

Planica 2015 Virtual Ski Flying

How real is virtual reality?

An important step in the online connectivity and digitalisation of our everyday life began with an enthusiast who just wanted to have fun. Founder of the **Oculus Rift** project Palmer Lucky made the prototype of the device when he was 19 years old in order to achieve **a unique experience of virtual reality** when playing video games. The device is made up of **technologically advanced goggles** that look similar to skiing goggles. In 2012, Oculus Rift successfully launched on **Kickstarter**, that look similar to skiing goggles. In 2012, Oculus Rift successfully launched on **Facebook**, which soon after set up its own studio for virtual reality movies that further develops the environment. Even though the device was at first intended to be used mainly in video games, it is predicted today that it will have a **wide area of application**. It is **currently a leading device in the field of virtual reality** and has even become synonymous with VR, therefore it is no surprise it has been increasingly imitated in the last few months. For now, it is still the best at performing its task - to create virtual experiences that are authentic and connected with reality as much as possible.

First time in Slovenia, a unique experience of ski jumping with Oculus Rift

This extremely interesting application for use with Oculus Rift was publicly launched this year by **Zavarovalnica Triglav**. It is **the unique experience of ski jumping with the help of virtual 3D goggles**. It sounds incredible, which the experience itself is, because this is **the first example of simulation of ski jumping in virtual reality in Slovenia**. The platform was in development for three months by experts from the companies **ArtRebel 9** and **Pristop** as part of the joint VR development project **WinterWings**. They gave special effort to the physics of the jump and to the experience (the user must descend down the in-run, jump from the ramp, land and experience the reception in the out-run). The entire experience thus encompasses a visual sensation provided by the latest version of the Oculus Rift, movement that accurately mimics the movement of a ski jumper and 3D surround sound via headphones. A smooth and genuine experience is powered by the most capable computer on the market.

The experience of try out a record-breaking jump with Oculus Rift was made possible for fans of ski jumping by Zavarovalnica Triglav, a long-time partner of the Ski Association of Slovenia in Planica as well as BTC City. All you need for a record jump is the Oculus Rift head-mounted display. The experience with the virtual 3D goggles is currently **the closest you can get to an actual jump at the legendary ski jumping venue** in the valley beneath the Ponce mountains where ski jumpers complete the final round of the competitive season.

On Thursday **March 19**, the unique experience was available to representatives of the media at the official press centre in **Kranjska Gora**; **a day later**, the virtual flying hill in **Planica** was available to competitors at the jumpers' village. On Saturday and Sunday, **March 21 and 22**, a new record in ski jumping was in the hands of visitors to the **Citypark** shopping centre in Ljubljana.





The Slovenian Eagles also Enraptured by the Virtual Ski Flying

The developers wanted to simulate as closely as possible the experience of a ski jumper and set the jump in the valley beneath the Ponce Mountains. And, according to Slovenian ski jumpers, the developers have succeeded. **The experience was tested by Slovenian ski jumpers (world champions) Peter Prevc, Jurij Tepeš and Franci Petek, who are enthusiastic about virtual ski jumping.** Prevc, the two-time winner of a medal at the Winter Olympics in Sochi 2014 and the winner of last year's final contest of the sky flying World Cup season in Planica, when testing the 3D virtual ski flying experience said: *"I'm very glad that we have finally made a large step forward. I think it would be great if this was tried by as many people as possible, because this is one of the best ways to experience the Planica ski flying hill."* Also waiting for his turn was **Tepeš**, the winner of the final contest of the 2013 World Cup in Planica. He was very enthusiastic about his virtual jump, because in his words it is *"much more realistic than anything else that already exists."* **Petek**, the world champion from the Val di Fiemme valley from 1991, was most of all enthusiastic about the genuine sensations the platform provides: *"A very interesting experience that truly provides the sensation of speed. It's also ideal for having fun."*

The device deceives the balance system of the person using it to just the right extent, as it sends confusing signals throughout the body, which is actually not in motion, and also to the brain, which is convinced that the user is performing various tasks in virtual reality. During the virtual ski flying, looking down and seeing everything below gets some people's blood pumping through their body; they hold their breath during the jump and are convinced they are actually jumping. This experience is greatly reminiscent of science-fiction movies.

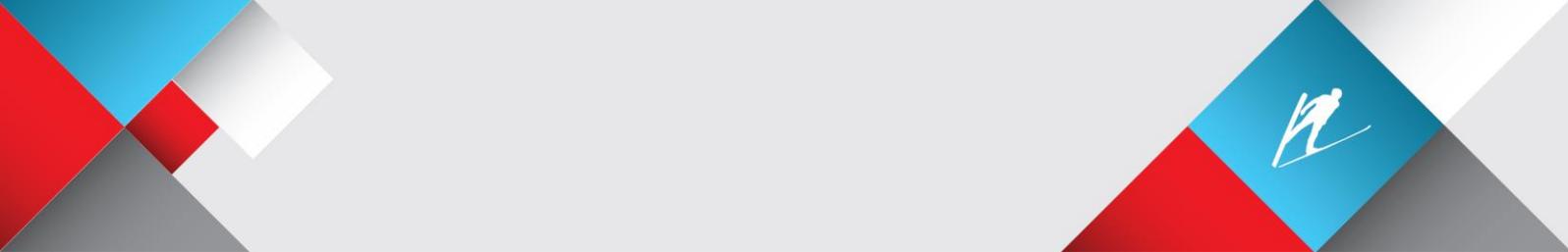
Triglav is Planica and Planica is Triglav

Zavarovalnica Triglav has been ensuring a safer future for generations of insured persons for 115 years, and **for more than 45 years** the insurance company has been **an integral part of the story in Planica**. Such an association makes it possible for Triglav to be extremely recognisable both in Slovenia as well as abroad. Similarly, the logo of Zavarovalnica Triglav on the out-run on the snow became an integral part of the winter scene in the valley under the Ponce Mountains.

The largest Slovenian insurance company has been **connected with elite sports for a long time and has been an active partner of the Ski Association of Slovenia for more than a decade**. The partnership with the Association has been successful and fruitful: as the golden sponsor of the Nordic skiing team and the sponsor of the biathlon national team. **It has been faithful supporter of ski flying in Planica for 46 years** (since 1969) and represents an indispensable part of the Slovenian sports holiday under the Ponce. In 2015, **it was also the golden sponsor of Planica**.

For more than 30 years, it has facilitated the gathering of sports enthusiasts of all generations, and this year it remains true to the tradition under the motto Triglav Generations in Planica. The day of children in Planica is something special every year, and the enthusiasm of the children also represents a unique experience for many. As the proud host of the Triglav Generations in Planica, Zavarovalnica Triglav brought **more than 3,000 children from all over Slovenia** to the valley under the Ponce with more than 60 buses. They estimate that in all the 30 years they have been doing this, they have transported approximately **80,000 people** to Planica. Their wish is to enable children from all social backgrounds to witness the spectacle in Planica. The event is also used to raise awareness among





youth, to make them enthusiastic about sports and to strive for a healthy way of life, to educate them and to encourage them to socialise and to get to know one another.

Planica, Planica, the Snow Queen ...

They say that every Slovenian should climb Triglav, visit the depths of the Postojna Cave and experience ski flying in **Planica**, which is seen as **the cradle of ski jumping**, at least once in their life. This year, **the ski flying hill** was excellently renovated and modernised by Janez Gorišek and his son Sebastjan. The valley under the Ponce is a synonymous with **the longest flights of ski jumpers**; therefore one could not imagine a World Cup season in ski jumping without Planica. Planica has held the world record throughout various periods; the longest was from March 1985 to February 2011. This year, during the largest Slovenian sports holiday in Planica, between 19 and 22 March, the competitive season was concluded by the best ski jumpers in the world and the valley of ski jumping hills once again welcomed a large crowd of sports enthusiasts.

The official video of the project with statements by ski jumpers Peter Prevc, Jurij Tepeš and others who have tested Oculus Rift is available at www.planica.tv and <http://bit.ly/1DApYzW>. If you need a video for a montage, we can send it to you via Wetransfer - please inform us of this in writing to the e-mail address saso.sever@triglav.si.

