

NSW Boy's Youth Team Report - RWS Swiss Cup, Trin

10km Mass Start, 22nd January, 2012

Success in Switzerland



We came to Trin, Switzerland, seeking World Youth Junior Championship qualifications and Daniel Walker achieved this on Saturday in really tough, heavy snow conditions. He had the second best shooting for the Youth Boys with 0, 3 in conditions which saw 10cm of snow fall per hour. ABA has endorsed his Q time and he now has his sights set on Finland. Congratulations Dan on such a huge achievement!

In today's Youth Mass Start Damon showed the maturity and mastery of an athlete years his senior to control the race and go onto comfortably win by over 1.5 minutes. Locals remarked that it was just brilliant. This is Damon's first international Regional Cup win in the U19 IBU Youth category. Congratulations Damon, a fantastic achievement!



The weather was warm for the race with a little drizzly rain starting to clear around the 10.40am race start time and plus 2 degrees. No wind. In the warm up, the boys commented that their skis were 'rocket' fast and the track was now pretty well packed and becoming slick. It was going to be much faster than yesterday.

I haven't seen Damon so nervous before a race for quite some time (perhaps the Kangaroo Hoppet). I could tell that he knew he could win the race and really wanted to put it all together. The Youth Women started first at 10 am and he keenly watched the leaders tussle it out in the range during his warm up. The top two positions were decided in the range when one girl hit all targets in standing and the second missed 3.

All our guys had a good clean start with Damon going out in around 5th for the 1st km and Daniel just sitting a couple of places back. As we had discussed pre race Damon kicked before the one big hill to move into second and maintained this into the range to be some 5 seconds behind the leader for the first shoot. He really slowed up as he entered the range letting those behind him close in. On hitting the mat he was quick to his first shot and pulled it. I call this a nervous shot and was nervous as the first prone shoot is so vital to set up the rest of the race, but he settled and knocked the next 4 down in sweet succession and was 1st out. The fastest skier had problems and missed 3, while another fast boy missed just 1 too.

In the second lap both these boys caught Damon and overtook him as they came into the range. Damon said he just slowed down for the range and ignored them. He settled quickly and in a time of 30 odd seconds shot clean and was again out in first place. One of the next two boys also shot clean and took off after Damon and again caught up with him just before the range. The fastest boy on skis also caught Damon as he came into his first standing despite having missed 5 in prone.

In Lane No.1 Damon found his rhythm in standing and missed just 1 in what was another quick range time. His fellow competitors went on to both miss 2 in standing and couldn't keep with him. Damon

came into the last standing with a good lead, settled and rattled off a clean shoot in quick succession. We couldn't believe it. The competitors behind him now stood no chance and Damon went on to win comfortably by 1 minute and 42 seconds .

Damon later reflected that he paced himself in the skiing, but found it quite annoying when the Swiss boys kept catching him before the shooting range on the first three laps. Also, had to block out the crowd while shooting, who were very vocal in cheering and announcing that the Aussie was leading.

Dan had another fantastic first half of his race, however, couldn't hold it together in the standing. He came in for his first shoot in 5th position just behind Damon and with 1 penalty maintained this position. In the second prone he missed just 1 again and moved up into 4th out of the range and 5th coming back into standing. However, 3 penalties and then 4 in standing really hurt and he finished 9th/14. We know what we need to do for Dan to take the next step and it is just a matter of time on the training track to reinforce the right standing shooting technique and continue to improve his fitness. His development over the last 12 months to come from nowhere to being competitive in Regional Cups has been just sensational.

Alex also had a pretty good race and only missed 1, 1 in prone and then 2 in his first standing. He is shooting really well and can shoot very quickly for his limited experience and he doesn't muck around in the range. Unfortunately, he missed 4 in his last shoot, which is a penalty of 600m extra and this just kills you. It nearly killed Alex as he collapsed over the finish line. He hadn't been feeling 100% before the race and really wanted to run as it was his last chance to qualify for World Youth Juniors in 2012. A gutsy effort Alex. We hope that he will pull up well from a good sleep.

We are off to Rupholding, in Bavaria, Germany, tomorrow for the British Biathlon and Cross Country Championships. They boys are looking forward to seeing some fellow Aussie team mates there, who are also competing, and are hoping to go to the aquatic centre which has a fantastic water slide and thermal baths, saunas etc

I have programmed this as a race week with 6 races in 9 days. On Tuesday we will contest the Junior Super Sprints Freestyle, Thursday an Individual Biathlon Distance Event and a Sprint and Mass Start on Saturday and Sunday to end January.

Results – 22/01/2012

Swiss Cup, Trin, Mass Start

Youth Men 1993 and younger

1st Damon Morton 1,0,1,0 (1996) – 29.47

2nd Dietrich Severin 1, 0, 2, 1 (1994) – 31.29

3rd Thetaz Alwin (1994) 3,2,2,2 – 31.31

10th Daniel Walker (1994) 1,1,3,4 – 36.17

14th Alex Lewis (1995) 1,1,2,4 – 38.29



Right – One of only two times on the penalty loop for Damon and equal best shooting for the day's competition

