**A perfect start to the World Cup for the HEAD World Cup Rebels**

**Victory for Alexis Pinturault, 2nd place for Mathieu Faivre, four in the top 5 in the men's category. Maria Therese Tviberg, Franziska Gritsch and Lara Gut-Behrami all in the top 10 in the women's event. The World Cup opening was pretty much perfect for the HEAD World Cup Rebels. The only downer: Bernadette Schild tore her cruciate ligament and is out of action for the rest of the season.**

"The highlight of the Sölden weekend was undoubtedly the men's race on Sunday. And it was a fantastic start to the season for us in the women's event too, especially considering the sub-optimal situation we began with. Anna Veith did not start, while Stephanie Brunner and Ragnhild Mowinckel are injured. That said, it was a really great result. Schild's injury is unfortunate; we are going to miss her a lot, especially in the Slalom. She's a real fighter though, and isn't going to give up," says HEAD Racing Director Rainer Salzgeber.

**Maria Therese Tviberg bags fastest time in the second run**

As is tradition, the World Cup started the new season with the women's Giant Slalom at the Rettenbach Glacier in Sölden, Austria. Maria Therese Tviberg, who started the race with bib number 58, caused a sensation. The Norwegian qualified for the second run, where she put in a stunning performance with the fastest time. Tviberg finished the race sixth overall. "This time the conditions in Sölden were perfect for the later start times too. Tviberg's speciality is the speed events. A year ago she started focussing on the Giant Slalom. It's going to get really interesting for her, especially on more gradual slopes", says Salzgeber. Just as impressive was seventh place for the Austrian Franziska Gritsch. "Coming from Sölden, this was of course a very special race. We have provided her and Schild with their own company service man, who will now work for her alone following Schild's injury. Gritsch has trained hard and converted that well in the race," says Salzgeber, who was also pleased with eighth place for Lara Gut-Behrami. "She's on a completely different level this year compared to last season."

**Four among the top 5 in the men's category - and 15th place for Downhill skier Mayer**

In the men's Giant Slalom the HEAD World Cup Rebels celebrated a French double victory. Alexis Pinturault won ahead of fellow compatriot Mathieu Faivre. The two USA rebels Tommy Ford and Ted Ligety delivered solid fourth and fifth places to make this one of the most successful races for the HEAD team. "For us this was a perfect start to the season. We had some changes to the boots, the bindings and some other details. The result was the best thing that could have happened to us. It demonstrates that we had complete control over the tuning of the equipment - not just for one but for many members of the team. This brings reassurance into the system," explains Rainer Salzgeber. "I was pleasantly surprised by Ted Ligety's solid result. But with him you can just see that he's a real racer. My personal highlight was 15th place for Matthias Mayer. This result is sensational for him as a Downhill racer. I am hoping he'll be able to transfer his drive into the other disciplines. Mayer will definitely be starting in the Giant Slalom in Beaver Creek."

**Slalom in Levi on 23 and 24 November**

The next stop for the World Cup is the women's and men's Slaloms in Levi, Finland on 23 and 24 November. "I believe that with Wendy Holdener and Anna Swenn-Larsson onboard we have a good chance of winning the women's event. Bernadette Schild is out of action unfortunately. In the men's events, Alexis Pinturault has always put in a good effort in Levi. I hope that we will see Albert Popov - who was among the top 10 in Kitzbühel and Schladming last season - take his performance to the next level. I've got a very positive feeling about this. We are definitely better covered in the Slalom than last year," says Salzgeber.