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Mexican Prince Brings Mariachi to Alpine Skiing

By Jennifer Monaghan

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Prince Hubertus von Hohenlohe, waving the flag for the Mexican team.

The men's alpine skiers will go for medals in Saturday's slalom event, with the oldest Olympian to compete at Sochi, Prince Hubertus von Hohenlohe, flying the flag for the Mexican team while wearing one of the Olympics' most eye-catching outfits.

A descendant of German royals, 55-year-old Von Hohenlohe was born in Mexico but grew up in Austria. He was eligible to compete for several different nations, but eventually chose Mexico, whose ski federation he founded in 1981.

Von Hohenlohe is the second-oldest Winter Olympian of all time and has competed in six different Games, with his best finish coming in Sarajevo, 1984, when he finished 37th.

There is more to Von Hohenlohe's career than skiing, however.

He is an avid photographer and has released eight singles as a professional musician under

the aliases Andy Himalaya and Royal Disaster.

He also happens to be the heir to an automobile fortune.

Yet, when it comes to the slalom, more attention will focus on his costume than on his racing. In the 2010 Vancouver Olympics, Von Hohenlohe competed in a desperado outfit while this year's suit has been inspired by Mexican mariachi bands.

"It really is a question of personality. You kind of have to have the personality of wanting to be noticed," Von Hohenlohe told NBC. "It's obvious that every circus needs different acts. You can't just have the winners," he said.

The slalom event sees competitors race against the clock while navigating a course marked with flags and gates spaced much closer together than in other alpine skiing disciplines. Athletes have two runs on the course, and medals are awarded to the three racers who post the quickest aggregated times overall.

The men's slalom will get under way at 16:45 p.m., with the second run taking place from 20:15 p.m.

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