



Stars, stunts and a BMX premiere at the Bike Republic Sölden Festival X Swatch Nines

Thanks to its new early summer date, Sölden once again provided a truly superlative action sports weekend to the bike community at the Bike Republic Sölden Festival. Led by world stars like Sam Pilgrim and Erik Fedko as well as BMX icons such as Perris Benegas, Bike Republic Sölden became a global hot spot of the biking scene. In addition to spectacular shows in the extended "Dirt District", the festival celebrated the new "Hupfar Line" jump line by integrating also the BMX elite on a brand new, 900-square-meter playground. A popular program highlight was the BRS Rally featuring 500 female and male bikers.

For a whole week, Sölden was the epicenter of the international biking elite. For the first time in the event's history, **mountain biking and BMX fused** on a shared course. The most spectacular new addition to the two-hectare Dirt District was the 900-square-meter BMX Plaza. Packed with quarter pipes, rails, ledges and a creative trampoline feature, it provided the perfect stage for a dazzling display of tricks across the two disciplines. "We plan to open parts of the new BMX area to the public in the future. It makes a perfect complement to the already existing offer. A fact that brings us even closer to our goal of providing a comprehensive experience for everyone," states Dominik Linser, Managing Director of Bike Republic Sölden.

Viral hits in "Super Mario" style

That Sölden is a driving force in the biking scene was once again evident in the digital realm. **Freeride legend Sam Pilgrim (UK)** raved on social media: "The most fun on earth exists here. Bike Republic Sölden." Together with his buddies, he hurtled down the mountain on the mountain cart track in "Super Mario" style. The video became a viral hit within just a few days, racking up almost 20 million views. The next generation of biking pros will remember Sölden fondly, which was demonstrated by the **appearance of exceptionally talented 11-year-old Weston Lukens**, who joined some of the sport's biggest names while using the "Dirt District" as a giant bike playground.

Large crowds at the BRS Rally, Expo and side events

It was not just on the pro lines that there was a fabulous festival atmosphere under bright sunshine. This was largely due to the **new event date in June**, which proved to be a complete success. The expo area, opportunities to try and test the latest equipment plus live music thrilled the community. One of the undisputed **highlights was the BRS Rally**: this fun-packed race was completely sold out thanks to 500 participants. Some in colorful costumes, had to tackle crazy challenges like navigating a raft or planting saplings in an eco-friendly way. Biking technique courses guided by local bike experts, group rides together with **scene luminaries like Korbi Engstler** as



well as the "Sick!Shows" MTB trial events with Gabriel Wibmer and Franz Gitterle rounded out the festival's splendid community program.

Enthusiasm among pros and spectators

At the Public Days on Thursday evening (Night Session) and Saturday afternoon, nearly 3,000 fans flocked to the trails for free to witness the world's best riders up close. An emotional highlight was the **Night Session** on Thursday evening: pyrotechnics, a custom-designed light installation and DJ music transformed the Dirt District into a unique stage as soon as darkness fell. The athletes were filled with great enthusiasm due to the alpine backdrop. For BMX rider Perris Benegas (USA) a dream came true in Sölden: "It's incredible to see how BMX and MTB riders inspire each other here."

A sustainable future

The pro bike couple **Sam Hodgson and Veronique Sandler** took full advantage of the weekend to present their latest jump line trail design to their friends and like-minded followers. The name of the trail in Ötztal dialect reflects its purpose: **"Hupfar" Line means jumping**. Covering a total length of 2.35 kilometers, it is one of the longest and most intense jump lines of the entire alpine region. While the first and third sections were built by Tirolean trail designer Matthias Garber from Reutte in collaboration with the BRS team, the Hodgson/Sandler duo planned the second section to world-class international standard.

A brief look ahead to the season

For all bike aficionados, the fun is far from over after this festival as the season in the Bike Republic Sölden continues in full swing well into autumn. Among the upcoming highlights are the regular **"Bike After Work"** events every Friday between 03 July and 21 August. The season will culminate in the traditional **BRS National Holiday** on 03 + 04 October 2026, when the "Alps' most flowing nation" will celebrate the finale in style.

