

Gardena

MAGAZINE

English
Version



**VAL
GARDENA**

DOLOMITES - ITALY

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10. EDITION

Cover:
Bettina Ruatti,
Miss Alto Adige /
Südtirol 2008

Gennaio/Januar/January 2008
Nr. 10 - Year 9

PUBLISHER
SNOW EVENTS

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GRAPHIC & DESIGN & PRINT
ARTPRINT, BRIXEN, TEL. 0472 200 183
WWW.ARTPRINT.BZ.IT



www.gardena.org

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GARDENA MAGAZINE

10

TENTH
EDITION

Mariangela Schiavo



This edition marks the X Anniversary of the Gardena Magazine! The publication first appeared in 1999 thanks to the efforts of two young local men, Alex Pitscheider and Alex Flaim. They are also the founders of SNOW EVENTS, an association which has long organised popular attractions including Snow Countdown, the Snow Carnival and the Winter Opening as well as fashion shows and concerts at high-altitude, set against the incredibly beautiful scenery of the Dolomite mountain peaks, in order to promote and publicise tourism in the area. Their much acclaimed entertainment line-up has included well-known singers and groups, such as Luca Carboni, Alexia and Los Locos and the Snow Events programme now goes on after the end of The ski season with a summertime animation programme, Happy Selva, which turns the valley into one big tourist village and attracts both a young and older public. The untiring organisers of Snow Events present a continuous tourist promotion project and know only too well how important it is to introduce visitors to the customs and traditions of the valley. They appreciate how important these factors are and want to let visitors in on some of the secrets of the "real" valley, its inhabitants and their very particular way of life. Arti-



cles about well-known local figures such as Luis Trenker, Isolde Kostner, Carolina Kostner and Giorgio Moroder, the only Italian to have won three Oscar Awards as he has for his sound tracks for the successful films Flash Dance, Top Gun and Midnight Express, have always made popular reading in the Magazine.

The magazine is divided into two parts, an editorial section which dedicates space to articles about the traditions and customs of the valley and to interesting little aspects we believe need to be known and preserved, and a second part which gives a detailed guide to the best restaurants, shops and après ski entertainment. Gardena Magazine is also justly proud of several scoops as, for example, when it published an as then-unknown photo of king Vittorio Emanuele of the royal house of Savoy, taken as a child and wearing traditional Gardena local costume. Other well-liked articles have been written about a number of well-known, regular visitors to the valley, such as the two most well-loved Presidents of the Republic of Italy, Sandro Pertini who chose to holiday in the valley for more than twenty years, and Carlo A. Ciampi.

Gardena Magazine, which was first called



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Selva Magazine, has always been a great success with visitors who have grown to love the valley and its surroundings and we are grateful to many of them for sending us their stories to be published under the title Our Guests and their Stories, or What Our Visitors Have To Say. Their very personal accounts of holidays spent in the valley make such interesting reading that we are now thinking of publishing them all in a book as a way of saving their memories for the future and thanking them for their valuable contributions.

We have always taken great care in our choice of material for the Gardena Magazine, selecting well-known, professional photographers for both the covers and inside pages and top-notch models as our Cover Girls, including four winners of the Miss Alto Adige / South Tyrol competition for the last four editions. We have used the most original, suggestive photo locations in the valley and high up amidst awesome, snow-capped peaks and have included various very original shots such as lunch in a cable-car as well as photos of après ski fun and frenetic shopping in the village centres. We are equally proud of our choice of editor, writers and other colleagues and take the opportunity to thank them here - head editor Leo Senoner, journalist for the RAI in Bolzano, Giovanni Di Vecchia, journalist with the Corriere della Sera, Filly Vilardi, professor of the Scuola Primaria and, of course, our many loyal, esteemed guests. We at Snow Events also thank the many sponsors who have supported us over the years and encouraged us to continue our work protecting and promoting the traditions and culture of this area which is, without doubt, one of the most beautiful parts of the world.



Gardena, past and present





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CHILDREN'S PLAY GROUNDS
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MOUNTAIN ADVENTURES

SUMMER 2008
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ELIKOS FLYING OVER THE TOP

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THE STORY OF ONE OF OUR LOYAL GUESTS ...

Selva, My Love!

Luigi Beretta



It was February 1947 and I found myself at Terminillo where my parents had sent me to recover from a bad bout of influenza. There was not much snow and, what little there was, was starting to melt and there were not many ski lifts to be seen then either, just after the war, so there wasn't much for me, a ski enthusiast, to do. In my hotel, I met a boy who was a bit older than myself and he, too, was complaining: "Enough! I'm so fed up! I'm leaving tomorrow. I'm going to Val Gardena, to Selva. I'm sure to find good snow there ... fantastic runs ... lifts to dream of." We spent all evening together, he did the talking while I listened to his every word and ... his enthusiasm really inspired me. I never saw him again. He left next morning but his words stayed with me. I went back to Rome and there I talked to Oscar, an old friend. Without doubt, he and I shared the same dreams. Next year, we wanted to go, we simply had to go skiing in Selva. We started to look around, make some enquiries and contacts and get some idea of the cost - a thing of paramount importance to us as poor students, and finally found Pensione La Selva with board-and-lodging for 450 lire a day! Just right for us as we budgeted to have a two-week holiday, third class travel included as well as a few extras. It goes without saying that we spent the entire summer looking forward to it all! At last, it was time to leave. After twelve hours spent banging about on the train's uncomfortably hard wooden benches, we arrived in Chiusa at midday. Then, we took the little valley train ... three wooden coaches with a small iron platform at

one end and a coal-fired engine which puffed and spluttered its way along ... everything, from the sleepers to the wagons and coaches with their little windows and shiny wooden benches, as tiny and perfect as the little toy trains I had played with when I was a small child. It wouldn't have surprised me at all if the passengers had been playful gnomes or delightful snow fairies!!!! Such was the magic of it all! I have often done the same journey in the intervening years and it always has the same calming effect on me ... I feel like a carefree child again. The train wound its way up and up the valley, revealing fantastic scenes of the surrounding countryside round every bend ... the pointed bell-tower of a little church, the traditional wooden farmhouses and isolated chalets, the snow-covered slopes, the carriages almost brushing against the cosy village houses with their happy inhabitants ... Then, at a certain point, above a thick fir-tree forest, the unexpected appearance of the mighty Sasso Lungo ... a truly fantastic sight when your eyes first see it in the distance!!!! The journey was still not over as the train slowly climbed bend after bend, not much faster than a man can walk, up a number of really steep inclines with its wheels slipping and sliding on the smooth, ice-covered rails and then coming to a full stop before retreating a little to a piece of flat where the engine driver stoked the fire to the hilt to get a better start on whatever steep slope had stopped it a few moments before while passengers shouted their encouragement from the open windows ... - It's impossible to forget all

this and not look back on it with a certain longing! I know you'll understand when I say how disappointed I was in 1961 when, with the appearance of more and more tourists, progress reared its ugly head and all this was lost for ever. I have never been able to accept or excuse the decision and just think what a fantastic tourist attraction the little train would be nowadays if they had saved it and let it run on another track, perhaps!!!!

Well, we eventually arrived in Selva where a robust man in a dark blue apron was waiting for us with a large wooden sleigh to carry our luggage and skis while we plodded on over the crisp snow for something like half an hour to Pensione La Selva which, in the meantime, has been renovated and is now an elegant residence. The original building was a lonely, two-floor guest-house comprising a dozen simple bedrooms and spacious dining-room with one large table which accommodated us all at mealtimes when Mamma Puntcher prepared excellent food in the nearby kitchen according to a menu we had all democratically agreed to the morning before. Riccardo, her son, tall, thin, unmarried and always to do whatever was needed, ruled the roost and it was he who introduced us to the secrets Selva had in store for its visitors.

In the morning, we went down to the village ... which was made up of Hotel Oswald, Hotel Post which stood in front of the Village Hall with Casa Riffeser to the other side of the road and a newspaper kiosk, bar Nives, the church, the cemetery and a few private houses. Hotel Stella was somewhat further down the road. Many years later, the isolated Hotel Alpina was built at Plan.Otto Insam used a jeep parked in front of Hotel Oswald, which had been abandoned there after the war, as a taxi to ferry tourists to the ski slopes ... This was Selva when I first knew it. There was always plenty of snow and everything was beautiful. I fell in love with the place, it would have been impossible not to have done so, and have returned many times over the years, lodging with the Riffeser sisters at a later date and then, when I started working, at Hotel Oswald. We felt like royalty every time we stayed at the most beautiful hotel in the valley with its retro atmosphere somewhat reminiscent of a certain middle-European flair, its cosy lounges with their heavy curtains, the larch-wood floors which squeaked as you walked, the restaurant over-looked by a maitre in his elegant dinner suit, the bar with its small orchestra of talented musicians ... all under the expert management of owner, Oswald Pitscheider, who became a real friend of mine and with whom I shared some great meals and even greater wines to go with them. In the meantime, military serv-



ice gave me further opportunity to discover the beauty of the valley. As an officer of the Alpini mountain troops at Merano, I spent three summer camps in Gardena and hiked the winter ski runs which I had only previously seen as they flashed before my eyes. Often in the company of one of my military colleagues, a certain Walter Bonatti, I climbed the Cir, the Odle, the Marmolada, the Boè and had the chance to admire the icy Pisciadù glacier before it disappeared for ever.

I remained true to Hotel Oswald, returning there for my honeymoon in 1958 and in the years afterwards while our children were growing up. Then, all this came to an end. Oswald sold the hotel and it stood empty for a considerable time so I looked for other accommodation, here and there, until I found Aaritz which has, in the meantime, become my home-from-home. I can remember when Susy was pregnant and Daniel was born - he's now 18 years old! We still come to Selva with our children and grand-children and I come with my wife alone though she does not like the cold or snow and prefers summer which we find to be just as beautiful as winter.

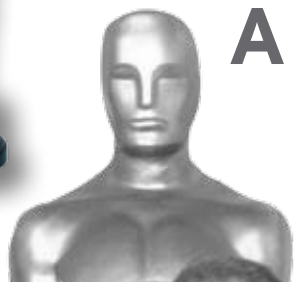
Four years ago, I was delighted to receive a certificate in recognition for my having spent 50 years of holidays in the valley, something I am terribly proud of but which also makes me think about how time has passed ... But, why worry! I still love to ski, together with my old friend Oscar, and with as much enthusiasm as ever even if my legs and lungs are not as good as they used to be! I like to think that I'm still good at it and enjoy seeing the changes and inspecting new facilities as they appear. Selva is a real part of me and I love the place. I tell myself that it belongs to me in part and I feel at home every time I return. When time comes for me to head back to Rome, I always say: "Arrivederci - See you again soon!"



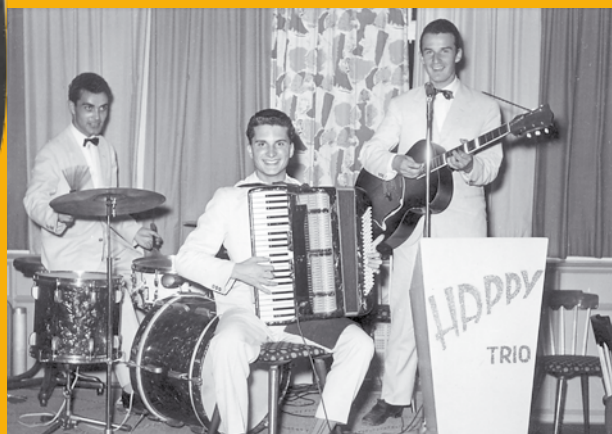
Do you have some special memories of your holiday in Val Gardena? Send us an e-mail: info@snowevents.it

GIORGIO MORODER AND BEIJING 2008

Leo Senoner



Beijing 2008



Olympic successes are not the prerogative of athletes alone. Artists and musicians may also find fame and fortune at such events. Giorgio Moroder, music producer and composer from Val Gardena is a good example of this. During the eighties, in fact, he wrote a number of hits for various important world-wide sports events including the song "Reach Out", the official music for the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics and "Hand in Hand", the anthem for the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games. He also composed "To Be Number One" for the 1990 World Championship Football Games held in Italy, a song which was later recorded by Italian singers Gianna Nannini and Edoardo Bennato under the title "Un' estate italiana" - An Italian Summer. Three enormous hits for three top sporting events which were watched by enthusiastic fans in every continent and which brought Moroder considerable fame and fortune. The musician's professional

career has evolved over the years. He was one of the first writers to use innovative electronic music and sound effects for the then very popular disco-dance scene. He had already written a considerable number of sound tracks for films which have received awards in Hollywood and elsewhere and had produced some extremely successful musicals before turning his hand to writing anthems for sporting and other large-scale events. His prestigious, successful compositions reflect his very versatile talent and artistic creativity. With years of prolific career behind him, the young-at-heart musician from Ortisei is now especially enthusiastic about the official anthem he is composing for the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, his third composition for this enormously prestigious, popular, global sports event. Together with Chinese pianist Kong Xiangdong and his ever-faithful text writer, German Michael Kunze, Moroder has penned the an-



them "Forever Friends" for the games to be held in China and both text writer and composer are delighted that the words of the song underline the importance of peace, unity, harmony and joy.

Giorgio Moroder has lived in Beverly Hills, California for a number of years now but is still in contact with his home here in Val Gardena and likes to return for a summer and winter holiday every year. Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, past President of the Republic of Italy, awarded him the title "commendatore" in 2005 in recognition of his outstanding talent and many professional successes. Moroder, in the meantime, confesses that his dream remains that of one day writing a new national anthem for Italy, not simply music for a big sports event but something for an entire nation.

Giorgio Moroder - and his Greatest Successes

Winner of three Academy Awards - Oscar Prizes

1979 - best sound track for the film Midnight Express

1984 - best film music for Flashdance

with special award for the song What A Feeling

1987 - best film music for Top Gun

with special award for the song Take My Breath Away

Winner of four Golden Globes - for the same films as

well as four nominations for the sound track of American Gigolo, best song Call Me from the film American Gigolo and for the sound track of Cat People and Scar Face.

Winner of two Grammy Awards, 1 Los Angeles Film Critics Association Award, 2 People's Choice Awards and more than 150 Golden and Platinum Discs.

His name took its place in 2004 in the **Dance Music Hall of Fame** in recognition of his musical productions.

As composer of 15 sound tracks of internationally successful films - including Midnight Express, the remake of Metropolis, Cat People, American Gigolo, Superman III, Scar Face, Flashdance, Electric Dreams, Over the Top and the Never Ending Story.

As composer and/or producer of the music written for over 40 successful films - including Top Gun, Beverly Hills, Cop II, Rambo III, Navy Seals, Fox and Quick-silver.

As composer and producer of songs for numerous well-known singers - such as Barbara Streisland, David Bowie, Donna Summer, Janet Jackson, Berlin, Olivia Newton John, Bonnie Tyler, Blondie, Jennifer Rush, Limahl, Cher, Irene Cara, Asia, Freddie Mercury, Elton John, Graham Nash and many, many more.

Giorgio Moroder's artistic talent and creative genius are not restricted to the field of music but spread into the realms of figurative art, architecture and design. He never stops looking for an innovative challenge and approaches each new opportunity with great artistic spirit. His works tend to express and reflect his wider vision of the world which surrounds us.



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PUNTO G



SELVA AND ITS NEW PEDESTRIAN ZONE

Filly Vilardi



At last! Selva has its long-awaited Pedestrian Only Zone (ready summer 2008). Everything is ready now in the central square, Piazza Nives, after an ambitious project which lasted two years. The new Pedestrian Only Zone joins the old centre, the Ghetun, where the historical Hotel Posta is located and where local people handed in their post and changed their horses, to the church of Santa Maria ad Nives. This little church actually dates back to the XV century and was built by the first noble members of the Wolkenstein family. It became a place of pilgrimage during the XVII century and was restored and enlarged several times in the intervening years until 1990 when it was completely re-built in a harmonious combination of traditional and modern styles. Two new buildings, a hotel and a hall which will house the new village museum, now grace the main square together with a two-storey, under-ground car park while a new village library will stand at the other end of the pedestrian area. The village Pedestrian Only Zone is of vital importance to Selva itself, a tourist resort of international fame, and to the whole valley community.





OUR CUSTOMS:

HELAU, HELAU

youths and their
coming-of-age ...

Leo Senoner

You may have already seen and heard happy groups of young men, one Sunday morning in May, shouting "Helau, Helau" at the very top of their voices. No-one really knows where the word in question comes from or what it actually means, but it is an old custom for young men from Val Gardena to make the fact known, in one village and the next, when they reach their coming of age. They set out to enjoy themselves and are often quite loud too, but rarely get aggressive and generally behave themselves.

You'll hear a lot of shouting and laughter but all done in a relatively civilised manner! The ritual is very characteristic of the Val Gardena and has its roots in a precise historic period.

The valley youth traditionally celebrated their coming-of-age in May, the Sunday before being called up for Military Service, which meant they were no longer considered as boys but had become men and were now part of adult male society. They would set out in their best white shirts, traditional blue aprons and typical valley hat with a splendid Wood Grouse feather stuck in the band and stroll from house to house, challenging younger youths and trying to attract the attention of any young girl who took their fancy.

Their leader, usually a brawny, strong-looking young man with a large wooden club in his hand, was there to protect his companions and ward off any unwanted attention. They might occasionally come to blows with anyone who dared complain about the noise or question their authority but, to coin a phrase, they were simply "strutting their stuff". It was a chance for them to show off and make their voices heard without creating any real trouble. So, now you know what to expect if you hear loud cries of "Helau! Helau! Helau!" echoing through the valley!

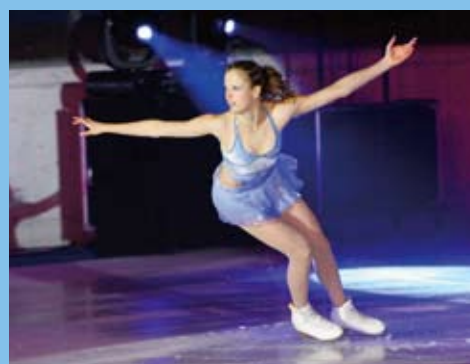




CAROLINA KOSTNER

Graceful, elegant,
talented champion

Mariangela
Schiavo



The last thing we had heard of Carolina, a real figure-skating star, was in 2005 when she proudly took her place on the prize-winners podium at Moscow's world-famous Luzhnick ice rink. Italy had been awaiting a medal winner in such a prestigious event for twenty-seven years, ever since Susan Driano won at Goteburg having beaten her own idol, top-notch champion Michelle Kwan. Carolina's splendid Moscow success marked the beginning of a whole series of wins. In fact, she won a bronze medal at the January 2006 European Championship at Lione and was chosen by the CONI to carry the Italian flag at the 2006 Turin Winter Olympic Games. Carolina also took the gold medal at the European Games at Warsaw in January 2007, thirty-five years after another Italian skater, Rita Trapanese, had been presented with the same award. Carolina is a truly exceptional skater, talented as well as charming, and is extremely popular with the public who rate her in second place after none other than Valentino Rossi, according to a recent survey by the TNT Infratest Society, once known as Abacus.

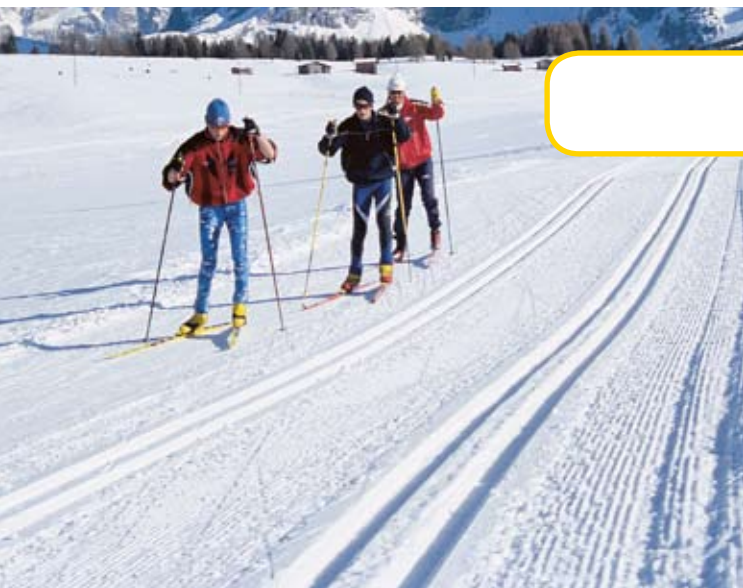
Furthermore, Carolina is the well-recognised figure-head of various publicity campaigns including the Progetto Lancia Ice and she also represents fashion guru Roberto Cavalli. Cavalli designed her dresses for the 2006 Turin Winter Ol-

ympic Games and has, ever since, supported her every time she enters a competition. Silvia Damiani, a designer whose creations feature in Made in Italy promotions, designs the lovely jewellery Carolina wears and Carolina, together with colleagues from the National Association of Figure Skating, also publicise the cruise liner Voyager of the Seas, which belongs to the Royal Caribbean Company. She is always ready to give her support to any number of worthy charities including "A Dream for the Gaslini", a project for a new building near the Gaslini Hospital in Genoa where children will stay during their convalescence and attend school, do rehabilitation therapy and have their own games and sports facilities. Carolina dedicates herself one hundred percent to her chosen sport and is the undisputed jewel in the crown of the Italian Figure Skating Association.

In a recent interview, she confessed that she concentrates so hard on what she is doing on the ice that she manages to forget all the hard work, pain and sacrifice involved. We in the valley admire her tremendously and know that her determination and talent are more than enough to charm and bewitch her fans as she traces shimmering, diamond-cut circles and cuts magnificent arabesques over the sparkling ice.



NEWS & PEOPLE



Cross-Country Skiing at Monte Pana

After ten years of planning and various projects, the new cross-country centre at Monte Pana on the Santa Cristina high plateau at the foot of the Sassolungo is ready for use. A cross-country centre which meets the strictest laws and highest expectations with a 8 km. long "panoramic" track connecting to the run which leads to the Alpe di Siusi and a number of smaller rings (1 km., 2.5 km., 3.3 km., 3.75 km. and 7.5 km. in length) of various levels from easy ones to those intended for experts and competition skiers. All the tracks start from the lower cross-country station. The Monte Pana Cross Country Skiing Centre will be inaugurated in December 2007 and is an official member

of the new Dolomiti Nordic Ski organisation which aims to promote cross-country ski centres throughout the Dolomite area and guarantee optimal, top quality service for all fans of the sport. The organisation insists on both excellent service and professional daily care of the runs. The one day ticket will cost 4 Euro while the price of a season pass is set at 40 Euro.

Gastronomic Rally

What a great idea! A real highlight! An elegant limousine to ferry you from one refined restaurant to the next! What more could you possibly want! An exclusive, gourmet dinner set in splendid surroundings. You'll find this and much more in Ortisei thanks to the initiative of the owners of four well-known restaurants whose chefs will take it in turns to prepare the most tempting, tasty menus for you. A luxurious limousine will take you from one restaurant to the next and you'll have the chance to sample special dishes prepared by the award-winning chefs at Tubladel, Concordia, the Alte Traube and Anna's Stuben. So, just settle back comfortably and enjoy the special atmosphere of the autumn colours of the trees as the sun sets slowly in the background and lights begin to twinkle throughout the valley. A delicious eight-course menu at these top-notch restaurants. Ortisei will be wearing her sparkling party gown as she gets ready to welcome you for a unique gourmet experience set against truly magical scenery.



Jasemba and Gasherbrum II for Karl Unterkircher

Two "firsts" for mountaineer Karl Unterkircher from Selva who, after having climbed Everest and K2 in 2004, a feat which got him into the Guinness Book of Records, managed another great enterprise which guarantees him star status amongst high altitude mountaineers. In May 2007, Unterkircher and his colleague Hans Kammerlander climbed the 7,350 mt. high Jasemba, a mountain which had never been conquered before. Jasemba, an unusually beautiful Himalayan peak on the border between China and Nepal, has seen many climbers turn back on their way to its summit. The mountain seems to be cursed in some way, especially since Luis Brugger, one of Unterkircher and Kammerlander's friends and team companions, fell to his death there last year. Then a mere two months later in July, the courageous Unterkircher climbed the mighty 8,835 meter high Gasherbrum II, an awesome peak in the Karakorum range on the borders of China and Pakistan. Together with companions Daniele Bernasconi, nick-named the "spider from Lecco" and Michele Compagnoni, who actually stopped a little short of the peak, he tackled the extremely insidious north side of the mountain which no other climber had ever done before. The three men battled on in places where others had been forced to turn back and pushed on to where no human had ever set foot. Unterkircher, the Gardena "cator", again proved himself to be one of the top mountaineers of our times.



Golf at Selva all-year-round

Golf is one of the most "in" sports of the moment and golfers are always on the look out for something special at the various courses they visit. Good training is essential and good

players must be able to practice where and when they want, at home, in the office, on the terrace, in the garden, at a hotel or a sports centre. Now, they can do all this thanks to the PGM Professional Golf Machine simulator and Complete Indoor training area at the Selva Tennis and Bowling Centre which is open all-year-round. Selva's Indoor Golf complex has a putting green with nine holes, two golf driving range cages for practising long shots, two PGM Professional Golf Machine simulators and a pitching area for practising short shots. The spectacular simulator has the very latest high-technology software which allows golfers to play both with and without balls in surroundings which reproduce a natural, open-air green. There are also a number of different golf courses to choose from, including Carezza, Bergamo, Udine or Dubai, and the ultra-precise electronic sensor and software calculates the speed and length of each shot, its distance from the hole and the angle of the golfer's swing ... so it's just like playing on a traditional green with just a little more precision and technical science involved. The game is designed for a maximum of four golfers while ten players can take part in Contest Games. This innovative centre in Selva is run by expert professional instructors who are there to give lessons to beginners and experts alike twelve months a year, even in winter. After a pleasant walk, a ride in a MTB or a little skiing, what could be better for golfers but to get together on their beloved green whose technological software will ensure them many hours of enjoyment and the perfect chance to improve their game.

World Stars Ski Event

8th-10th February 2008
in Selva,
Val Gardena



The "Star Team For Children", a new charity founded by Prince Albert II of Monaco which involves important, well-known stars from the world of international sport and show-business has recently been presented to the public.

Star Team for Children will promote and sponsor various, top-notch, sporting events with the aim of collecting money to help children in under-developed, emerging countries. In order to make itself more known, the organisation will shortly be presenting a number of sports events for the first time here in Italy.

Val Gardena will host a ski meeting at Plan de Gralba from 8th to 10th February 2008. Prince Albert of Monaco himself will be present as well as a line-up of well-known stars including very popular show-girl Michelle Hunziker.

THE TYPICAL TRADITIONAL COSTUME OF GARDENA

Elfriede Perathoner

The traditional regional costume of the Gardena people is, without doubt, one of the most lovely and typical of the whole Dolomite region. It is not known exactly when the costume first appeared but its origins go back several centuries. The valley costume reflects the culture and traditions of the Ladin people and, in particular, the history of the Gardena inhabitants. In 1888, Jan Batista Alton, a priest from Val Badia, visited Ortisei and remarked on the surprisingly beautiful local dress although he added that most of the men and women seemed to prefer more modern "city clothes". The valley inhabitants, in fact, only wore traditional local costume for high days and holidays such as the religious festival of Corpus Domini or for important family occasions like christenings, weddings and funerals. Alton added that, by 1888, the Gardena men did not really wear traditional costume at all any more and it must be said that little importance was given to the cultural value of local costume and traditions at that time. A number of Gardena people even sold their traditional clothes to antique dealers from other parts of the country, something which very much upset the then mayor of Ortisei, Franz Moroder.

However, the well-known painter from Ortisei, Josef Moroder Lusenberg, who personally much appreciated the traditional costume, started to acquire and collect various rare items of clothing in order to prevent such traditions disappearing. He also managed to save the much-loved, traditional Gardena horse-drawn wedding coaches with their beautiful finery and preserved other traditions which were at risk of being lost for ever. Franz von Defregger, the great Austrian artist, described the Gardena bridal costume as being the most "glorious" in all the Tyrol region and Jan Batista Alton, too, spoke of the beauty and great value of the Gardena costumes,



which cost three times more than those of the nearby Val di Fassa and the area around Marebbe. A certain Spanish and Portuguese influence, brought to the area by the numerous Gardena merchants and wood carvers who travelled throughout Europe selling their wares, can be seen in the typical valley costumes.

An association of traditionally-thinking people was founded in Ortisei in 1903 and its members worked hard to preserve the historic costumes as well as other customs. They appointed a certain Franz Schmalzl to design and make a new costume for them. The association was disbanded in 1919 but another similar group of



Vittorio Emanuele from Savoia as a child in the vacation in Val Gardena



enthusiasts, the "Union Costumes de Gherdeina", soon took its place with Leo Demetz from Ortisei as president. The arrival of the Fascist era meant that the association had a relatively short life as cultural activity involved in preserving local traditions was regarded with considerable suspicion at that time. However, Fascism was unable to prevent people being interested in their historic culture and the costumes survived. Arturo Tanesini, land-owner from Ortisei, confirms that traditional costumes were worn for religious processions throughout the valley and also mentions that the younger generation favoured them whenever a religious celebration gave them the excuse to do so. A new association, the "Lia per la cura dl paesc y dla usanzas y guanc", was founded in 1956.

Led by Heinrich Moroder de Doss, it dedicated itself to safeguarding traditional customs and the valley costumes. Later, in 1963, Toni Senoner founded a separate committee within the association, the "gruppa bal populer de Ghereina", or Popular Dance Association of the Val Gardena, which did research into the traditional old folk dances of the valley and the surrounding area. At the beginning of the '70s, Florian Schrott founded a further sub-section of the association, the "Lia per natura y usanzas", Association for Nature and Customs, and, at the end of the seventies, these two groups and the "Guanc dala Gherdeina", the Costume Group of the Val Gardena, with its president Roland Sadei, decided to separate and continue their work on an individual basis.

The Selva "Lia per Cultura y Usanzas", the Selva Association for Culture and Traditions, was founded in 1964 with Hermann Senoner as its president. The long, incredibly rich history of various traditional customs, celebrations and costumes has been saved for posterity thanks to the dedication of these hard-working associations and the valley people are still proud today to wear their typical, colourful, folklore costumes for a number of annual religious processions and other festivities.

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Eighty Years of ICE HOCKEY IN THE VAL GARDENA

Leo Senoner



More and more visitors began to come to Val Gardena after the end of World War II, including skiers and ice hockey fans who loved nothing more than to slip into their old-fashioned skates and head for whatever ice they could find. The first public skating rink opened in 1922 in Ortisei's piazza S. Antonio and the first hockey club in the valley was founded a mere three years later on 26th. October 1927. Hans Kerschbaumer was the promoter and first president of Hockey Club Gardena/Ortisei whose players wore blue-and-white colours. The team started with a few friendly matches against Bolzano, Nürnberg and Turin that season and took part in the Italian National Championship series together with Milan, Turin, Varese, Renon, Cortina, Alleghe and Auronzo. Ice hockey became really popular during the 1930's until World War II put an end to almost all sport activities and matches became an extremely rare event. The sport again saw an increase in popularity in the period between 1947 and 1957 and attracted countless young and older fans. A second club, Hockey Club Saslong, soon appeared in the valley with well-known, much loved Tschucky Kerschbaumer as its founder and captain. The team comprised players from Selva and Santa Cristina. The year 1953 saw the first of a long series of derby matches between the two Gardena line-ups and both teams began winning ever more prestigious titles. The junior team won the 1954/1955 Junior National Championships and the hard work they had put into encouraging and training young, up-and-coming local athletes, many of whom would go on to play in the top national teams, really

started to pay off. A number of simple, amateur ice rinks started appearing all over the place in the 1960's, many in people's back gardens or near wood carvers' workshops, and the whole valley became fanatic about the sport. Young and more mature players, beginners and experts alike, put in untold hours of practice on any suitable icy surface they could find. The Gardena teams had a good choice of players ready and willing to join their ranks and any promising talent won the attention of national selectors and scouts who were always on the look-out for new blood. 1967 was another especially important year for ice hockey in the valley. A new state-of-the-art covered rink, with a capacity of 4500 seats, opened on grazing land at Setil near Ortisei and a whole new era began. Gardena won many prestigious cups and trophies and everyone in the valley was proud of the team's continued successes, especially when, a mere two years later, Gardena won the Italian National Championship title for the first time, a title which had belonged almost exclusively to either Bolzano or Cortina over the previous twenty or more years.

The sport became more and more popular throughout the 1970's, too. Another association, Hockey Club Selva, appeared in the valley in 1973 and, thanks to its many fine local players and two great foreign stars, the Finns Lasse Oksanen and Jorma Valtonen, Gardena won the national title for the second time in the 1975/1976 season. Years of absolute euphoria and as yet unseen enthusiasm followed with a number of successful wins in Italy and Europe and Gardena players and the local



teams earned fine reputations for themselves. Gardena took two national championship titles in the 1979/1980 and 1980/1981 seasons and, to quote a popular Italian saying, the "cherry on the cake" appeared in March 1981 when the Italian national team, with trainer Adolf Insam from Gardena, won the B championship round and was rightly promoted to the A section in the annals of world hockey. An unexpected honour and high-point for ice hockey through the entire valley.

The 1980's saw a really new tendency with the arrival of many foreign players, most of them Italian Canadians. Their presence was seen as a danger by some as many of them were at the top of their career and could command exorbitant fees which caused considerable financial hardship for various clubs. A number of less important clubs were forced to retire from the championship and, even though Gardena was in the lucky position of having some extremely valid local players, the valley coffers also suffered to some extent. Yet, the team managed to go on for a number of years until the 1985/1986 season when it had to withdraw to a lower series. Our best players transferred to other teams and valley fans were left to console themselves with epic derby games between Gardena and its closest rivals Selva, to look forward to. Selva, in the meantime, had always been one of the best line-up in the B series. After a considerable time in the lower series, years during which the faithful fans and their pride suffered terribly, Hockey Club Gardena was re-admitted to the A series for the 1991/1992 season. The team dearly wished to return to its former glory and made considerable in-

vestments to strengthen its chances. With their loyal fans there to support them, the team soon started winning important games and Gardena was the real protagonist of the Alpenliga championship even if it did not quite manage to win any prestigious cups. Then, after a number of reasonably successful years, the club once more ran into serious financial difficulties and there was nothing left to do but to retire once more to the B series. A crucial moment came in June 1999 when the future of Hockey Club Gardena and the sport in general throughout the whole valley seemed to be at real risk. An enormous land-slide came hurtling down the mountainside and buried the ice rink at Setil under a vast mound of stones, rock, debris and mud. It really did look as if destiny had played her final cruel hand and that Hockey Club Gardena would have no hope of ever recovering from such a disaster.

Yet once again, local hockey fans joined ranks and, at great sacrifice to themselves, somehow got the money together to rebuild the ruins. Hockey Club Gardena, which had just managed re-emerged from under the rubble of the flattened ice rink, and Hockey Club Selva, which had battled on courageously for so many years, finally took the long-awaited decision to join forces for the 2002/2003 season, and play in the B series. A new society with new managers and yet the traditional team spirit and passionate enthusiasm was still very much alive together with a fervent desire to play well and honourably and encourage young local players in the hope of seeing other thrilling wins and great successes as in years gone by.



A STORY WHICH INVOLVES MUCH MORE THAN PERSONAL FEELINGS OF LOSS AND SUFFERING

Giovanni Di Vecchia

Most local people still remember a tragic event which happened in the valley some years ago, something which may well serve as an example to us all nowadays, at a time when we are not so aware of others around us even when they are going through extremely difficult times. The year 1952 played an important and never-to-be-forgotten part in the life of Gardena mountain guide Giovanni Demetz from Santa Cristina who, although he had just lost a son, selflessly turned to help others in distress. What actually happened that day is told here by a witness to the event. It was the afternoon of 17th. August and Giovanni Demetz felt strangely worried and upset, almost as if he knew that something terrible was about to happen. The hour hand of the clock on the wall of the Passo Sella mountain rescue hut pointed to five o'clock and Giovanni's son, Toni, a mountain guide like his father, had not returned yet - he was out climbing on the Sassolungo, first man on the rope with some visitors. The weather had started to worsen some hours before and a violent storm was buffeting the whole area. Clouds covered the top of the Sassolungo and, from time to time, flashes of lightning illuminated the mountains. Giovanni Demetz decided to go out and meet the climbers on their way back.

He crossed the pass and, made his way to the Vicenza rescue hut where the locals said: "Toni is an expert, careful guide. We're sure that he'll have found shelter in the bivouac there and will sit it out until conditions improve ..."

News came at dawn the next morning of victims lost in the storm on the Sciliar, the Marmolada and the Catinaccio. Giovanni Demetz did not hesitate. He could wait no longer and set out, even though it was bitterly cold and there was a smooth layer of ice on the rocks. After an incredibly difficult ascent, he had just managed to get close to the bivouac when he heard a voice, which seemed to come from a nearby peak, cry out for help. But it was not his son's.

He hurried towards the voice and found one of the climbers who told him that his son had been struck by lightning. Toni lay, in fact, just a small distance away with his arms round a rock. Overcome with despair, Giovanni screamed at the top of his voice but his words were carried away by the howling wind. He somehow managed to find the strength to carry his son's body back to the bivouac and then returned to his senses. As a guide, he already had a number of mountain rescues to his name and realised that, although he could

no longer do anything to save his son, he still had a mountaineer to take back to safety. Another climber appeared and together they lowered the injured man down through the dangerous, jagged canals to the Vicenza refuge hut. Then Demetz went on down to the valley and got a team together to bring his son's body home. The weather had already changed for the better when, accompanied by don Martino Delugan, priest and mountaineer, Franco Pancheri, a doctor from Verona, and several others, Demetz once more set out for the bivouac. The climb was not easy but they finally reached the wind-blown crest and, after eight hours of descent, arrived at the Vicenza hut again. Remember they had none of the technical equipment or helicopters at their disposal which we have nowadays. Having reached the injured climber, they asked him to tell them what had happened.

He explained that the group had set out at dawn and, with Toni as rope leader, had reached the peak after a few hours' climb. The weather started to change as they began their way down and worsened even more as they came in sight of the bivouac. A flash of lightning hit Toni full on and the current of electricity also struck another climber on his back. Although Toni's face and hands were badly burnt, he did everything he could to save the others but could not save himself.

What happened that fateful day and how it affected Giovanni Demetz, the agonised suffering and despair of a father who had lost a much-loved son, did not go unnoticed and the Gardena Mountain Guides Association has now awarded Demetz the prestigious "Stella Del Cardo" medal for "solidarity in the mountains". The long-awaited presentation ceremony will take place on Christmas Eve this year.



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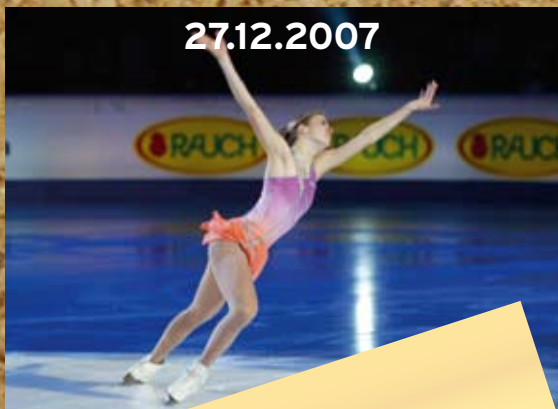
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THE LADIN REFERENDUM

Cortina, Colle Santa Lucia and Fodom

all say "Yes!"

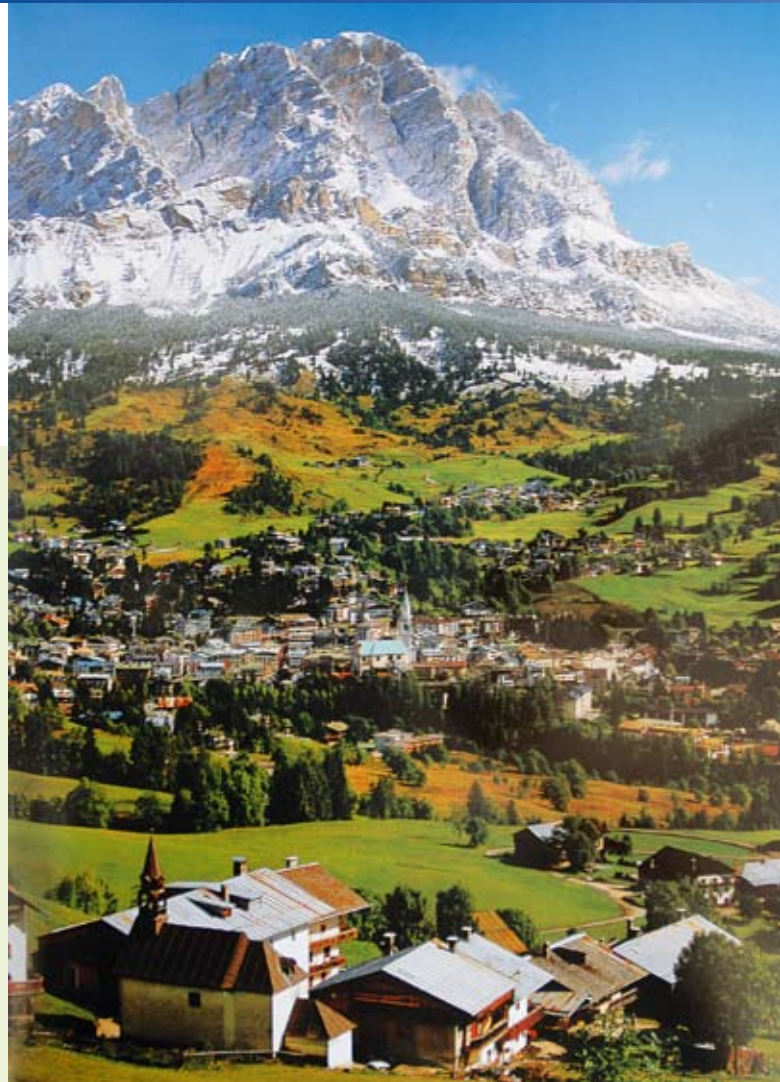
Leo Senoner

29th October 2007 - an historic day for the Dolomite Ladin population when the inhabitants of three Ladin-speaking council areas in the province of Belluno, in the Veneto region in the north of Italy, voted to become part of the autonomous region of Alto Adige/South Tyrol. A day which will take its place in the annals of history alongside other important dates which have been of considerable significance in the story of the whole area.

The Ladin people of the Dolomites over the last century

The First World War brought suffering, death and destruction to the Dolomite region where the Sella Ladin people live. The front line between Austrian and Italian troops ran through the Ampezzo and Fodom/Livinalongo valleys and the area saw fierce fighting and much misery. The Versailles and St. Germain peace treaties stipulated that South Tyrol be given to Italy and caused many repercussions for the local population. The year 1920 saw thousands of Ladin people march together in protest at Passo Gardena where they claimed recognition for themselves as an minority ethnic group, certain rights of autonomy and expressed their wish to remain united under one political administration. The then Fascist government refused to listen to their demands and went ahead with plans to divide the Ladin Dolomite area into two regions and three separate provinces. Val Gardena and Val Badia became part of Alto Adige/South Tyrol, while Val di Fassa was annexed to Trentino and Fodom/Livinalongo and Colle Santa Lucia and Cortina became part of the province of Belluno in the Veneto region. This historic event completely changed the political and administrative balance of the area and has remained in vigour to the present time. Other popular manifestations followed, including a well-attended, peaceful demonstra-

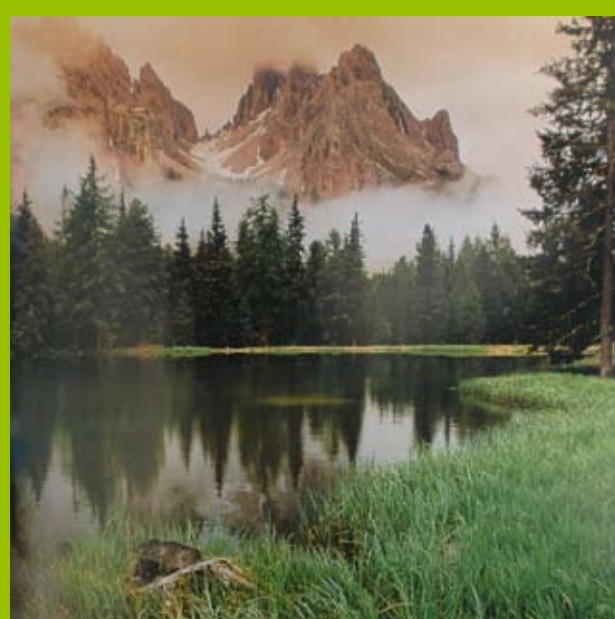
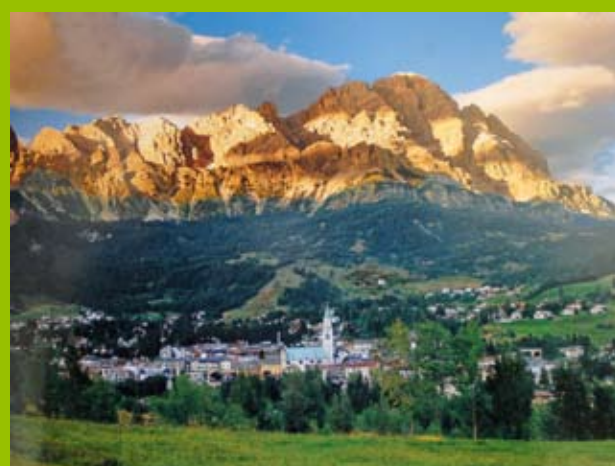
tion of 4000 inhabitants of the Ladin valleys at Passo Sella on 14th July 1946. Their claims for re-unification were, however, ignored by those in power and, just a few months later, on 5th September 1946, the so-called De Gasperi-Gruber international treaty came into force. This agreement was signed by both parties involved, Italy and Austria, and recognised South Tyrol, Trentino/Alto Adige, as an autonomous region but dismissed the Ladin cause completely. 29th October 2007 is, therefore, an extremely significant date in the history of the Dolomite Ladin population and will, hopefully, lead towards reunification of the three areas which have been separated from each other since the Fascist intervention in 1923.





The Referendum - a democratic move by peaceful people claiming their rights

After seventeen years of waiting, the Ladin people of Cortina, Colle Santa Lucia and Fodom/Livinallongo have finally had the chance to express their views. They have long wished to unite with the Ladin population of the provinces of Trento and Bolzano who enjoy greater respect and status as an ethnic and cultural minority and the vast majority of referendum voters loudly proclaimed "yes". The Ladin Associations of Ampezzo, Colle Santa Lucia and Fodom, as well as Ladin communities in nearby valleys, had called for a referendum and had founded "Amisc dla Ladinia Unida", Friends of a United Ladin Community Committee, to encourage awareness of the prevailing political, social, economic, ethnic and cultural situation in the provinces of Trento and Bolzano. The Ladin population of Cortina, Colle Santa Lucia and Fodom/Livinallongo expressed their wishes in a clear, determined way but the political and institutional processes which may eventually lead to the reunification of the population of the Sella area, under the administration of the provinces of Bolzano and Trento, are somewhat complex and may well take a considerable time. In any case, it is the responsibility of the Parliament of the Republic of Italy to decide the outcome of the matter and take the required final, legal steps.



Referendum Regarding Annexation to the Region of Trentino/South Tyrol

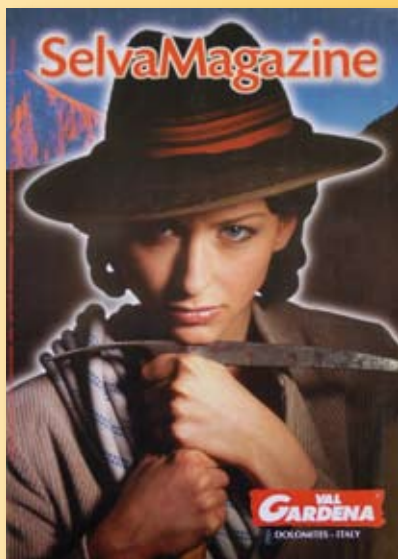
	YES	NO
Cortina	77,0%	23,0%
Fodom/Livinallongo	87,5%	12,5%
Colle Santa Lucia	84,5%	15,5%



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