



Long-time Inferno cross-country skiing champion Oliver Zurbrügg was the first to take to the race track in Stechelberg

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## Start of the 82nd International Inferno Ski-Races with cross-country skiing event in Stechelberg

The 82<sup>nd</sup> International Inferno Ski-Races in Mürren are underway: on Wednesday evening, 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026, the Inferno combination cross-country skiing competition took place as usual. Instead of racing through the village of Mürren, this time the athletes battled it out on a perfectly groomed cross-country ski trail in Stechelberg. Numerous participants from the Bernese Oberland dominated the race.

The 82<sup>nd</sup> International Inferno Ski-Races in Mürren got off to a successful start: today, Wednesday afternoon at 4 p.m., over 300 cross-country skiers took part in the Inferno Combination. However, due to the current snow situation, the race did not take place in Mürren as usual, but in Stechelberg for once. Right next to the Schilthorn cable car valley station, the participants set off at 20-second intervals on a perfectly groomed cross-country ski trail. Thanks to the cool temperatures and the sparse sunshine in the valley at this time of year, conditions were ideal for setting up a race track at short notice. The skiers were enthusiastic and glad that they did not have to complete laps on the other possible alternative, the Allmendhubel. The lower altitude and the good atmosphere thanks to numerous spectators pushed them to peak performances.

### **Fast athlete from Simmental shakes up the usual pecking order**

Silvio Fähnrich completed the three-kilometre circuit at the rear of the Lauterbrunnen Valley in the fastest time of 7 minutes and 13 seconds. The Simmental native finished well ahead of Oliver Zurbrügg from Lauterbrunnen, who had been the undisputed Inferno cross-country skiing champion for many years and crossed the finish line in third place just under 17 seconds later. Patrick Zürcher from Latterbach in Niedersimmental, who also finished second last year, came in between them, completing the Bernese Oberland podium.

### **Last year's ladies winner also at the top this year**

The women's race was also won by a competitor from the Bernese Oberland: Sara Stern from Därligen once again took victory in the cross-country skiing competition with a time of 8:44.3. She dominated the race, finishing a good 45 seconds ahead of last year's runner-up Melanie Schock from Weinstadt in Germany. Third place went to Michelle Hurni from Unterseen.

### **The programme continues at a rapid pace**

There will be no time for long breaks: at 10 a.m. on Thursday morning, 22 January 2025, the Inferno Combination participants will continue with the giant slalom at Winteregg. The grand finale will then take place on Saturday with the legendary Inferno Downhill, which this year will start as usual at the Kleiner Schilthorn thanks to the new cable car between Birg and Schilthorn. The finish line is at Winteregg. There will also be plenty of socialising during

Inferno Week. Various parties will be held around the Alpine Sports Centre in Mürren on Friday and Saturday. On Friday evening at 8 p.m., the traditional Inferno parade will take place through the village of Mürren.

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