



## DAVOS WORLD OF ICE IN DAVOS KLOSTERS

**Ice sports in Davos Klosters boast a long tradition. Over the course of some 150 years, they have reinvented themselves again and again. The «Davos World of Ice» ice sports park replaces the former natural ice rink. The home stadium of the Hockey Club Davos (HCD) is undergoing a thorough renovation.**

The 1,800 m<sup>2</sup> natural ice rink had suffered increasingly from global warming. In the record winter of 1924/1925, ice skating was practised on 128 days; in the winters around the turn of the millennium the average number of operating days fell to around 70, and in the winter of 2015/16 a negative record of only 16 days was recorded. Thus in December 2016 the discovery park «Davos World of Ice» was opened instead of the natural ice rink. After two trial seasons and guest surveys, it was decided to reduce the range of activities and adapt it to the needs of the guests.

### **Ice Sports at their Best**

Since the 2018/19 winter season, ice sports have been a top priority in the «Davos World of Ice». Ice skating, ice hockey, curling and Bavarian curling are performed at the newly designed facility. An ice hockey field occupies the heart of the «Davos World of Ice». A field specially designed for curling is located on the edge of the large field. An official ISU training track for speed skating was built all around this ice field. This, as well as the inner surface, is available for public ice skating. Before the official opening hours speed skaters can use the ice track for training purposes. The restaurant «Timeout» north of the complex is open for warming up with tea and cake or have lunch. Its large sun deck provides a good view on the ice field.

### **HCD – much beloved and passionately hated**

HC Davos leaves no one aloof when it comes to Swiss ice hockey. The first team, playing in blue-yellow colours most likely has the highest number of fans in Switzerland who love their HCD. The supporters of the other top teams however just as passionately hate the record champion. Since its foundation in 1921, the Grisons have won 31 Swiss Championship titles. In the 2018/19 season, the era of the charismatic coach Arno del Curto at the HCD came to an end. Amidst the season, the head coach left a crisis-ridden HCD after 22 successful years, six Swiss championship titles and five Spengler Cup victories. At the end of the season, the HCD missed the playoffs for the first time since 1993. Under the lead of Latvian coach Harijs Witolinsch, the team managed to keep the league at its own force. Together with head coach Christian Wohlwend, the record champion has embarked on the 2019/20 season and thus a new era.

### **The «Spengler Cup» Tournament – a Story of Success**

At the end of 1923 the younger son of health resort founder Alexander Spengler, Dr. Carl Spengler, donated a challenging cup for an international tournament. The competition that was named after him was intended to strengthen the HCD playfully and promote international contacts. During the interwar period, the «Spengler Cup» was regarded as the unofficial European Championship. After the Second World War, the team tournament became less and less important. The tide turned from 1990 onwards with the professionalization of the tournament. From 1993, the HCD was back in the game as a crowd puller. The home club celebrated its first victory in 1927 and its 15th Spengler Cup victory in 2011. The Spengler Cup enjoys an international reputation and Team Canada's matches are broadcast live in the home country of ice hockey.

### **A long-held Dream has come true**

With the inauguration of the training hall in October 2018, the Hockey Club Davos (HCD) has fulfilled its long-held dream. Instead of the former artificial ice rink, an attractive wooden construction made of translucent plastic has been built. The 68 m long, 48 m wide and 10 m high building offers space for a training area, a grandstand as well as a training centre. Solar power is generated on its roof, sufficient to cover a large part of the annual electricity consumption for the artificial ice.

### **Figure skating stars in Davos**

It is not only for hockey players that two skates mean the world to them. The traditional «International Ice Skating Club Davos» (ISCD) is responsible for the education and training of speed and figure skaters. Every year in February, the best figure skaters in the world enchant the audience in the Davos ice stadium when they perform elegant pirouettes and double Axel jumps at the internationally renowned show «Art on Ice», accompanied by the performance of international music stars.

### **Skate Grinding for Pros**

Many of the stars of figure skating send their skates to Davos for grinding. Claudio Meng is not only a knife maker, but also dedicated to ice sports. The former President of the ISCD has specialised in skate grinding and refined his technique over the years. So it happens again and again that the skates of German ice skating legend Katarina Witt, ice princess Sarah Meier or world champion Stéphane Lambiel get a fresh polish in one of his workshops in Davos or Zurich.

### **Fun on Natural Ice**

Davos still offers two natural ice rinks: the 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> ice rink on the «Dorfseeli» offers free of charge public ice skating and is particularly popular with families. It is located opposite the Parsennbahn Valley Station and next to the local bus stop. An insiders' tip is the 1,200 m<sup>2</sup> natural ice surface by the Davos Wiesen school house available for ice-skating fun at no charge.

### **«Arena Klosters» featuring a large offering for ice sports activities**

The sports centre Klosters, opened in 1996, was renamed «Arena Klosters» in 2016 due to a wider offering. It is located in the heart of the resort. In the winter, sports facilities are offered on two artificial ice rinks. The 1,800 m<sup>2</sup> open artificial ice rink is used for ice hockey, figure skating and Bavarian curling.

The open-air artificial ice curling track offers 900 m<sup>2</sup> for four rinks. The ice rinks can be booked for private events as well. The inviting restaurant in the «Arena Klosters» offers a spacious winter garden as well as a large sun deck. The menu is varied and ideal for sportspeople who want to have a bite before or after ice skating.

### **Longstanding Ice Skating Tradition**

In the second half of the 19th century, ice skating was primarily a leisure activity for spa guests coming from all over Europe. Around 1865 the frozen Davos Lake was used for ice skating, and in 1869 an artificial ice rink was built on today's «Arkadenplatz». In the winter of 1870/71, the Kurverein created the first 6,500 m<sup>2</sup> ice rink on the site of today's sports centre, this was extended to 16,000 m<sup>2</sup> in 1880/81. Around the turn of the century, the ice rink reached an area of 25,700 m<sup>2</sup>. During the interwar period it was divided into three sections: the large ice rink, an open ice hockey stadium and the «English Ice». After the Second World War, it was expanded into an ice sports centre: in 1979/80, the Kurverein built the ice sports stadium. In 1996 the new sports centre was opened, replacing the former ice rink buildings that had been built in 1934 in the New Building style and then burnt down in 1991. The large natural ice rink featuring 18,000 m<sup>2</sup> as well as the so-called «English Ice Rink» with an area of 4,500 m<sup>2</sup> were in operation until the 2015/16 season.

### **Ice Sports Pioneers**

Various sports – mostly for the first time in Switzerland – were played on the Davos ice rinks. In 1888 the first official curling season took place in Davos, and in 1891 British guests founded one of Switzerland's curling clubs. German health resort guests introduced Bavarian curling to Davos. Played by local farmers and craftsmen it developed into a popular folk sport. As a result, the oldest Swiss Bavarian Curling Club was founded in 1898.

Also in 1891, the first international ice sports competitions in figure and speed skating were held on the large ice rink. Davos remained Mecca of speed and figure skating until 1977. A total of around 50 European and World Championships were held on the large natural ice rink. The last speed skating World Cup races in Davos took place in 1998.

Bandy, the precursor of ice hockey, was first played in Switzerland in 1890/91 in Davos, where the very first European Championship of this sport was held in 1913. In 1918, the first Davos ice hockey club was founded. This guest-team suffered from frequent player changes and so a local club, today's HCD, was founded in 1921 upon the initiative of Paul Müller, a local dentist.

## Useful Links

Ice sports at a glance	<a href="https://davos.ch/en/winter/activities/ice-sports/">davos.ch/en/winter/activities/ice-sports/</a>
Hockey Club Davos	<a href="https://hcd.ch">hcd.ch</a>
Spengler Cup	<a href="https://spenglercup.ch">spenglercup.ch</a>
International Ice Skating Club Davos	<a href="https://davos-skating.ch">davos-skating.ch</a>
Art on Ice	<a href="https://artonice.com/en">artonice.com/en</a>

## Destination Davos Klosters

Davos Klosters is one of the most famous holiday resorts in the world and boasts the most comprehensive holiday, sports and meeting facilities in the mountains. Although the contrast between urban Davos and idyllic Klosters could not be greater, both villages, which lie only ten minutes drive from each other, have one thing in common: their fascinating and breathtaking mountain backdrop.

[www.davos.ch](https://www.davos.ch) | [www.klosters.ch](https://www.klosters.ch)

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