

2017 CEV SNOW VOLLEYBALL EUROPEAN TOUR KRONPLATZ / PLAN DE CORONES



Snow volleyball pioneer Matyja crowned King of the Snow for fourth time!

Michal Matyja is the real King of the Snow. Even though he changed partners a number of times throughout the 2017 edition of the CEV Snow Volleyball European Tour, he finished on top of the pile even before the end of the tournament at Kronplatz / Plan de Corones. This result accounts for his fourth continental crown, after he previously emerged as the King of the Snow in 2013, 2014 and 2016 as well.

Dostalova & Knoblochova secure Queens of the Snow titles even before Kronplatz

Even before the last stop on the 2017 CEV Snow Volleyball European Tour in Kronplatz, Czechia's Anna Dostalova & Michaela Knoblochova had accumulated enough points to be unreachable on the top of the European Ranking. They were crowned the 2017 Queens of the Snow at the awarding ceremony at the end of the competition in the Italian Alps.

Spectacular final propels Bogatov & Daianov to Kronplatz gold!

Yury Bogatov & Ruslan Daianov from Russia are the new title-holders of the Kronplatz / Plan de Corones stop of the CEV Snow Volleyball European Tour. Within the spectacular surroundings of the Italian Alps and under a spectacularly bright sky, a spectacular men's final propelled the two Russians to their second gold on the Tour.

After a very strong showing in their semifinal match, where they cruised to a speedy 2-0 (11-8, 11-2) victory over the King of Snow Michal Matyja and his Polish compatriot Karol Szczepanik, seeded second in the main draw, the fourth-seeded Bogatov & Daianov had to face the other yet unbeaten team in Kronplatz – third-seeded Slovenians Tadej Bozenk & Danijel Pokersnik, in the final.

In their semifinal, Bozenk & Pokersnik had disposed of last year's winner in Kronplatz, Germany's Benedikt Doranth and his partner Julius Hoefler with a 2-0 (11-9, 11-7) shutout.

Cheered on by numerous spectators around the center court under the Concordia 2000 bell, the Russians and the Slovenians put on a very tough battle. The first set went way beyond the 11th point and was won by Bogatov & Daianov. The Russians were quicker to win the second set and this was the only part, which did not go into extra time. At that point Bozenk & Pokersnik started working on a comeback. They took the third set to stay in contention. The fourth set was an epic, out-of-this-world duel between snow volleyballers of the highest level. The Slovenians missed several opportunities to close it in their favor and prompt a tie-breaker. The Russians could not convert a few match points before they finally emerged victorious with 3-1 (15-13, 11-6, 11-13, 24-22). With a total of 46 rallies, the last set tied the European Tour record set just a week ago in the men's final at the Malbun stop.

“This was the most difficult match we have played anywhere any time,” exclaimed Ruslan Daianov while trying to catch his breath immediately after the winning point. “This was a powerful game and a real show with a lot of great action. This was our second participation on the European Tour and our second gold. We are so happy. We will play again next year.”

Before being crowned 2017 King of the Snow, Michal Matyja and his partner Karol Szczepanik tried to finish the season with a medal, but the bronze went to Benedikt Doranth & Julius Hofer, who won the third place match by 2-1 (11-9, 9-11, 11-6).

Russians net European Tour gold to upset former Queen of the Snow

Ksenia Khakimzanova & Ekaterina Syrtseva claimed the top honors at the final stop of this year’s CEV Snow Volleyball European Tour – and the Russians did so in emphatic style, rallying to a comprehensive 3-0 (11-6, 11-8, 11-8) victory in the gold medal match against home favorites Greta Cicolari & Alice Bertolaso from Italy.

Khakimzanova was not a rookie on the European Tour since she had finished second earlier this season at the Turkish stop in Uludag, but Syrtseva was contesting her first international tournament on the snow. She did not have to wait for too long to net a gold medal and cement Russia’s role as a volleyball powerhouse – regardless of the surface you play on.

One week after topping the charts at the Russian Snow Volleyball Championship in Sochi with regular partner Alexandra Moiseeva, Syrtseva had something more to celebrate. “I really enjoyed this tournament. It was very well organized, not to speak about the magnificent view and background we could enjoy from the top of this mountain. I still focus my career on beach volleyball and hope I can achieve some good results this year. As for the snow, I like it very much and I think I will play again.” The Russian team won the tournament dropping only one set along the way – this happened in their third-round fixture with Germany’s Tiana Nicolaus & Florentina Buettner.

Khakimzanova & Syrtseva were well prepared for this tournament as the domestic competition is a tough one. Khakimzanova had finished ‘only’ ninth in Sochi and now she is standing on top of a European podium. As for Cicolari & Bertolaso, they were happy with their result on home snow. “We just came here for the fun of a weekend on the snow, but of course I like competing,” said Cicolari, a 2011 European beach volleyball champion. “Actually Alice is my boss at work. She runs the beach volleyball center where I coach in the outskirts of Milan. We played together for the first time here in Kronplatz and we needed some time to find each other, so to speak, and to develop some kind of chemistry. After all, it was a good experience for someone like me who loves any kind of competition.”

The 2017 Queens of the Snow Anna Dostalova & Michaela Knoblochova had to be content with the bronze medals to cap their participation in this year’s European Tour. The Czechs were able to forget the disappointment they suffered in the semifinal with Cicolari & Bertolaso to rally to a 2-0 (13-11, 11-8) victory over Viktoria Mair & Marilena Preiml from Austria. “It is a pity we lost the semifinal that way,” Dostalova said. “However, we knew it was going to be a close affair since we had played Cicolari in last year’s final and we expected it to be a tough battle. We were able to regroup and finish the Tour with a bronze medal. We wanted more, but we are still happy with the result.”

Dostalova delighted the audience with some great defense actions and once again she confirmed she does feel extremely comfortable when playing on the snow. “I have been playing as a libero for many years and when you do this indoors, you have to learn to move

fast and dive in order to save the ball, and sometimes the surface is not any softer than the snow we have been playing on here. I just love this game and I am definitely planning to come back again next year!"

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