

Boxing Day. Mass start-Pokljuka, Slovenia

Normally people are out sobering up or out hunting for the best price in the shops, not me. I'm out ready for a race! In fact it's the first Boxing Day race I've ever done and it's my first ever Mass start race. So having a bit of change from a sprint or a individual shooting procedure of prone, standing, prone, standing, I really had to remember that my shooting order is prone, prone, standing, standing. So we arrive up the top to clear blue skies with the a few clouds, the tracks looked great! I dumped my gear at the range and went for a warm up ski. The tracks were perfect, super fast. As I was warming up I've realized that this isn't like a serious regional cup race this is just a laid back race, not much was set up, nothing was really organized. I like to know what time I need to zero, what lane I'm zeroing on, what time I start my race. As this information was not as accessible as a regional cup race I was getting a little stressed. But as time went on they became more organized and all the information I needed I had so I was relieved.

While in zero it was taking a little to long for my liking and when it takes to many shots to zero I started getting frustrated, but I had to keep in mind that I lifted my rifle out of the stock for travel, so it was going to take longer to zero. But finally I had finished zeroing 10 minutes before my race start! But that was never a worry, thankfully I did my entire warm up before zero and went to material control during zero. My biggest worry was the start. As I put my skies on and watched all these Slovenian World Cup skiers putting on there skies on I became worried why? Because one, I didn't want to get steam trained by one of these World Cup skiers, Two because I didn't want to break a pole at the start. Off we go on a 12.5km adventure! I had a clean start thank god! But unfortunately one of the other juniors broke his pole up one of the first hills. As I was coming down the first hill in the tuck, my skies were running great! I was passing the Slovenian World Cup girls. So I was really happy with my waxing job the night before. On my first lap I felt good trying to keep a good pace behind the other juniors, which I was I wasn't loosing much time on them as I come into the range my bib number was 13 so I had to go lane 13 for my first shoot.

As I proceed on lane 13. I've finally settled ready to shoot in prone position, missing 1. That's ok for now. So I skied around the "criminal circle " as the Slovenian's call a penalty loop. Back out on the track for my second loop, trying to catch up my 25second I lost doing my penalty loop, feeling good and skiing well. Coming into my second prone. I shoot; I



miss my first target again! With 1 penalty. Now for my third loop, now I'm feeling sore, fatigued and lactic. Oh no! I've gone too hard in the first 2 loops, now I've realized this is going to be a long last half of this race. As I keep pushing through the course I finally come in for standing.



As I settled I felt stable. But I was wrong, I've missed 4 targets!! My race is over! I am officially kicking myself about this shoot! But I got on with the race I skied my 4 penalties and proceed on my 4th loop around the 2.5km course. I've finally found a good pace, I was still felling fatigued and lactic but I felt as though I could push over those hills a little better then what I did on my 3rd loop. So in for my

last shoot for the day I come in I get settled. I missed 2! Not so good. So I finished my penalties out on the course for the last time giving it all I could. Trying to keep on the back of other races, trying not to loose them or drop off the back of them. Pushing over those hills like no tomorrow. I finally come into the finish absolutely bugged! I crouch over puffing like crazy, feeling awful, I felt like I was going to throw up!



Result:

Dyllan Harmer 4th 43:14.2
+6:41.9 P-1 P-1 S-4 S-2
18.3% behind the winner.

Winner: Lenart Oblak SLO
36:32.3 P-0 P-1 S-1 S-0

At the end of the day I wasn't very happy with my shooting, but my skiing felt great. I'm happy in one aspect, that it was regional cup race and not an IBU Cup, OECH, or at YJWCH. Getting all the bad races out now before my more important races.

Written By
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