

## Competition Climbing's Media Profile

The last UIAA-ICC World Championships produced in excess of 20 hours of television coverage which was distributed to 130 countries. The cumulative audience of the national coverage in the host country consisted of over 11 million viewers.



Particularly young audiences appreciate a regular fare of competition climbing broadcasts and allow for this fresh, young and trendy sport to garner exceptional ratings. The U.S. sports network ESPN includes speed climbing in the line-up of the hippest of all *lifestyle sports* by putting it on the program of its X-Games. In the 2002 edition of this made-for-television multi-sport event, Tori Allen (USA) and Maxim Stenkovoy (RUS) won first place in the women's and the men's divisions and were featured extensively in the worldwide X-Games coverage.



With all the attributes to do exceptionally well with the sought after 14-29 targets, competition climbing is bound to have a bright television future.

## Made for TV

The UIAA-ICC and many of the national federations address the issue of media access to the sport in their competition rules. An excerpt of the British Mountaineering Council's Regulations for its Indoor Climbing Championships illustrates how photographers and camera crews are safely brought up close with the action taking place on climbing walls towering up to 20 meters.

1. With the approval of the President of the Jury, photographers and television camera crews may be permitted to operate in the competition wall area. They shall be allowed to do so on the understanding that:

- a) They do not distract or interfere with a competitor during their preparation for, or their attempt on, a route.
- b) That any mechanical equipment used to support camera crews and equipment does not interfere with the competitors. Special care shall be taken to ensure that any fall does not result in a competitor coming into contact with any camera crew personnel, cameras or associated equipment.
- c) That all camera crew personnel obey immediately any instruction given to them by a Category Judge and/or the President of the Jury.
- d) Photographers and television camera crews may operate from the top of the wall subject to the approval of the President of the Jury. No use of excessive or changing lighting patterns, or any activities which might interfere with a competitor during their attempt on a route, shall be permitted.



Even though the performances in competition climbing are not subject to any qualitative criteria – the climbers' styles are not evaluated – and most of the judging is done with simple timing equipment, recording the ascending athletes on video ensures that rules and safety procedures are complied with. If this recording is done by professional camera operators, broadcast material is generated by the competition itself. Dramatic images of the climbers' chalked fingers reaching for the next hold bring out the sport's essence best. And they can be projected to

large screens for the benefit of the spectators in attendance (a crowd of 6'000 watched the finals of the 2001 World Bouldering Cup).

## Climbing the Iron Foundry

The competition climbing events of The World Games 2005 are staged at the Landschaftspark Nord in Duisburg, the former iron foundry turned multi-purpose venue for sports and culture. In the steel colossus made up of redundant cooling towers and turbine rooms, climbing walls will be erected for the best climbers in the world to compete for the titles in two disciplines: Speed and Difficulty.



Competition climbing has considerable tradition in Germany. The first German Open Championships were held in 1989. Since then, German organizers have regularly distinguished themselves by selecting championship venues that bring the young sport to capacity crowds. The first leg of the 2003 DAV SALOMON Bouldering Cup is held at the fair grounds in Munich in conjunction with the ISPO, the renowned International Trade Fair for Sport Equipment and Fashion. UIAA-ICC Secretary General Reindert Lenselink: "Germany has been an important country for the development of competition climbing because of the work of the German Alpine Club."

The German Alpine Club (*Deutscher Alpenverein – DAV*) with its 650'000 members is the world's largest national mountaineering association. Climb on!