

A Great Event - 19th Masters' ALLROUND GAMES in Baselga di Pinè/Italy

vs. The 19th Masters' International Speed Skating ALLROUND GAMES on 26 – 28 Feb 2010 were already the third Masters' ALLROUND GAMES in Baselga di Pinè. I still remember well the 7th Masters' ALLROUND GAMES in Baselga di Pinè/Italy **1998**, the first Allround Games in Italy, where I competed for the first time at a large competition in Italy. At this competition **145 competitors from 10 Nations** competed already in three competition days under various, partially hard weather conditions. We had not only to fight against ourselves but also against strong winds and rain. But despite these difficulties the days were wonderful, well organized by Mr. Sergio Anesi, Tourist Office director, today Mayor of Baselga, and his team, and we had very much fun. In **2005** we were again in Baselga di Pinè,



seven years later, and there the 14th Masters' Allround Games were held with already **178 speed skating Masters of 13 Nations**. This was again a great success with much better weather than in 1998, with sunny days and very good ice. And now in **2010** we were delighted that we could be again in Baselga di Piné, the fine place in the nice Italian Alps of the Trentino, for the 19th Masters' ALLROUND GAMES, with **192 competitors of 17 Nations**.

For the first time I travelled the 1200 km not in my own car as in 1998, or by train, as in 2005, but by plane. Because I am living in Krefeld, I could fly with Ryanair from airport Weeze/Düsseldorf in Germany, which is near Krefeld, to Bergamo in Italy. And Bergamo is about three hours by car from Baselga di Piné. The great advantage was that Ryanair is a low price carrier and the flight is only 1 ½ hours. The tickets for me and my wife were two times 40,00 EUR only, unbelievable. Because the flight tickets were so inexpensive we decided to hire a car in Bergamo for the days in Baselga. Because the flight time had been changed from

originally 12:00 a.m. at midday to 8:00 p.m. in the evening we unfortunately had to take a hotel room still in Bergamo and could only go to Baselga on the second travel day, despite the fast and nice flight. But without problems with the Italian traffic on the motorway we reached Baselga in about three hours the next morning.

Unfortunately I was hindered to take part in the Allround Games competitions by knee problems. So my main task was to organize the Sessions of the ISU Masters Speed Skating Working Group (IMSSG) and the International Masters' Speed Skating Committee (IMSSC), which are held in conjunction with the Masters' Allround Games every year. And because I have to lead the discussions in my function as IMSSC Secretary, I had to prepare myself intensively about all items of the agendas already at home, but also again before the sessions. The Session of the IMSSG with the four Members was held Wednesday afternoon and lasted 3 hours (Members see picture on the following pages). The IMSSC Session with 20 participants lasted from Friday morning until the afternoon and took 5 hours (Members see



picture also on the following pages). The long session times are really hard for the participants, because most of them are also competitors and want to have training and recreation only before the competition days Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The numerous results of the sessions shall not be discussed here. You find them on our website www.imssc.org under "Latest News 2009/2010" (some information) and under "IMSSG Sessions" and "IMSSC Sessions" (Complete Minutes). I will mention here only one important decision: In future the IMSSG and IMSSC Members will no longer have problems with long sessions of the IMSSG and the IMSSC because the Sessions will only be in summer from 2010.

One day before the start of the 3 competition days the competitors and companions were welcomed by the General Manager of the Competition, **Sergio Revolti**, at the Drawing and Welcome Drink in the nice Congress Center of Baselga. At the three competition days **192 speed skaters (40 Ladies and 152 Men) from 17 Nations (AUS 1, AUT 3, BEL 1, CAN 3, ESP 1, FIN 11, GER 23, ITA 18, KAZ 1, LAT 2, NED 62, NOR 40, ROU 1, RUS 14, SUI 8, UKR 1, USA 2)** competed in the 4distance combinations 500, 1500/1000, 3000 m (Ladies

5year age groups 30 and higher, Men age groups 65, 70, 75) and 500, 3000/1500, 5000 m (Men 5year age groups 30 – 60).



At the first day the athletes had to fight also against difficult weather conditions, rain and snow. It was an advantage for the skaters from open tracks, who know such conditions well.

The second day with much sun and the third day with clouds but no rain and no wind brought much better ice as could be seen by the good results (see Results at the following pages). **Five IMSSC Records** from the IMSSC Records' List 2009 could be lowered, **all by Thea Kroontje/NED F 65**: 500 m 53,00, 1000 m

1:38,27, 1500 m 2:31,36, 3000 m 5:16,96 and 4 distance combination (500, 1500/1000, 3000 m) 205,413 points. The competitions were well conducted by the main referees **Debora Sighele** (Ladies) and **Armando Gorza** (Men) and their large teams.



At the closing banquet and victory ceremony the 320 participants and companions were welcomed by the Mayor of Baselga di Pinè, **Sergio Anesi** and the chairmen of the Organizing Committee, **Enrico Colombini**. The Secretary of the IMSSC, **Volker Serini**, said thanks for the fine organization of the 19th Masters' Allround Games. The very good closing banquet with six delicious courses and the nice victory ceremony with wonderful prizes, which was done in three parts, were held in a large very nice tent directly above the speed skating track. The track was illuminated and could be seen through the two transparent sides of the tent. This tent was really a good idea and a perfect solution for the 320 participants. Music by a small band, which played a lot of nice oldies, still raised the good mood of the guests.



We left Baselga Monday morning and were again one night in Bergamo, because our flight back was Tuesday evening. So we had time to see the old town of Bergamo, which has still the complete walls from the middle age, when Bergamo was an important town at the southern border of the Alpes, which could be defended very well. And we were enthusiastic about the wonderful complete old town from the middle age with a lot of wonderful churches and other nice historical buildings and beautiful places. It was really a good idea not to fly back home already Monday. We arrived at home Tuesday evening, content with the wonderful competition days in the nice place Baselga di Pinè surrounded by the alpine mountains of the Trentino and with the additional fine day with a highly interesting cultural program, the visit to the old town of Bergamo.

Volker Serini/Germany