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## LAAX OPEN 2023:

# Snowboard Halfpipe Finalists Determined and Freeskiers Debut at the FIS World Cup with the Men's Slopestyle Qualifier

### Snowboard Halfpipe Women & Men

The world's best pipe specialists lined up in the LAAX Superpipe on Thursday to get one of the coveted spots for the night finals on Saturday. They were all full of praise for the perfect Halfpipe! The favourites made it into the women's event, including today's semi-final winner Mitsuki Ono (JPN) with big amplitude and 2021 LAAX OPEN winner Queralt Castellet (SPA) in fourth place.

As expected, the top twelve men heading into Saturday's night finals include Ruka Hirano (1<sup>st</sup>/JPN) and two-time LAAX OPEN winner Scotty James (AUS), who is looking forward to Saturday night: "It's always a very special final here in LAAX under the lights and the big crowd!" Yuto Totskua (3<sup>rd</sup> place) wowed with his amplitude, and young Korean Chaeun Lee (5<sup>th</sup> place) surprised with his back-to-back 1440s. Exceptionally talented Valentino Guseli (AUS) is the only snowboarder who made both slopestyle and halfpipe finals. Jan Scherrer (SUI) and Andre Höflich (GER) also made the cut for Saturday.

### Slopestyle Freeski Qualification Men

A historic day for the freeskiers, as they are part of the FIS World Cup in LAAX for the very first time and got into the action today in the men's slopestyle qualification. Matej Svancer (AUT) and World Champion Andri Ragetli (SUI) are the winners of their respective heats. Matej is in top form and apparently playing with the laws of physics. Favourites like Overall World Cup leader Birk Ruud (NOR), Colby Stevenson (USA), Olympic Champion Alex Hall (USA) and Max Maffott (CAN) also made it to the final. High-flyer Birk Ruud: "It is an honor to be here in beautiful LAAX, I love it. I am very happy to be here for the first World Cup for freeskiers. Stoked I made it to finals. See you guys on Sunday!" The Swiss team has a good chance at the podium with Fabian Bösch, Valentin Morel and local hero Ragetli.

Results, information and broadcasts can be found on [www.laax.com/open](http://www.laax.com/open) and in the LAAX APP.

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