

GREEN ENERGY IN THE BIATHLON CENTER MARTELL

MARTELL - VAL MARTELLO ITALY



ABSTRACT

Since the 2022/23 season, the Biathlon Center Grogg in Martell has been fully powered by renewable energy. A new hydropower plant supplies more than 2.19 million kWh annually, covering all energy needs for snow production, service buildings, and event operations. The venue also introduced woodchip heating, a charging station for electric cars, and measures to reduce waste, such as reusable tableware and digitalised communication. The IBU Junior Cup in December 2022 achieved full GreenEvent certification, recognising Martell's commitment to sustainability. In summer 2025, solar panels were added on the roof of a new container house, further expanding the green energy supply; electricity that is not used at the Biathlon Center is fed into the public grid. Martell demonstrates how alpine communities can successfully integrate renewable energy and sustainable practices into international biathlon events.

WHAT WAS THE GOAL?

OC Martell set out to transform its Biathlon Center "Grogg" into a model of sustainability by securing a long-term, environmentally friendly energy supply. Located in the Stelvio National Park, surrounded by

pristine alpine landscapes, the community aimed to align the operation of the stadium with the principles of slow tourism and green sport. The objective was to power the entire site, including snow production, service buildings, and visitor infrastructure, with renewable energy. In doing so, the Organising Committee also wanted to position Martell as a pioneer of sustainable event hosting and inspire future generations to enjoy biathlon in harmony with nature.

HOW WAS THE GOAL ACHIEVED?

The turning point came in 2022/23, when the municipality of Martell completed the construction of a new hydropower plant. This facility now provides the Biathlon Center with a steady supply of clean electricity, amounting to over 2.19 million kWh annually. The plant was built using only "restwater" from the Zufrittstausee reservoir, ensuring that no new concessions or environmental disturbances were required. In summer 2025, solar panels were added on the roof of a new container house, further expanding the green energy supply; electricity that is not used at the Biathlon Center is fed into the public grid.



Key elements of the initiative included:

- **Hydropower:** Supplying 100% of the Biathlon Center's energy needs for snow production, service buildings, wax containers, and other operations.
- **GreenEvent certification:** The IBU Junior Cup in December 2022 achieved the highest-level "GreenEvent" status from the Autonomous Province of Bolzano, after previously holding a "Going GreenEvent" certificate.
- **Electric mobility:** Installation of a hyper-charging station for electric cars directly at the venue.
- **Sustainable heating:** Both service buildings now operate with woodchip-based heating systems.
- **Digitalisation & waste reduction:** The GreenEvent concept promoted QR codes instead of printed team info, online result lists, and reusable tableware.

Through these measures, OC Martell created a comprehensive green energy framework that links renewable power generation with sustainable event management.



[Click here to watch the video](#)

WHICH IBU SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES DOES IT ADDRESS?

The project directly addresses several IBU sustainability issues outlined in the IBU Sustainability Strategy 2020–2030:

- **Emissions from energy use for heating, cooling and power** – The new hydropower plant eliminates reliance on fossil energy, with 2.19 million kWh annually generated from renewable water sources.
- **Emissions from travel & transport** – The installation of an e-car charging station promotes sustainable mobility choices for athletes, staff, and visitors.
- **Waste production** – GreenEvent certification led to significant reductions in waste, including a ban on disposable plastics, use of reusable catering materials, and minimisation of print advertising.

- **Inadequate sustainability awareness among biathlon stakeholders** – By engaging volunteers, local associations, and regional partners, the initiative raised awareness of renewable energy and sustainable practices at events.
- **Unsustainable sourcing practices** – Catering prioritised regional and environmentally friendly food, reinforcing the link between local value creation and sustainability.

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES FACED?

The biggest challenges were linked to bureaucratic and financial hurdles. The planning and approval process for the hydropower plant stretched over eight years, requiring extensive measurement of water flows and negotiations with Alperia Greenpower. In addition, the high investment cost of around €2.3 million placed a heavy burden on the municipality, which had to combine its own funds with external financing. Another challenge was convincing stakeholders of the long-term value of such an ambitious project, requiring persistent awareness-raising and communication efforts from OC Martell and the municipality.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

Looking ahead, OC Martell intends to expand its sustainability programme with further renewable energy investments. The Organising Committee also aims to deepen its social sustainability initiatives by involving local youth and continuing to host certified GreenEvents. In this way, Martell seeks to secure both the environmental and social legacy of biathlon in the valley.

Responsible energy, responsible sport – OC Martell is showing how alpine communities can power biathlon sustainably for the future.

For further information on the sustainability work of the IBU, please visit:

<https://www.biathlonworld.com/inside-ibu/sustainability>