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Press release – Swiss Armed Forces

A women's record and Swiss teams on the podium: the Patrouille des Glaciers 2026 concludes a radiant edition.

Zermatt - Arolla - Verbier (VS), April 18, 2026 – The 2026 edition of the Patrouille des Glaciers came to a magnificent close this Saturday in Verbier. Including the 1,968 participants who started on Tuesday, a total of 4,356 racers set off from Zermatt and Arolla towards Verbier. Highly anticipated, the Swiss contingent—buoyed by its impressive haul of Olympic, World Cup, and European Championship medals—delivered strong overall performances, though not taking the top spot. In the men's race, victory went for the first time, after a spectacular head-to-head battle, to a French trio composed of Xavier Gachet, Samuel Equy, and William Bon. They finished ahead of the Swiss team of Rémi Bonnet, Aurélien Gay, and Martin Anthamatten (by 5 minutes 18 seconds). Third place went to the Swiss team of Thomas and Robin Bussard and Ludovic Lattion. In the women's race, the French team set a new record of 7:04:41, defeating the team led by Olympic champion Marianne Fattou, accompanied by Maëlle Minnig and Déborah Marti. PdG ambassador Caroline Ulrich secured third place alongside Alessandra Schmid and Thibe Deseyn. Two years after the frustrations of 2024 (when three races were cancelled), this edition delivered a week full of joy and emotion, shared on Friday evening with Federal Councillor Martin Pfister, the head of the Swiss Armed Forces, Corps Commander Benedikt Roos, and PdG race commander Brigadier Yves Charrière.

“After a 24-hour postponement of the first starts, we were all able to experience an exceptional week. Thanks to the commitment of our Armed Forces, the event ran perfectly for patrols from 31 countries. We can all be proud of this edition: the Patrouille des Glaciers remains a legendary race of the Swiss Alps, showcasing our country and bringing together military personnel and civilians alike. Together at the heart of the effort,” said race commander Brigadier Yves Charrière after his first PdG.

Behind the smiles and emotions of those reaching Verbier lies the spirit of teamwork and self-transcendence. The proportion of teams not appearing in the final rankings (20% for the A1/Z1 races) illustrates the demanding nature of the competition.

Favorable weather conditions attracted large crowds, while RTS, Canal 9, La Télé, and Blue Sport broadcast a joint 3-hour live program. In addition to its sporting and popular success, the event also saw unprecedented media interest, with more than 110 accredited media representatives (an increase of over 40%).

Contact

For the PdG command : Lt col Harley Anderegg, chef communication PdG, 076 302 24 88, presse@pdg.ch
For the Patrouille des Glaciers Foundation : Corinne Rimet-Baume, 079 621 40 15, operations@fopdg.ch