

## Lobodzinski and Walsham defend their World Cup titles

In a grandiose World Cup Final Piotr Lobodzinski (POL) and Suzy Walsham (AUS) defended their Towerrunning World Cup titles, while the race and WFGT Towerrunning Challenge victories went to Christian Riedl (GER) and Andrea Mayr (AUT). But let's start at the beginning.

An exclusive field of 67 stair runners including the top-ranked athletes of the Towerrunning World Cup, the winners of ten WFGT Towerrunning Challenge events all around the globe and Towerrunning Austria qualifiers gathered in the wintry Vienna, Mecca of the European stair racing community. In the first one of two individually timed heats, the competitors had the task to secure their ticket for the final round by placing among the top 10. Naturally, as the athletes want to save their energy for the decisive heat, this mode gives rise to tactical experiments and surprises. Australia's Darren Wilson gambled away his chances and was eliminated on 12th position. Wilson was in good company with Cristina Bonacina (ITA), Jana Zatlukalova (SVK), G6rge Heimann (GER), Norbert Lechner (AUT), and other top-ranked international athletes missing the cut.

The fastest semi-final times were set by Christian Riedl and Andrea Mayr. Did they shoot their bolt too early? By no means. No one thought possible that the course record could be broken in the ice-cold stairwell, but Christian Riedl proved us wrong. The German, racing his first World Cup competition since October, literally smashed Lobodzinski's standing record and clocked an unbelievable time of 3:23.6 minutes, four seconds ahead of the Polish World Cup champion and further Eastern European rivals Tomas Celko (SVK), Tomas Macecek (CZE) and Stefan Stefina (SVK). Young Austrian athlete Jakob Meyer caused a stir with his 6th place in a world-class field.

Andrea Mayr, still unbeaten in Towerrunning races, gave another demonstration of her stair racing qualities and won the competition in 4 minutes and 7.4 seconds. Though she was without a chance in the battle for a World Cup medal with just five race participations in the 2014 season, the reigning European Towerrunning Champion seems to be well-positioned for the World Championships in Doha. A fortnight after her AOTC title, Suzy Walsham's World Cup triumph was never placed in jeopardy. The Singapore-living Australian, scarcely recovered from a short illness, became runner-up and kept her World Cup rival Lenka Svabikova clearly at bay. The Czech, leading the point standings for several weeks, placed fourth in Vienna, one second behind Dominika Wisniewska-Ulfik (POL).

After a short breather, the Towerrunning World Cup award presentation was held amidst great rejoicing. As mentioned in the beginning, Piotr Lobodzinski (1569 points) and Suzy Walsham (1471.5) stood atop the podium. Tomas Celko (1427) and Lenka Svabikova (1372) took silver, and the bronze medals went to Christian Riedl (1422.5) and Maria Theresa Handlbauer (955.5). With the points collected in GuangZhou and Vienna, Australia sealed the deal in the Nations Cup ranking. Towerrunning Austria's 6TL Cup titles, connected with an invitation to the World Championships, went to Klaus Hausleitner and Maria-Theresa Handlbauer.

**Further information**

**Towerrunning World Association: [www.towerrunning.com](http://www.towerrunning.com)**

**Press contact: Piotr Jakobik, [media@towerrunning.com](mailto:media@towerrunning.com)**