



Verbier Ride 08 (December) – Press Release

What an awesome event! The early season's Verbier Ride 08 (Dec) (www.verbierride.com) couldn't have been better. The season started early with the kind of powder expected mid season. Televerbier's (www.televerbier.ch) carefully selected Snowpark team, Fabien, Bebert and Dave worked for many long days to construct a Slopestyle in the La Chaux Snowpark (www.mysnowpark.ch) to be proud of. Many of the riders said it is the best park Verbier has ever had.

The event was due to run over the weekend of the 13th-14th December, but after studying the weather forecast closely on the run up to the event, the Ride team decided to run both the Qualifications and the Finals on Saturday, and what an excellent decision that was. The weather was perfect on Saturday changing to stormy on the Sunday with the resort being forced to close the lifts for safety reasons.

There were many familiar faces from the Freestyle world coming to what has become a meeting ground for competing Freestyle skiers. So the atmosphere was awesome with an air of exhilaration and electricity. The DJ was pumping out some tunes and the Ecole de Ski Verbier hosted a snow bar with an area for riders and the audience to hang out together and soak in the sun, enjoying the big day.

The many nationalities had one language in common – Freestyle skiing where the tricks and expressions mean the same in every language. In the Qualification runs, the girls and the guys enjoyed riding the field together and pushing each other on to even bigger and more technical tricks for the final.

In the finals, the pace picked up and the crowd multiplied. The riding was of a very high level. Last year's winner Alex Neurohr (SUI) was riding well again and finished in the top 10 at position 7. Newcomer Paulo Martinoglio (ITA) just missed a podium finish with 4th place and Blayze Brommell (SWE) was getting the attention of the crowd with his style. However local Nicolas Vuigner who has competed in the Verbier Ride before but never took a podium place, took 3rd place with a clean Unnatural Switch 720, Rodeo 720 and a Rodeo 900 keeping it smooth and with good landings.

Janne van Enckevort (FIN/SUI) took 2nd place to the delight of his fellow riders. He finished with a nice Switch 1080 with a Mute Grab. He was clearly enjoying the comp and being with the other guys on the circuit. Janne had been hanging out with the winning rider all day and was clearly stoked to see him take his first Verbier Ride podium finish.

16 year old James Woods (Woodsy) from the UK took the well deserved winning title. Woodsy who has competed in the Verbier Ride before and also the Saas-Fee Ride and London Ride was riding at a level way up there with some of the big European names. The judges were blown away with the massive amount of work he has put into his skiing in the last year and how much of a star performer he was at the Verbier Ride 08's December event. He threw down a Kangaroo flip off the kicker with an absolutely perfect landing, and was spinning cleanly on the rail, 270 in on the Flat Down. His style from beginning to end was relaxed and carried out with ease, making him a true winner.

The women's competition was amazing with one of the camera crew at one point saying they couldn't tell the difference between some of the girls and the guys. Most of the girls gave the big kicker a go at least once during the day.

15 year old Nina Michel (SUI) looked cute, petite and delicate but once she got into the Slopestyle she showed talent, determination and guts! She was spinning 270 on the rail and the box, and then spinning 360s on the small table. She is definitely someone to look out for in the future.

In 2nd place it was regular Ride competitor and winner Katrien Aerts from Belgium. Katrien had a stressful start to the day with car problems and arrived late and flustered. With no warm up and no practice in the newly constructed Slopestyle, she was thrown in at the deep end, riding blind. However, she didn't fail to impress the judges with her clean 360 Safety on the big Table. It was a good end to a day that started off badly for Katrien.

Finally it was Switzerland's Eveline Bhend who took 1st place on the podium. Eveline who first competed in summer 08 at the Saas-Fee Ride was a cut above the rest. She was hitting the big kicker with ease and focus. At no time did she look out of her depth. Her winning run was a 360 Reverse Double Mute on the big table and a clean 720 on the last kicker. We look forward to seeing her develop further and further in the future.

So what a day. All the riders were there doing what they do best with the people they love to have around them. It was a pleasurable day, perfect all round for everyone. Many thanks goes to the resort of Verbier (Televerbier, Verbier Sport Plus, Ecole de Ski Verbier, Verbier Tourism) for their support of the Verbier Ride and helping to make the best park possible for the day. Also to the event partners Snow & Rock, Ski Service for their trust and support and to the Farinet/Casbah for hosting a big send off with the Verbier Ride after Party and to the help of Natives for providing Emma and the [Show Love Tour](#).

The action from the event will be going out to the networks from end of January starting with YOZ on Eurosport. You will also be able to watch the event from your IPOD and mobile by downloading the 24 minute TV programme from www.verbierride.com. See you all next year!