

# The festival of extreme sports «Red Fox Elbrus Race»

6 - 11 May 2009

With the support of the Government of the Kabardino-Balkaria, Federation of the Mountaineering of Russia, the Russian Emergency Ministry

The festival of extreme sports took place at the Elbrus area for the second time and gathered more than 80 participants.



Sportsmen from Russia, Kirghizia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Ukraine, Australia, Austria, Spain, New Zealand and Switzerland took part in the competitions.

The large geography of the event, the presence of the well-known sportsmen, and also of the servicemen of the mountain troupes and Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia created a unique friendly atmosphere.

The general direction of the preparation of the competitions was fulfilled by the company «Red Fox» with the Federation of mountaineering of Russia.

The main judge of the competitions– *Sergey Igorievich Berchov* has remarked an outstanding interest of such event to strengthen the sport spirit and to create a special occasion for communication and an exchange of experience between the professional sportsmen and the amateurs and beginners.

*The competitions were held in 5 disciplines.*

On the **7th of May** from the Glade Azau (2300 m) the team competitions started in the frameworks of the Open Cup of ski mountaineering of the Elbrus area and the championship of Russia of ski-tour.

15 men's, 3 women's and one mixed teams, consisting of 2 sportsmen passed a hard, tiring itinerary with the highest point on the height of 3600 m – the station “Mir”.



From the start there were 2 leading teams: Rinat Sofin and Alexander Kojin (both from Kirovsk) side by side with the Austrian team – Rolf Majcen and Johannes Bock.

The Austrians broke away from the competitors and were leading up till the end of the race. The interval between the Russian and the Austrian which was 3-4 minutes during the race, reached to 5 minutes on the finish line.

The third place was awarded to the team of Gennady Kirievsky from Magnitogorsk and Mingalim Sibaev from New Zealand. Gennady Kirievsky is the present chairman of Ski mountaineering Committee of the Russian Federation of mountaineering.

The women's teams divided the prizes in a following order:

1. *Ekaterina Elikova, Natalia Kudienko (Moscow)*
2. *Diana Elikova, Elena Popush (Moscow)*
3. *Elena Kirievskaya /Natalia Aleksandrova (Chelyabinsk region)*

*The high speed race on the Elbrus (5642 m), the hardest competition by the weather and altitude conditions took place on **the 8th of May**. A record number of 44 participants gathered at the start line.*

Estimating the potential leaders before the start, the director of the Festival Eugenie Kolchanov had marked out very strong sportsmen from Kirghizia, some Russian mountaineers (in the first place master of sports of international level of mountaineering Mikhail Pershin) and also the Spanish sportsman Jessed Hernandez Gispert, the holder of the title of the vice champion of 2008 in sky running, the winner of many international competitions in sky running, and the Austrians Rolf Majcen and Johannes Bock, who won the team competitions of ski mountaineering on the first day of the festival.

The morning of the 8th of May, the day of the start of the race, was sunny, by 7 o'clock the both tops of the Elbrus came to the light, but the weather forecasters and the high altitude judges who were on the top announced a very strong wind 25-35 m/s and the change of weather for the worst.

By 10 o'clock (the time the leaders achieved the peak), the weather has changed dramatically, and it started snowing heavily. The visibility at the height over 3800 m was 2-3- meters. The high altitude judges decided to stop the passage from the Saddle (5300m) to the top because of the danger of losing the itinerary by the participants. Only 4 sportsmen have reached the top. The rest had to descend.



Sergey Bogomolov – a member of judge team, master of sports of international level, the Himalayan legend of Russia, commented the decision of judges: «We don't need frost bitten and perished participants. The race became too dangerous. The decision took by the jury was absolutely correct ».

The first who passed the distance from the start (3800m) to the top (5642m) in 2 hours 43 minutes, was Semen Dvornichenko (Bishkek, team Red Fox Asia), who took away 1000 dollars and a golden medal. Semen had won the race the previous year with the time 2 hours 58 minutes with calmer weather situation.

The silver medal was awarded to his colleague – the leader of Red Fox Asia team *Andrei Puchinin* (Alma-Ata), 2 hours 52 minutes and the third result had Roman Gubanov from Teberda, 3 hours 1 minute, 3 minutes longer than last year when he gained the silver medal.

Only 4 women took part in the race. *Nadejda Shubina* (Kirov), in 4 hours 10 minutes reached the Settle, *she was followed by Agureeva Valeria* (Saint-Petersburg), result on the settle - 4 hours 38 minutes.

During the Soviet period, the speed races to the Elbrus were held as a preliminary competition to

choose the participants for the expeditions to The Himalayas. The mountain was well known for all the serious mountaineers and its height was enough for the tests of endurance. The strongest mountaineers of the Soviet Union took part in the races which were considered very prestigious. The director and the founder of the company Red Fox, Vlad Moroz, took part in such race in 1987 to become a member of the expedition to Kanchenjunga in 1989.

The festival Red Fox Elbrus Race continues the traditions of the speed races to Elbrus of the Soviet time and gives an opportunity for the young sportsmen to show their worth and to meet interesting and congenial people

**The 9th of May.** The day of Victory was marked by a sunny weather on the start of individual race of ski-tour in the frameworks of the Open Cup of the Elbrus area and the Championship of Russia of ski-tour.



Race was held in very hard conditions: it was snowing all day and night long on the Glade Azau and higher up, so the itinerary marked the day before was nearly covered with snow. However this circumstance didn't prevent the sportsmen to fight for the festival prizes. The first prize was awarded to the representative of Kirovsk Rinat Sofin, the second –to the leader of the team race of the 7th of May Johannes Bock, the third to his team partner Rolf Majcen.

The results of women's competitions: the first place – Ekaterina Elikova (Moscow region), the second place – Natalia Kudienko (Moscow), the third place – Elena Kirievskaja (Magnitogorsk).

In the frame works of the festival for the first time was held the Cup of Victory (all- Russian competition of mountain ski training among the servicemen).

The participation of servicemen brought animation among the sportsmen. Sceptically tuned public, from the first minutes of the competition was convinced in an excellent preparation of soldiers of 33 and 34 mountain brigades of the Ministry of Security of Russian Federation, of 121st separate regiment of executive destination of the MIA Russia (Nalchik) and of servicemen of the high mountain regiment of Russian Emergency Ministry.



The chief of the group of reconnaissance direction of the internal army of MIA colonel *Michael Illarionov*, who won the Cup of Victory, remarked: «The participation in such an event is a

political issue. I hope it will be permanent, not episodically». The senior assistant of the chief of the department of the mountain training of the separate mountain brigade 34, captain *Viacheslav Tanakov*: «For us these competitions, besides the army and sport aims, represent a possibility to communicate with people from different countries and regions of Russia, to exchange the experience and to extend our knowledge ».

During the Triumphal Awarding Ceremony of the Cup of Victory, the names of the heroes were announced:

*Individual race:*

1. Ivan Ribakov, MIA

2. Matkin Sergey, MIA
3. Tkachenko Eduard, The Russian Emergency Ministry

*Team race:*

1. Dmitry Hohlov, Michael Illarionov, MIA
2. Eugenie Kogut, Sergey Denisko, MS
3. Sergey Matkin, Ivan Ribakov, MIA

The race on snow shoes took place **on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May**.

The spectacular, dynamic sport, gathering thousands of admirers all over the world, only starts its development in Russia. Thanks to the festival in the Elbrus area, it becomes more popular.



All the interested persons were aloud to take part in the competitions. 16 competitors participated in the race, among them – the champion of Europe of snow shoes Jessed Hernandez Gispert, who shared the first place with a legendary mountaineer and multi racer from Saint-Petersburg Michael Pershin. The third was Semen Dvornichenko from the team Red Fox Asia.

Among the women the first price was awarded to Oksana Chekulaeva, the second to Valery Agureeva from Saint-Petersburg, the third to Elena Travina (Archangelsk).