

A joyful American

The World Cup in 2000 was first and foremost characterized by a joyful American, who had the weekend of his life in Kvitfjell. The athlete's name was Daron Rahlves (USA), and Kvitfjell was the big breakthrough for this highly likeable fellow. After this, everyone in Kvitfjell formed a special relationship with Daron, as Rahlves did with the Kvitfjell organizer.



► Daron Rahlves have had many good times in Kvitfjell. AP Photo / Cornelius Poppe / SCANPIX

Prior to the three races in 2000, Rahlves wasn't that much of a topic of conversation. But after this, a lot of people listened to everything the American had on his mind. And Daron was smiling and laughing, chatted with everyone, and told them about his dreams. And these dreams came through in Kvitfjell. Rahlves wasn't unknown as a part of the World Cup circus but winning both the Downhill races in Kvitfjell no doubt exceeded his wildest dreams.

- Of course, I've had a dream of once standing at the top of the podium in a World Cup race. That this was to happen on Norwegian snow, and in no less than 2 straight races in the same hill, that is just indescribable. It is crazy, cheered Rahlves, who didn't really want to leave Kvitfjell at all.

- I will enjoy this sugar treat for a long time.

The fact that Rahlves won on Friday was of course a big surprise. That he won again on Saturday was extraordinary. On the other hand, he had nothing to defend.

- I just had fun with it. This was two of these days that everything just came together a 100 percent.

Sunday became the day for another alpine charmer. The Italian Kristian Ghedina outsmarted Hermann Maier and cheated him of the victory. And Ghedina turned everyone's heads this Sunday, charming everyone, not least the Norwegian girls. - I love Norwegian women, and I'm having a great time in Kvitfjell, says the Italian people-pleaser, smiling. The fact that Ghedina, from a high start number, swooped in at first place, didn't make everyone that happy. Up until this, Hermann Maier had in fact been quite sure he would win. And in a season where everything up until then had gone Hermann's way, the disappointment of being cheated of this victory wasn't easy to handle. Maier was grumpy, a fact that both the organizers and the audience could feel.

The Norwegian efforts in 2000 isn't much to brag about. Lasse Kjus became ill, while Kjetil André was a big let-down. His best achievement was a 6th place in the Super-G on Sunday.

Results, 2000 men

DH: Daron Rahlves, USA. Didier Cuche, Switzerland. Hermann Maier, Austria.

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SG: Kristian Ghedina, Italy. Hermann Maier, Austria. Andreas Schiffrer, Austria.