the best possible conditions and the most difficult conditions because we look for a world champion."

Gueye distributed black armbands to male and female racers who wore them in support of his beliefs.

The fastest 25 men from today's race will be added to the list of 50 who were pre-qualified for Friday's giant slalom. Watch video coverage on Universalsports.com.



Nepal's Khatri Subash displays his brand new skis. (Eric Williams)



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Rank	Bib	FIS Code	Name	Year	Nation	Run 1	Run 2	Total Time	FIS Points
1	15	480736	HOROSHILOV Alexandr	1984	RUS	1:18.15	1:16.55	2:34.70	28.88
2	3	380296	MARINELLI Danko	1987	CRO	1:17.44	1:18.33	2:35.77	34.97
3	2	220689	RYDING David	1986	GBR	1:17.84	1:18.48	2:36.32	38.10
4	4	700724	BABUSIAK Jaroslav	1984	SVK	1:17.67	1:18.79	2:36.46	38.89
5	46	301709	YUASA Naoki	1983	JPN	1:20.46	1:16.01	2:36.47	38.95
6	5	410270	CAFE Tim	1987	NZE	1:17.93	1:18.59	2:36.52	39.23
7	1	491151	DE LA CUESTA Paul	1988	SPA	1:16.79	1:19.78	2:36.57	39.52
8	10	60088	VAN DEN BOGAERT Jeroen	1979	BEL	1:18.23	1:18.68	2:36.91	41.45
9	8	90047	GEORGIEV Stefan	1977	BUL	1:18.67	1:18.27	2:36.94	41.62
10	19	400131	QUARTEL DE Alwin	1983	NED	1:18.50	1:18.62	2:37.12	42.65
11	30	700830	ZAMPA Adam	1990	SVK	1:19.43	1:17.75	2:37.18	42.99
12	35	110178	MARTINIC Jorge	1986	CHI	1:19.76	1:18.24	2:38.00	47.65
13	21	460040	NAN Ioan-Gabriel	1980	ROU	1:19.87	1:18.18	2:38.05	47.94
14	31	40304	STEVENS Bryce	1984	AUS	1:19.64	1:18.43	2:38.07	48.05
15	16	680041	ABRAMASHVILI Iason	1988	GEO	1:18.18	1:19.97	2:38.15	48.51
16	26	400163	ROOU VAN Joery	1986	NED	1:19.77	1:18.51	2:38.28	49.24
17	29	40332	STEVENS Hugh	1986	AUS	1:19.54	1:18.75	2:38.29	49.30
18	12	490958	CAPDEVILA Guillem	1985	SPA	1:20.24	1:18.10	2:38.34	49.59
19	22	90132	MANOLOV Kiril	1987	BUL	1:19.66	1:18.70	2:38.36	49.70
20	7	370022	JENOT Olivier	1988	MON	1:19.25	1:19.21	2:38.46	50.27
21	23	40363	GEIGER Christian	1988	AUS	1:20.24	1:19.07	2:39.31	55.10
22	39	250267	SIGURGEIRSSON Stefan Jon	1989	ISL	1:20.79	1:18.55	2:39.34	55.27
23	27	92534	CHONGAROV Nikola	1989	BUL	1:20.40	1:19.17	2:39.57	56.58
24	11	491110	JIMENEZ Diego	1987	SPA	1:20.79	1:19.29	2:40.08	59.48
25	17	30115	TORRES Agustin	1978	ARG	1:21.07	1:19.84	2:40.91	64.21
26	28	80063	LONGHI Jhonatan	1988	BRA	1:21.13	1:19.88	2:41.01	64.77
27	36	700808	STANCEL Simon	1988	SVK	1:21.42	1:19.78	2:41.20	65.85
28	42	60179	CORNETTE Niels	1991	BEL	1:21.64	1:20.63	2:42.27	71.94
29	9	480610	KASAKOV Ivan	1982	RUS	1:22.07	1:20.23	2:42.30	72.11
30	44	680045	VAKHTANGISHVILI Kote	1991	GEO	1:21.40	1:21.21	2:42.61	73.88
31	25	750063	VITANOV Aleksandar	1985	MKD	1:21.19	1:22.43	2:43.62	79.62
32	37	280020	RENZHIN Mikail	1978	ISR	1:21.97	1:21.85	2:43.82	80.76
33	13	90131	GEORGIEV Georgi	1987	BUL	1:23.11	1:20.99	2:44.10	82.35
34	52	170136	VIAL Christian	1984	DAN	1:22.64	1:22.21	2:44.85	86.62
35	53	670029	PIMENOV Taras	1984	KAZ	1:22.94	1:21.96	2:44.90	86.90
36	41	750088	RISTEVSKI Antonio	1989	MKD	1:22.78	1:22.63	2:45.41	89.80
37	57	750089	DEHARI Dardan	1990	MKD	1:24.20	1:23.05	2:47.25	100.27
38	48	550026	LANSMANIS Einars	1988	LAT	1:22.39	1:26.11	2:48.50	107.38
39	55	310388	KOSIC Bojan	1990	MNE	1:24.44	1:24.09	2:48.53	107.55
40	54	230116	TRIPODAKIS Pavlos	1982	GRE	1:24.20	1:24.40	2:48.60	107.95
41	43	230165	TSIMIKALIS Stephanos	1985	GRE	1:24.87	1:24.06	2:48.93	109.83
42	69	550022	RODE Roberts	1987	LAT	1:25.47	1:23.51	2:48.98	110.11
43	76	690086	FESHCHUK Rostyslav	1990	UKR	1:25.61	1:23.48	2:49.09	110.74
44	51	240111	BENE Marton	1986	HUN	1:25.10	1:25.66	2:50.76	120.24
45	70	260079	SAVEH SHEMSHAKI Hossein	1985	IRA	1:26.24	1:25.00	2:51.24	122.97
46	68	740018	SARKAKHYAN Abraham	1986	ARM	1:26.73	1:25.03	2:51.76	125.92
47	92	570015	SCOTT Peter	1990	RSA	1:26.94	1:25.88	2:52.82	131.95
48	78	270027	BYRNE Peter	1983	IRE	1:29.65	1:28.86	2:58.51	164.32
49	66	260084	TIR Omid	1984	IRA	1:32.16	1:26.42	2:58.58	164.72
50	83	860004	NOTZ Cedric	1974	AZE	1:30.90	1:27.99	2:58.89	166.48
51	86	170135	JENSEN Nichlas Bojer	1991	DAN	1:31.34	1:28.92	3:00.26	174.28
52	93	450017	GIORDANI Gian Luca	1989	RSM	1:31.03	1:29.80	3:00.83	177.52
53	90	740028	MANUKYAN Yura	1991	ARM	1:36.99	1:35.48	3:12.47	243.73
54	98	620050	NAMGIAL Jamyang	1985	IND	1:37.90	1:36.86	3:14.76	256.76
55	97	890003	SHYAM Kumar-Dhakal	1981	NEP	1:38.77	1:36.72	3:15.49	260.91
56	100	620030	KUMAR Santosh	1979	IND	1:40.75	1:37.27	3:18.02	275.30
57	102	360035	TRIERWEILER Ben	1988	LUX	1:42.34	1:39.80	3:22.14	298.74
58	103	780003	ENDRIUKAITIS Tomas	1972	LTU	1:42.79	1:40.14	3:22.93	303.23
59	99	941000	NKRUMAH-ACHEAMPONG Kwame	1974	GHA	1:41.29	1:42.27	3:23.56	306.82
60	104	890004	SUBASH Khatri	1987	NEP	1:46.88	1:41.93	3:28.81	336.68
61	105	720050	BAYARZUL Chagnaa	1971	MGL	2:13.54	2:06.57	4:20.11	628.50
Disqualified 2nd run									
	45	680042	TEDIASHVILI Vakhtang	1989	GEO				
Disqualified 1st run									
	95	340040	MEHANNA Jamil	1978	LIB				
	89	958400	TRAVERS Dow	1987	CAY				
	88	170114	STENE Nils-Henrik	1988	DAN				
	80	770011	TRELEVSKI Dmitry	1983	KGZ				
	77	770012	BORISOV Ivan	1979	KGZ				
	64	690036	VAKHNENKO Igor	1981	UKR				
	58	260007	SAVEH SHEMSHAKI Alidad	1972	IRA				
	40	320293	KYUNG Sung-Hyun	1990	KOR				
	24	430429	BYDLINSKI Maciej	1988	POL				
	20	250234	GUDMUNDSSON Gisli Rafn	1986	ISL				
Did not start 2nd run									
	84	540001	VON HOHENLOHE Hubertus	1959	MEX				
	82	340033	SALAMEH Georges	1976	LIB				
	18	250208	THORVALDSSON Arni	1984	ISL				
Did not start 1st run									
	101	660015	MAZALEUSKI Siarhei	1992	BLR				
	96	958401	TRAVERS Dillon	1991	CAY				

81	240128	BUJTAS Csaba	1992	HUN
Did not finish 2nd run				
94	790005	AZZIMANI Samir	1977	MAR
87	450015	CARDELLI Marino	1987	RSM
79	160074	PAPAMICHALOPOULOS Christopher	1988	CYP
74	690067	DOLGYI Serhiy	1984	UKR
73	240108	SZABO Bence	1986	HUN
67	520063	SARE Hamit	1982	TUR
62	230189	BONOU Nikos	1986	GRE
59	260097	SAVEH SHEMSHAKI Porya	1987	IRA
49	710311	RUDIC Marko	1990	BIH
47	230192	TSAKNAKIS Alexandros	1986	GRE
38	60159	VAN BUYNDER Frederik	1988	BEL
34	60160	ALAEERTS Kai	1989	BEL
33	30229	DENEGRY Segundo	1989	ARG
32	460060	BARBU Alexandru	1987	ROU
14	110207	ANGUITA Rafael	1988	CHI
6	410198	HOWDEN Angus	1981	NZE
Did not finish 1st run				
91	270031	BYRNE Brian E.	1987	IRE
85	770006	BORISOV Igor	1965	KGZ
75	770007	TRELEVSKI Alexander	1982	KGZ
72	170123	JAEGESEN Alex	1991	DAN
71	740022	NERSISYAN Arsen	1987	ARM
65	240122	SZEPESI Bertold	1990	HUN
63	550044	MARKSS Svens	1991	LAT
61	240132	FARKAS Norbert	1992	HUN
60	670037	ZAKURDAEV Igor	1987	KAZ
56	710269	BADURA Slaven	1986	BIH
50	680047	BENIANIDZE Alex	1991	GEO

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