

# Jitloff scores points in Slovenia World Cup

By USSA

KRANJSKA GORA, Slovenia -â€ With just two weeks remaining until Opening Ceremonies in Vancouver, 2006 combined gold medalist Ted Ligety (Park City, UT) rocketed to the top of the Audi FIS Alpine World Cup podium Friday with his third consecutive giant slalom victory at Kranjska Gora.

After finishing second on the first run, Ligety edged Austria's Marcel Hirscher by 0.34 seconds in the finale before early leader Aksel Lund Svindal fell to fourth. The race was a reschedule from the fog scratched event originally set for Adelboden, Switzerland in early January.

"First run, I skied really well at the top," Ligety said. "I was pretty psyched I was in second place, one hundredth back. It's a lot better than being in first place one hundredth ahead.

"I knew I had to go hard to beat Hirscher, and Aksel is such a great competitor so I knew I had to go hard. I didn't hold back at all."

It is the third podium of the season for Ligety, who won the World Cup GS title in 2008 and regains the discipline lead, 292-259 over Austria's Benjamin Raich, who is tied for second in the points with Italian Masimilliano Blardone. Ligety also moved up to sixth in the overall standings with another GS on tap at Kranjska on Saturday.

"It's nice to have this race right before the Olympics. It kind of gives me a little extra confidence boost," said Ligety, whose Rossignol ski tech, Ales Kalamar, is from nearby and enjoys strong support in Kranjska.

“It’s an awesome GS hill with such incredible terrain, so I really like that part of it. Plus, it’s always toward the end of the year, and that’s when I feel like I’m skiing the best. It always feels good to race here. I really feel blessed to have a hill like this to compete on.”

Ligety wasn’t the only American to rip into the finals. Newly-named Olympian Tommy Ford (Bend, OR) was 21st despite small mistakes on both runs.

“It showed that he’s fast and strong,” said Men’s Slalom Head Coach Rudi Soulard, pointing to his third-fastest time on the final pitch of the second run.

Teammate Tim Jitloff (Reno, NV) also took home points, taking 27th after a mistake on his second run cost him a chance at a higher result.

“It’s nice to see him get back on track,” Soulard said.

Ligety’s win marked the 101st World Cup victory for American men. Two-time overall champion Bode Miller (Franconia, NH), who secured No. 100 with his super combined win in Wengen, Switzerland, never planned to race in Kranjska and is stateside resting his ankle.

### **Kranjska Gora, Slovenia, Jan. 29, Men’s Giant Slalom**

1. Ted Ligety (Park City, UT), 2:22.02

2. Marcel Hirscher, Austria, 2:22.36

3. Kjetil Jansrud, Norway, 2:22.53

4. Aksel Lund Svindal, Norway, 2:22.84

5. Davide Simioncelli, Italy, 2:23.00

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21. Tommy Ford, Bend, OR, 2:25.38

27. Tim Jitloff, Reno, NV, 2:26.18

DNQ 1 " Nolan Kasper, Warren, VT; Jake Zamansky, Aspen, CO

DNF 1 " Warner Nickerson, Gilford, NH