

The WANDERBIRD Hike & Fly Trophy conquers the living room of the paragliding scene!

In the beautiful Stubaital, under the motto "Find your Path", the Wanderbird Team, around Aaron Durogati and Paul Guschlbauer, invited to the Wanderbird Hike & Fly Trophy from 02 to 03 September 2023. With an impressive international starting field of 120 registered pilots and a great atmosphere, the unique event concept presented itself in Neustift. The event was accompanied by best weather and offered a fascinating supporting program, which was not only an enrichment for competition participants, but for everyone.

The Wanderbird Hike & Fly Trophies consist of the exciting categories FUN, TOUR and HERO. Each category offers its own challenge and allows athletes to improve their skills and achieve their personal goals. The race started at the Parafly flight school in Neustift and led to the first turning point Elferhütte. The race continued on the opposite side of the valley to the Sennjochhütte. To have successfully passed a turnpoint, participants must take a 'selfie' with the turnpoint sign, which must then be sent to the race organizers. Finally they reached the finish again at the starting point and thus one lap of the Fun category was 23 km. The TOUR category had to reach one more turnpoint and this came to a total distance of 31.5 km.

The participants of the HERO category had to complete the round twice, so even the professionals, with over 60km distance, got their money's worth.

The fascinating thing about the Hike & Fly Trophy is not only the alpine route itself, but also the possibility to start in one of the three different categories with different requirements. Athletes in the FUN category are allowed to use cable cars as an ascent aid, while this is not permitted for participants in the TOUR and HERO categories.

To ensure that both the enthusiastic spectators on site and those at home had the feeling of being there live with the athletes, the race could be followed in real time via Burnair Map's live tracking. In addition, spectators were regularly kept up to date with social media updates from the participants. As a local social program, DJ Andrea provided a pleasant atmosphere with relaxed music, Daniela from Unbound offered great coffee specialties with a cool Coffee bike. Further delicacies were provided by our catering over the event weekend.

An "After Race Party" at the village square of Neustift, where the band Janka provided a great atmosphere, rounded off the exciting day perfectly. There, the day's winners were rewarded with over €5,000 in prize money and additional gifts. The prizes were presented by Mayor Andreas Gleirscher, Stubai Tourism Association, represented by Roland Volderauer and Herbert Hofer, and Andreas Mantl and Thomas Maier from the Raiffeisenbanken Stubaital Wipptal. The purpose of this award is to emphasize the appreciation for the participation in this challenging competition and to promote the professionalization of the sport Hike & Fly in the long term.

The complete results are available on the website at hikeandflytrophy.com.

After the exciting and full of tension race day, Sunday morning started much slower. A Pilates session with Barbara Perchtold served as a warm-up exercise before Paul Guschlbauer ensured that the participants could center themselves in themselves with a flow meditation.

Afterwards, Veronika Mayerhofer (sports psychologist) and Paul Guschlbauer offered insights and holistic advice on the many challenges of Hike & Fly and life in their Mental Performance Workshop. In addition, there was a debriefing from race day and further input from the pros as well as the Founder of the Burnair App, Bernie Hertz.

Throughout the weekend, exhibitors Advance, Skywalk and Woody Valley were available for athletes and visitors to test out the new products.

Another notable new feature is the introduction of the "Storyteller Award". Entries for this award can be submitted via social media until September 13. The best three videos will be awarded a total of €2,000. More information is available on the hikeandflytrophy.com website in the "Prize Money" section.

Special thanks go to our volunteers and sponsors, especially the Stubai Tourism Association, Salewa, Raiffeisenbank Wipptal-Stubaital Mitte and AustriAlpin. We would also like to thank our exhibitors Advance, Skywalk and Woody Valley for their presence and support.

A big thank you also goes to our cable car partners, Elferbahnen and Schlick 2000, who provided free mountain rides for the participants in the FUN category as well as for the helpers.

The latest information about WANDERBIRD and the WANDERBIRD events can be found at www.wanderbird.io.

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