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AUDI FIS SKI WORLD CUP

Francesca Marsaglia talks about the excitement of the World Cup at home

Awaiting the return this week of the Circo Bianco in pink on the slopes of Sestriere, former Italian national team athlete **Francesca Marsaglia talks**, with that hint of emotion, about **her own debut in that downhill race at home** that remains a vivid memory.

Currently engaged in the telling of sporting events on TV, **Francesca does not forget that rumble in her heart of a World Cup at home.**

"If the truth be told, I came to take part in this magnificent circuit without even realising it one hundred per cent. Skiing was an activity for the whole family, and when you are young, you are swept away by this blender of euphoria and emotions at an uncontrollable speed, where everything seems almost predictable and normal," says a smiling Francesca about herself.

Let's come back to that 9 February 2008, the first World Cup race. *"For me, the debut was not something 'normal': I had the honour of being able to play for a place for my first start at the age of eighteen in the downhill at Sestriere / Borgata, therefore at home. I had won that place during the trials of the previous days and up to that point everything seemed normal, also given the fact that I was sleeping in my bed and at the finish line I had mum, dad and classmates like so many other times. On the day of the race I found myself alone at the café, waiting for my turn to go up to the start, with the television on: it was at that precise moment that I realised that I too would be going down that slope and that I too would be crossing the same finish line as my idols of the time such as Julia Mancuso, Nadia Fanchini, Anja Paerson, etc."*. That time, the American Lindsey Vonn won, taking her ninth downhill victory: the start of a long series, which saw her end her career in 2019 with a total of 82 World Cup victories, including 43 in downhill.

For Francesca, that day was the start of fifteen years of World Cup skiing, with the honour (*"and a bit of luck"*) of competing at home twice more. As she remembers *"in front of twenty thousand spectators ready to shout and cheer Italy on and fight for a photo or an autograph, an emotion that is difficult to explain but that, believe me, is worth more than any victory"*.

We are looking forward to the great return of the Circo Bianco to Sestriere, to watch the giant slalom on Saturday 10 and the slalom on Sunday 11 December on the Kandahar G.A. slope. Agnelli slope.

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