

## **“It’s definitely the best half pipe ever built in Austria”**

**With its gigantic scale of 135 meters in length and 6.30 meters height, it just can’t escape one’s notice – exactly, the speech is of the Superpipe at Snowpark Kitzsteinhorn! Crisp and fresh as ever, the largest pipe in Austria is both attraction and magnet for freestylers from all over Europe. We wanted to know why the pipe is simply "SUPER" and how the monster tube appeals to shredders and so we have invited snowboard freestyle rookie coach Christian "Gigi" Scheidl, his younguns Viktor Szigeti and Johannes Handle, and of course Snowpark Kitzsteinhorn parkdesigner Stefan Plattner for a sit-in.**

Christian "Gigi Scheidl " is snowboard freestyle coach of the junior Skihandelsschule Schladming and trains regularly with his YoungGuns in the Superpipe at the Kitzsteinhorn. We have asked him and two of his young talents Viktor and Johannes for a few statements on the subject "Superpipe". How much effort it is to keep the pipe always in best-shape and how long you can still “smoke this pipe - parkdesigner Stefan Plattner tells you everything!

***The Snowpark Kitzsteinhorn as "training stronghold" with monster kickers, rails, boxes, and the pipe of course... here you can basically find everything a freestyler’s heart wishes. How do your kids take on the park?***

The park is of course very appealing to them. As you said, there is everything you need for pushing them further and reaching the next level!

***Since when and how often do you train with your kids in the pipe? Have there already emerged some real talents?***

We from the SHAS Schladming have been training here since the pipe has been opened. We go there at least once a week for practicing reasons. Slopestyle-wise we are well-placed at the Horsefeathers Superpark Planai, but at Kitzsteinhorn we have the Superpipe as additional training ground. We used to go at least 2-3 times to Switzerland for a decent pipe, which is for God’s sake not needed anymore. Our riders and especially their parents who have always paid for the trips are of course very grateful for the current situation, as with the Salzburg Super Ski Card, we have no additional costs for lift-tickets neither.

Young talents are emerging, of course. If the boys and girls have become acquainted with a pipe, you realize very quickly how they push each other and always want more. Of course Clemens Schattschneider, Mathias Weißenbacher and Adrian Krainer have to be mentioned here. But we must not forget Viktor Szigeti, Philip Toplitsch, Anna Gyarmati and still a handful of others. The level in our team is currently very high. At the higher semesters, it is even higher but the boys learn incredibly fast just by watching them and hence sit the "old" fairly in the neck, so that they cannot rest on their laurels! For example, we now have ten riders jumping doubles, including one girl!

***How do the kids get along with the pipe generally?***

Actually, they dealt with it very well right from the start. After we had spent more than 3 weeks in Saas Fee and Laax in autumn, they're no pipe greenhorns anymore. After one or two basic runs they immediately started to do tricks and go on for more height.

***What would you say is it that makes the superpipe so "Super"?***

For me, the pipe is a great blessing as we only have 1 hour by car and so start for the Kitzsteinhorn depending on the weather situation. What really matters is that the pipeline is Stefan Plattner's personal baby, something you’d notice at every drop in. It’s definitely the best pipe ever built in Austria for longer than a week. I have never had a session this season where it was not in perfect

condition.

***The pipe at the Kitzsteinhorn is the only permanent Pipe in Austria, and thus is also providing a permanent practicing facility. Can we hence expect more pipe pros in the near future?***

Definitely. Now just the basic requirement was created for being able to ride a pipe. Since we now have regular access to a pipe in very good condition, it's only a matter of time until the first doubles will fall in the pipe!

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**VIKTOR SZIGETI** (Snowboard)

***Viktor, we know you as rail-machine and kicker specialist, what about pipes?***

Unfortunately I'm not yet a pipe specialist. I can do jet back to back sevens, but that's it basically. But in the next couple of years I really want to train more for the pipe, therefore the superpipe at the Kitzsteinhorn is just perfect!

***What's your favorite pipe trick?***

A Haakon Flip.

***What makes the superpipe so "Super" to you?***

Because it's a real superpipe! Always in perfect shape and in perfect condition. Something like that I would really need in my garden! ;)

***Do you have any pipe role-model?***

Actually I do not have real role-model but I like the styles of Louie Vito and Kazuhiro Kokubo.

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**JOHANNES HANDLE** (Snowboard)

„Joe“ Johannes Handle is barely known in Austria, mainly because he goes to school in Switzerland. That's also the reason why he is rather spoiled when it comes to the quality of pipes. Joe has won the slope style and pipe rookie competition at the this year's Austrian Masters and showed once more his all-round talent.

***Joe, your season went pretty good so far, you have won the Austrian Masters in slope style and also in the pipe category. Since when are you practicing in the pipe?***

I've been riding the pipe for about 4 years now, in Switzerland I visit the Hochalpine Institution in Ftan so I have perfect conditions to train in the pipe.

***What is it that makes the Kitzsteinhorn superpipe so „Super“?***

The pipe at Kitzsteinhorn is great, I like it a lot! The quality is very high and nearly as good as pipes in Switzerland, which is a huge progress for Austria. If I shred pipes in Austria, I definitely prefer the one at the Kitzsteinhorn.

***Do you have a "signature" pipe trick?***

Frontside 9 Tailgrab

***Do you want to expand your pipe skills or do you plan a career as a pipe-pro?***

Of course my big goal is it to start a pro career and I will definitely give my best to achieve this aim.

***Who is your pipe hero?***

That's Danny Davis, for sure!

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**STEFAN PLATTNER** (Parkdesigner)

***How often is the pipe being shaped? What is the amount of work to maintain a pipe of this size?***

The pipe is actually shaped every second day, but now almost every day as there is so much going on in the park. The workload amounts to about 2 hours a day.

***Who is riding the pipe the most?***

At the moment, clearly more snowboarders are shredding the pipe, especially the kids of the Skihandelsschule Schladming are eagerly in business there. Now and then also some good freeskiers show up and of course there are many guests and tourists to sample the pipe ... thank God there have been few accidents yet ;)

***Till when do you think the pipe will be open this season?***

That's always difficult to say as it totally depends on the weather, but for sure it will be on until mid-April, after that we'll see if the weather conditions are right.

**So, dear friends of the vertical height-euphoria: The Superpipe at Kitzsteinhorn is the absolute pinnacle of this year's season and for a good while ready to be shredded by you! Better try it out!**