

August, 23. 2011

Dear Mr. President, council members, general secretary, and the members of the Alpine Executive Board;

It is unfortunate that we have learned about the new equipment regulations through the news and PR release from FIS. The athlete's commission is very surprised that we were never informed about the results of the scientific studies from University of Salzburg. It is also surprising that that you did not asked the athletes for their opinions or input during this process. The new rules were not carefully considered in our opinion. The stars of the sport should have had the opportunity to make recommendations based on the studies because the athletes are the best resource for serious input on this matter.

We all know that our sport is dangerous. Everyone involved knows that we cannot make this sport 100 percent safe. We are also aware that is part of what makes the sport attractive to the fans. We all want to make Ski Racing as safe, fair and attractive as possible.

The new regulations for speed skis are not taking a huge step backward. We feel you need to reconsider the decision to reduce the stand height. Athletes with bigger shoes sizes will have a significant disadvantage. The boot out effect will pose huge risks for fatal crashes. This does not seem fair and it is a serious safety concern. Other than this issue, we do not see a big problem with the new speed ski regulations.

We absolutely do not support the new regulations for GS! We are deeply concerned for the following reasons;

1. These new dimensions are taking the sport backward over 20 years. The carving innovation has provided so much for our sport. It has become more powerful, dynamic and last but not least more popular for our audience. It is not good for the ski industry/suppliers and they are very important for the success of ski racing. These skis will not be good for the appeal of our sport. We all want to sell our sport and we do not think that going backward 20 years will help us do this.

2. There will definitely be disadvantages for smaller athletes. A woman that is 155cm tall will have a huge disadvantage when competing against a woman that is 180cm tall. This will be the same situation for small men. It is pure discrimination for smaller athletes. Smaller and less muscle packed athletes had the same chance for success with the carving skis. In recent years the podiums have been a mix of many different body types, unlike 15 years ago when you saw mainly larger athletes. We also need to think about junior ski racers. Will this be fun for kids to try to ski race on these new skis? We cannot afford to drive kids away from the sport. There should be an additional study on this issue .

3. The costs for the ski industry will be huge. This will ultimately affect the support for the athletes, especially those at the lower levels. The cost will also be challenging for the juniors, who will have to purchase many new skis. This may drive kids away from the sport. We do not want that!

We all know that we have to keep skiing as safe as possible. But we do not think that these equipment regulations are the best thing for our sport. Here are our recommendations;

For DH and SG:

The new regulations are mainly ok. We are in favor of the narrower skis, but we need to keep the old stand height to avoid boot out.

For GS :

min length 183cm women / 190cm men

max width: 65mm

min radius should be 30m , preferable lower!!! to keep the sport attractive to watch for the public. Do not limit the max width at the tip . Every athlete knows that a wider tip helps with the initiation of the turn and in our mind it is less dangerous. Whereas a wider tail is more dangerous.

As an alternative to dramatic changes in equipment, we suggest considering changes in course setting and course preparation.

We hope that you take the athletes opinion serious and that you reconsider your decisions on that matter for the sake of the sport the ski industry and the athletes!!!

Signatory see enclosed list.