



# Piolets d'Or 2019

An International Celebration of Grand Alpinism

Press release # 4 - November 2019

From the 20th to 23rd September, 2019, and for the second consecutive year, the Piolets d'Or were held in the spa city of Łądek-Zdrój, Poland. The venue was the Ładek Mountain Festival, which has become the largest mountain festival in the country (more than 4,000 individual attendees), and one of the biggest in the world. More than 100 journalists were present, including 21 from countries other than Poland, and more than 2,000 spectators attended the Piolets D'Or ceremony in a packed marquee, sharing the evening's "mountain spirit" with great enthusiasm.

This year was particularly special because of its heightened emotion: the elegance and daring of the three awarded ascents were tempered by the knowledge that two of the participants would not be present. After their solo ascents in 2018, Austrians Hansjörg Auer and David Lama disappeared in the Canadian Rockies in the spring of 2019, together with another great name in mountaineering, Jess Roskelley, son of the American 2014 recipient of the Piolets d'Or Career Award, John Roskelley.

The climbing community was in mourning at that time but now came together to celebrate the incredible achievements of these three climbers. They did so in the presence of the families and many former climbing partners, including Conrad Anker who is very close to the Lama family. As Christian Trommsdorff, president of the GHM and principle organizer of the Piolets d'Or, said, "*we all put our hearts into this edition. We stayed true to the spirit of the Piolets and its values, but sadly this also meant having to accept the harshness of reality*".

The Polish public, who continue to come in large numbers to Ładek, were deeply impressed by the quality and commitment of the three awarded ascents, Latok I in particular receiving a long ovation. Andrej Štremfelj, last year's recipient of the Piolets d'Or Career Award, took the stage to present a Piolets d'Or award to Aleš Česen and Luka strazar (Tom Livingstone unable to be present as he was climbing in Pakistan), a strong "passing of the baton" between two generations of Slovenian climbers.

The atmosphere that evening was perhaps more intense than usual because Poland was particularly honoured in two separate events. The first was a re-enactment, led by the French ambassador to Poland, of the presentation of the Légion d'Honneur (Legion of Honour) to the Polish mountaineers who in the winter of 2018 rescued Elizabeth Revol from Nanga Parbat. The second, and the highlight of the evening, was the presentation of the 2019 Piolets d'Or Career Award to Krzysztof Wielicki. His winter exploits and high altitude solos in the Himalaya during the Golden Age of Polish mountaineering made Wielicki a natural candidate for this prestigious award, and it was presented to him by John Roskelley and GHM joint-president Catherine Destivelle. Wielicki is the 11th mountaineer to receive the Career Award and the second from Poland, the first being the legendary Wojciech Kurtyka.

With this press release we take the opportunity to announce to the French public that on the 7th November Krzysztof Wielicki will be the main guest at the Rencontres Ciné Montagne in the city of Grenoble. The evening will be dedicated to "Grand Alpinisme", and will include the film of David Lama's two attempts and final successful climb of Lunag Ri in Nepal, a first ascent that was awarded a 2019 Piolet d'Or. You will find a detailed program of the 21st Rencontres Ciné Montagne at:

<https://www.grenoble.fr/1476-rencontres-cine-montagne-2019.htm>

We now look forward to seeing you in 2020 for the next Piolets d'Or. This should prove to be very exciting in view of the achievements already seen to date during 2019.

Do zobaczenia w przyszłym roku!



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David Lama's parents, accompanied by Conrad Anker



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Hansjörg Auer's family on stage with Christian Trommsdorff



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Aleš Česen and Luka Stražar, welcomed by Andrej Štremfelj



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Krzysztof Wielicki received the 11th Career Award



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