



## Press Release

### **Around 100 cyclists from 14 nations compete at Rotary Cycling World Championships in Kitzbühel**

**Participants ranged in age from 14 to 83. Women made up around a quarter of the field. Organizers expect proceeds in the five-figure Euro range, which will benefit regional, national, and international Rotary social projects.**

**Kitzbühel, 7 September 2026** – For four days, Kitzbühel and its mountain landscape were dedicated to international amateur cycling: around 100 athletes from 14 nations took part in the 2026 Rotary Cycling World Championships in Kitzbühel from 2 to 5 September. Competitors came from numerous European countries, including Ukraine, as well as from Taiwan and the USA, among others. Around a quarter of the field was female. The youngest cyclist was 14, the oldest 83.

The Cycling World Championships were organized by Rotary Club Kitzbühel and the Rotary Cycling Fellowship Austria. Alongside the sporting competition, the focus was on international encounter, Rotarian friendship, and shared commitment to social projects.

#### **Proceeds to benefit projects in Kitzbühel and Uganda**

Once the final accounting is complete, organizers expect total proceeds in the five-figure euro range. The funds will benefit several regional, national, and international Rotary projects.

“The sporting encounter creates international friendships and, at the same time, allows us to support people in very concrete ways,” emphasizes Günther Aigner, President of the Rotary Cycling Fellowship Austria. “This combination of community and social commitment reflects the Rotarian spirit and our motto ‘Cycling to Serve.’”

#### **New Race Format**

For the first time, the Rotary Cycling World Championships were held in a segment format. This combined group rides through the region with two individually scored race segments: a ten-kilometre time trial on a flat course between Erpfendorf and Kössen, and a four-kilometre mountain time trial from Reinache to Hollenauer Kreuz. The mountain segment involved around 320 meters of elevation gain.

The times from both segments were combined to form the basis for the World Championship rankings in seven age groups. Among the world champions was Kitzbühel local favourite Helene Stanger in the women's under-35 category. In the men's field, Prof. Kurt Matzler — an ultra-cyclist, multi-participant and successful solo finisher of the Race Across America — won the world championship title in his age category.

“With the Cycling World Championships in Kitzbühel, we deliberately took a new approach, which also involved a certain amount of risk,” explains Michael Rosendorfer, head of the organizing committee. “With the segment format, we were able to offer a sportingly demanding competition while specifically appealing to a more international, younger, and more female field of participants. The extremely positive feedback shows us that the new format was very well received.”

### **Ride to the Kitzbüheler Horn**

The sporting program also included a group ride through the Kitzbühel mountains and the demanding climb up the Kitzbüheler Horn. Over roughly seven kilometres, riders had to master about 870 meters of elevation gain and gradients of up to 22.3 percent.

“We wanted to showcase the Kitzbühel mountain landscape at its best and offer our guests varied sporting challenges,” explains Raimund Stanger of Rotary Club Kitzbühel, who designed the cycling program. “With the routes around St. Johann, the Kitzbüheler Horn, and the two World Championship segments, we were able to combine the shared cycling experience perfectly with the sporting competition.”

The complete results of the World Championships are available at <https://my.raceresult.com/371849/>.

### **International Program Extends Beyond the Racecourse**

The social hub of the event was the “House of Friendship” at the Schlosshotel Kitzbühel. Highlights held there included an international Rotary gathering and the closing gala evening in a festive setting.

Guests and accompanying persons were also offered a varied program. This included a visit to the start house of the world-famous Streif with support from the Kitzbühel Ski Club, a city tour with Pepi Treichl, and an excursion to the Alpine Flower Garden with Barbara Schmidt-Hofer.

Another social highlight was a Tyrolean evening at Rosi’s Sonnbergstuben. Guests of honour at the Tyrolean evening included Kitzbühel's mayor Klaus Winkler and Viktoria Veider-Walser, managing director of Kitzbühel Tourism and a member of Rotary Club Kitzbühel.

The next Rotary Cycling World Championships will take place in 2027 in Vila-real, Spain.

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