



**2002 ITU Winter Triathlon  
World Series  
Wildhaus, Switzerland**



**Press Release**

**For immediate release – 6 January 2002: Wildhaus, Switzerland**

Excellent weather and snow-conditions at 1,180 meters above sea level, plus a total of 1,004 metres elevation difference for the run, mountain bike, cross-country ski, resulted in a challenging course of 12 laps. Athletes and technical officials awarded the first event of the 2002 ITU Winter Triathlon Series “4” stars.

In the majestic mountainous region of the Swiss canton of St. Gallen, the village of Wildhaus played host to this challenging event.

The women’s race was dominated by Marianne Vlasfeld from the flatland of Holland. She ended the run course 24 seconds ahead of the pack, dropped 4 seconds on the bike, then picked up 9 seconds on the well-groomed cross-country ski course, to win with a comfortable 29 seconds over the World Champion, Sigrid Lang of Germany.

The contest for 3<sup>rd</sup> place developed into a fierce struggle between Karin Mobes, local Swiss Miss and Gabi Pauli of Germany. The local favourite had a serious crash during the mountain bike portion, but fought back to take the bronze medal 3 minutes ahead of Gabi. Immediately after the awards ceremony, Karin was whisked off to hospital for examination. Anna Serra from Spain was a respectful 5<sup>th</sup> overall.

20 Minutes after the end of the women’s race, the men were off and running with the sounds of cheering spectators and the clang of cow bells in their ears. Benjamin Sonntag of Germany, the current leader of the season, entered transition a scant 2 seconds ahead of Marc Ruhe of Liechtenstein. In the bike section Marc was 4 seconds faster than Benjamin.

The cross-country segment was hot, with skating specialist Sonntag leaving the bike specialist Ruhe behind in his tracks by 1 minute to take the gold medal ahead of the Liechtensteiner. Othmar Brügger passed fellow Swiss team-mate Iwan Schuwey on the bike and increased his lead to take bronze, with twin brother Josef a credible 5<sup>th</sup> overall.

This first stage of the ITU 2002 World Cup Series was organised to a high level of Swiss competence by President of the Wildhaus organising committee Hans-Peter Schück. The efficiency and dedication of the large group of local volunteers, plus the professional advice of Bruno Selebam, and his “SportMandat Team” created exceptional conditions for this international event, and principally for the athletes.

The big smiles and enthusiasm at the conclusion of the awards celebration endorsed a desire on everyone’s part to return to Wildhaus for a future Winter Triathlon World Cup.

Much of the background work on the ITU Winter World Cup we owe to Michel Gignoux of France, the ITU Technical Director in Europe. Michel is also the Technical Delegate for the Summer Olympic Games Triathlon – Athens 2004.

The series now moves to:

Stoos, again in the Swiss Alps on 3 February

Jaca, in the Spanish Pyrenees on 17 February

Canmore, in the Canadian Rocky Mountains on 16 March.

The World Championships of Winter Triathlon takes place in Brusson in the Val d'Aosta, Italy on 20-24 February.

For more information visit the ITU Winter Triathlon Homepage at:

[www.triathlon.org/winter-tri/index.htm](http://www.triathlon.org/winter-tri/index.htm)

**Top 5 results are:**

### **Elite Women**

<b>Finish Position</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First name</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Run</b>	<b>Bike</b>	<b>X-C Skate</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1</b>	VLASVELD	Marianne	HOL	00:23:31	0:38:22	0:25:23	<b>01:27:16</b>
<b>2</b>	LANG	Sigrid	GER	00:23:55	0:38:18	0:25:32	<b>01:27:45</b>
<b>3</b>	MÖBES	Karin	SUI	00:25:10	0:41:14	0:27:24	<b>01:33:48</b>
<b>4</b>	PAULI	Gabi	GER	00:24:44	0:40:41	0:30:51	<b>01:36:16</b>
<b>5</b>	SERRA	Anna	ESP	00:24:46	0:46:13	0:29:06	<b>01:40:05</b>

### **Elite Men**

<b>Finish Position</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First name</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Run</b>	<b>Bike</b>	<b>X-C Skate</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1</b>	SONNTAG	Benjamin	GER	00:20:40	0:31:33	0:23:40	<b>01:15:53</b>
<b>2</b>	RUHE	Marc	LIE	00:20:42	0:31:29	0:24:39	<b>01:16:50</b>
<b>3</b>	BRÜGGER	Othmar	SUI	00:20:28	0:32:43	0:24:07	<b>01:17:18</b>
<b>4</b>	SCHUWEY	Iwan	SUI	00:20:12	0:34:42	0:23:12	<b>01:18:06</b>
<b>5</b>	BRÜGGER	Josef	SUI	00:21:25	0:34:12	0:24:17	<b>01:19:54</b>