

Five Star Cuche takes fifth Hahnenkamm



The weather Gods may have tried to stop the race happening but Didier Cuche grabbed the hill by the horns and became THE most successful racer down the feared Streif. This was the HEAD World Cup rebel's fifth win on the course, overtaking the record he held jointly with Franz Klammer. With almost a metre of new snow on the course and a course crew that had worked through the night, the legend of Didier Cuche surpassed all others on race day to win for the third year in a row.

With the race starting lower down the famed course due to the weather, this was a race that was decided on small measures. Some of the classic sections of the course were missing: There was no Mausefalle or Steilhang and the course started at Alte Schneise. The shortened course meant little chance of errors, like the one that ended Bode Miller's attack as he caught an edge approaching Hausbergkannte and this cost him valuable time.

Cuche was fastest at the top then seemed to lose time through the slow gliding section before fighting his way back into the reckoning and by the time he took to the Zielschuss, Cuche was heading to victory, again. When he crossed the finish line the green light for the leader came up and he spoke after the race saying that "there is no better way to spend a weekend."





While Cuche celebrated, legendary HEAD racer Franz Klammer was watching in the finish and admitted that Cuche's run was "a great run," adding that "records are meant to be broken."

With Didier Cuche having announced his retirement from Alpine ski racing at the end of the 2012 season, there will be many looking to fill his boots as the most successful racer down the fearsome course in Kitzbuehel.

Johan Clarey took a well deserved fifth place in the race and Stephan Keppler placed eighth, both battling their early start numbers and the poor light to produce great results. According to Aksel Lund Svindal it had been crazy but with the help of 500 volunteers the course had been made possible to race on.

As the crowds moved away from the finish, Cuche was declared "The Emperor of Kitzbuehel!"

