

# 2017 CEV SNOW VOLLEYBALL EUROPEAN TOUR DISENTIS



## Swiss podium sweep in men's tournament

The Swiss domination in the men's tournament on the 2017 CEV Snow Volleyball European Tour stop in Disentis resulted in a complete home-team sweep of the podium. Ninth-seeded snow volleyball rookies Andreas Catschegn & Timon Hallauer continued their winning streak all the way through the gold medal match to triumph with the title. Sixth-seeded Raphael Zurgilgen & Thomas Helbling and seventh-seeded Marco Back & Christian Busin claimed silver and bronze, respectively.

Sunday's competition started off with the last leg of the losers' bracket and immediately brought in a surprising result. Back & Busin managed a 3-1 (11-9, 12-10, 7-11, 11-7) victory over the top-seeded Polish pair Michal Matyja & Maciej Klimas to knock the reigning King of the Snow out of the competition. The other Polish duo, third-seeded Piotr Groszek & Tomasz Cwiertnia, managed to save the international spirit of the competition by becoming the only non-Swiss team among the semifinalists.

But this was as much as any foreign pair could achieve on Swiss snow this weekend. The semifinals were very interesting, offering some snow volleyball of the highest level, and were extended to four sets each. Catschegn & Hallauer won the all-Swiss clash with Back & Busin by 3-1 (11-8, 12-14, 11-6, 11-8) and Zurgilgen & Helbling put a stop to Groszek & Cwiertnia's hopes to make the final with a 3-1 (6-11, 11-8, 11-6, 14-12) win.

Back & Busin made sure the Swiss occupation of the podium was complete with a 3-0 (11-9, 11-9, 11-9) shutout of the Polish team in the bronze medal match.

With the home crowd happy to cheer on two Swiss teams competing for the gold medals on a sunny Alpine Disentis afternoon, the two contending duos put on a fight, especially in the first set. However, with Andi Catschegn's powerful blocks dominating over the net, his team was unstoppable. Catschegn & Hallauer cruised to a 3-0 (14-12, 11-8, 11-5) victory after 38 minutes of play and celebrated with the title.

"No, we did not expect that at all!" exclaimed Andi Catschegn upon closing the final match with a win. "We knew that there were some very good players from other countries, like the Polish guys, and they were good indeed. We had to beat them first. So we are very happy with our win here. I have no idea how we achieved this. I think the nice surrounding and the nice weather gave us a push. It is the first time that we have played on snow and we were surprised that it felt quite strange, not like sand. But we played quite well I think, so we are happy with our result. We will definitely come back."

## **Huber & Kurzbein persevere through spectacular final to win home gold**

Snow volleyball first-timers Kim Huber & Karin Kurzbein from Switzerland came out on top in their spectacular five-set final match against the top-seeded Czech duo Anna Dostalova & Michaela Knoblochova to triumph with the women's gold medal at the 2017 CEV Snow Volleyball European Tour stop in Disentis. The home snow in the Swiss Alps brought the host country a historic first title on the Tour in either gender.

Following their two straight-set losses to the more experienced Czech opponents on Saturday, Huber & Kurzbein persevered through their underdog status and five tough sets in Sunday's 52-minute battle on the snow to emerge victorious with a 3-2 (11-6, 12-10, 8-11, 11-13, 11-8) win.

Cheered on enthusiastically by the home crowd on the sunny slopes of Disentis, Huber & Kurzbein established domination in the first set and took it with a solid difference. Gaining self-confidence, they continued their strong performance in the second set and, after an extended 12-10, saw themselves with a two-set lead.

However, Dostalova & Knoblochova had no intention of giving up. They took control on the court to win the third set by 11-8. In the fourth set, the Czech athletes showed an incredibly strong character, coming back from 8-10, saving the double match point for the opponents and eventually tying the match with a 13-11 win.

When everyone thought that the pre-favorites were up for a complete turnaround, it was the Swiss girls' turn again to show some character. Re-gaining control, they pushed through to the eventual 11-8 to rejoice with the gold.

"It feels amazing! I could cry right now," exclaimed Karin Kurzbein immediately after the winning point. "We did not expect it, but it came out perfectly. It was a fight. Both teams played really well and it was an awesome game. It's nice that we could win."

"Sometimes it is an advantage to be the underdog," Kim Huber added. "We were just lucky, we played our best and it's very nice! Our ambition was to just play well. We started really well, we went two sets ahead and then our knees became a little bit shaky - we didn't believe that much in ourselves. And then in the fifth set we could win again and we feel awesome!"

The bronze medals went to Germany's Esther Luft & Sarah Bauer.

*Further information regarding the tour, the registration, kids' activities or press pictures are online on [www.snowvolleyball.com](http://www.snowvolleyball.com) or follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) #snowvolleyball!*