TRAILS, SUNSHINE, AND TOP PERFORMANCES: A SUCCESSFUL DEBUT FOR THE 2026 NORTH FACE GROSSGLOCKNER ULTRA-TRAIL

ZELL AM SEE-KAPRUN, VSF KAPRUN AND SALTY TRAILRUNNING CELEBRATE A NEW CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF THIS CLASSIC EVENT AROUND AUSTRIA'S HIGHEST MOUNTAIN

Strong emotions, uncompromising trails, and unforgettable moments of victory around the Grossglockner: from 23 to 26 July 2026, Zell am See-Kaprun became the centre of the international trail running community for four days during The North Face Grossglockner Ultra-Trail. Fuelled by endurance, passion, and the aim of pushing beyond their own limits on the trails, the runners took routes through high-alpine terrain, over technical sections, and past glaciers and peaks across five distances ranging from 16 to 110 kilometres – all finishing in the centre of Kaprun. Promising trail running talents started in the two children's races. Outstanding winners took centre stage across all distances, with Robert Berger from Austria and Miranda Krekovic from Croatia crowned champions of the flagship race, the GGUT, covering 110 kilometres and 6,500 metres of elevation gain.

The 2026 edition marked the Grossglockner Ultra-Trail's debut under its new organiser, Zell am See-Kaprun. Together with the VSF (Association for the Creation of Special Leisure Facilities in Kaprun), co-organiser SALTY Trailrunning, and the new main sponsor, The North Face, a strong new chapter was opened for this long-established trail running event. The event proved hugely popular: following around 1,500 participants the previous year, this year saw more than 2,400 entries from 50 nations. Perfect weather conditions provided ideal circumstances on the high-alpine trails around the Grossglockner.

TOP SPORTING PERFORMANCES AROUND THE GROSSGLOCKNER

The first notable accomplishment was achieved by Josef Bodner from Kartitsch on the Weißsee Glacier World Trail (GWT), covering 37 kilometres and 1,500 metres of elevation gain. He completed the demanding course in a new record time of 3:15:10.9 hours. In the women's race, South Tyrolean Greta Haselrieder from Bruneck triumphed in 3:50:25.0 hours – and this was her very first trail race ever.

The night-time start of the Grossglockner Ultra-Trail (GGUT) on Friday evening at Salzburger Platz in Kaprun created a particularly extraordinary atmosphere: for the first time, the route took runners through the spectacularly illuminated Sigmund Thun Gorge. Numerous supporters accompanied the runners for the first few metres, turning the start into a truly impressive experience. Following the start, the high-alpine route of 110 km and 6,500 metres of elevation gain lay ahead – passing 14 glaciers, surrounded by around 300 three-thousand-metre-high peaks, and the 3,798-metre-high Grossglockner always looming in the background.

Robert Berger made history in this most prestigious event, covering 110 kilometres and 6,500 metres of elevation gain. For the athlete, born in 1986 and hailing from Kirchberg near Mattighofen, it was his first race over such a long distance. His original aim had simply been to finish the race successfully. In the end, Berger crossed the finish line in 14:22:42.0 hours as the winner – more than 33 minutes ahead of the runner-up.

The North Face athlete Ida-Sophie Hegemann also delivered an outstanding performance in the Osttirol Trail (OTT) over 84 kilometres and 5,000 metres of elevation gain. Not only did she confidently secure victory in the women's category with a lead of almost two and a half hours, but she also clocked the third-fastest time of the entire field. For both the Osttirol Trail and the Grossglockner Trail (GGT), Zell am See-Kaprun can count on its long-standing partnership with East Tyrol, which contributes significantly to the success and special appeal of both events.
The Kaprun Scenic Trail (KST) has made a successful comeback: after a two-year break, the 16-kilometre race with 1,000 metres of elevation gain was back on the agenda and completely sold out. The diverse and scenic route around Kaprun received high praise from the participants.
Junior trail runners also took part with great enthusiasm: 119 children lined up at the start of the kids' races. The Mini GGUT, sponsored by Osttirol and held in Kals, attracted 51 children. All proceeds from the Kids Trail Kaprun were donated to the Kinderwünsche Pinzgau charity. This regional initiative fulfils the wishes of children in need in the Pinzgau region – not just at Christmas, but all year round.

A SUPPORTING PROGRAMME FULL OF VARIETY

There was also plenty to enjoy for visitors away from the trails. As early as Thursday 23 July, the GGUT Expo opened its doors at 2 pm and, together with other side events, turned into a lively meeting place for the international trail running community. A wonderful finale to the race on Saturday was the admission-free live concert by the Bavarian band Dis M: from 9 pm, the band was playing at Salzburger Platz in Kaprun.

Lisa Loferer, CEO Zell am See-Kaprun Tourismus: "For Zell am See-Kaprun, this 11th edition of the GGUT was a very special premiere. As it was the first time for us, we were able to organise The North Face Grossglockner Ultra-Trail in collaboration with the VSF and our partners, particularly the municipalities of Bruck, Fusch and Kals am Großglockner. The fact that nearly 2,000 participants took to the start line fills us with great joy and demonstrates the special appeal of this event. My heartfelt thanks go to the entire organising team, all the volunteers, and the rescue services. Their commitment was simply outstanding: with tireless energy, the utmost professionalism, and impressive team spirit, they made this event possible. I would also like to congratulate all the athletes on their extraordinary achievements. Anyone who takes on these routes deserves maximum respect – regardless of distance, placing or finishing time."

Johannes Überbacher, The North Face Brand Marketing Manager for Germany, Austria and Switzerland: "The performances of all runners were impressive. On the courses, everyone treated one another fairly, respectfully, and to the highest sporting standards. Added to this was a fantastic atmosphere throughout the entire event. We had a very good feeling about this partnership right from the start – and this has been fully confirmed. We are therefore all the more excited about next year."

RESULTS IN DETAIL

- Grossglockner Ultra-Trail | GGUT: 110 km, 6,500 metres of elevation gain
    - Men: Robert Berger (AUT), 14:22:42.0; Constantin Leinekugel (GER), 14:55:53.9; Simon Krammig (GER), 15:51:37.9
    - Women: Miranda Krekovic (CRO), 17:27:37.2; Anita Mersnik (AUT), 19:55:24.2, Kristina Kmetova (SVK) 20:43:04,1
- Osttirol Trail | OTT: 84 km, 5,000 metres of elevation gain
    - Women: Ida-Sophie Hegemann (GER), 11:09:05.4; Sarah Keuschnig (AUT), 13:31:56.1, Monika Stadlmann (AUT) 13:41:56,6
    - Men: Falk Fischer (GER), 10:47:34.6; Josef Herbst (AUT), 11:06:24.5; Leonard Spähn (GER), 11:30:51.2
- Grossglockner Trail | GGT: 57 km, 3,500 metres of elevation gain
    - Men: Jiří Petr (CZE), 6:24:38.4; Oleg Ponomarev (RUS), 6:33:42.9; Jack Chamberlain (GB), 6:45:41.1
    - Women: Robyn Lesh (USA), 6:50:53.8; Johanna Ehrenklau (GER), 7:16:22.0; Celina Jelinek (GER), 7:26:44.9
- Weißsee Glacier World Trail | GWT: 37 km, 1,500 metres of elevation gain
    - Men: Josef Bodner (AUT), 3:15:10.9; Michael Brunner (AUT), 3:34:25.0; Max Göther (GER), 3:37:57.9
    - Women: Greta Haselrieder (ITA), 3:50:25.0; Isabell Speer (AUT), 4:08:06.7; Lina Helander El Kott (SWE), 4:31:15.8
- Kaprun Scenic Trail | KST: 16 km, 1,000 metres of elevation gain
    - Men: Aitor Navarro Hita (ESP), 1:27:34.9; Ewen Wilkinson (GB), 1:28:12.5; Enrico Kuhn (GER), 1:32:20.2
    - Women: Nastja Mihelčič (SLO), 1:46:46.8; Michelle Rannacher (GER), 1:50:28.2; Lisa Rohrbacher (GER), 1:52:24.6

All results available at: https://www.ultratrail.at/de/informationen/nach-dem-rennen/ergebnisse

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