

Jitloff 29th in final GS before Olympics

By USSA

KRANJSKA GORA, Slovenia -â€“ A day after cruising to his third consecutive giant slalom victory at Kranjska Gora, Ted Ligety (Park City, UT) battled from behind for third in yet another GS on Saturday, his fourth Audi FIS Alpine World Cup podium of the season.

“That was pretty impressive,” said Men’s Slalom Coach Rudi Souldard. “To finish top three two days in a row is great.

“He made a small mistake on that last pitch, skiing a little bit conservative,” Souldard said of Ligety’s second run. “Still, it’s more points for him. You want to win, but at the same time you feel like ‘I can’t make any mistakes,’ or you’ll fall out of the points. Tactically, it was clever.”

With only one GS remaining, the World Cup Finals at Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, Ligety owns a 352-309 lead over Italy’s Massimiliano Blardone in the discipline standings. Ligety won the GS title two years ago.

“It’s very nice to still have the red bib and build my lead on Blardone, but then obviously losing a little bit to Marcel (Hirscher, the winner), it’s not all that safe.”

Ligety – sixth in the overall standings, just four points out of the top five – said Austria’s Hirscher won it on the same stretch where he struggled.

Tim Jitloff (Reno, NV) was the only other American in the final, skiing well until a late mistake cost him.

“It was nice to see him get back on track,” Souldard said.

Jake Zamansky (Aspen, CO) was slated to start, but felt back pain during Friday's GS and opted to rest in favor of being 100 percent for the Olympic preparation training camp next week in Park City, Souldard said.

Sunday's slalom is the final race before the Olympics.

Kranjska Gora, Slovenia, Jan. 30, Men's Giant Slalom

1. Marcel Hirscher, Austria, 2:31.30
2. Kjetil Jansrud, Norway, 2:31.75
3. Ted Ligety, Park City, UT, 2:31.88
4. Massimiliano Blardone, Italy, 2:32.16
5. Davide Simoncelli, Italy, 2:32.39

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29. Tim Jitloff, Reno, NV, 2:37.00

DNS 1 " Jake Zamansky, Aspen, CO

DNQ 1 " Dane Spencer, Boise, ID; Warner Nickerson, Gilford, NH

DNF 1 " Tommy Ford, Bend, OR