

Reno's Jitloff does not qualify in slalom in Croatia

Elizabeth Karam, USSA

ZAGREB, Croatia -â€“ Italy had a solid day taking the top two spots in Wednesday's night slalom in Zagreb. Giuliano Razzoli was on top with Manfred Moelgg in second. Jimmy Cochran (Keene, NH) was the lone American to qualify for the second run, finishing 25th.

Razzoli added a win to his belt, beating out teammate Moelgg. Finishing not far behind the Italians was France's Julien Lizeroux.

The race hill at Zagreb proved to be a bit more challenging this year with outside factors coming into play. The weather has been quite erratic creating an inconsistent snow track for the racers.

“It was just tricky snow, it had been rained on, then it had been warm then it got cold then it snowed,” said Cochran. “They were trying to scrape the snow off, but it was just really inconsistent and tough for sure.”

Ted Ligety (Park City, UT) was a having a solid first run before crashing near the bottom of the course. Ligety was uninjured, but did not finish the run.

“I was skiing OK but it wasn't super clean,” Ligety said. “The course preparation is good considering they had no snow and it's kind of warm here.”

Cochran has been skiing incredible slalom, scoring World Cup points in every slalom race this season improving his standing to 25th in the World Cup start list.

“That's good, I mean I had wished I finished a little better,”

said Cochran. "But it's nice to score some points and maybe move up the rankings a little bit. I'll take it."

Cochran put forth a strong performance on Wednesday, finishing 13th the first run. He was knifing the second run, over a half a second ahead at the split, before experiencing trouble when he leaned in too much. The mistake forced him onto his side and set him instantly four seconds behind the leader.

"I had a solid run, nothing special but it was solid," explained Cochran. "Second run I was trying to go for it a little more and I just paid for it."

Tim Jitloff (Reno, NV), Dave Chodounsky (Crested Butte, CO), and Paul McDonald (Bellevue, WA) have all been skiing and training well. Unfortunately, all three experienced a bit of unlucky and difficulty in attempting to attack the course.

"We wish Cody [Marshall] was here," said McDonald. "He dominates this hill."

The World Cup slalom and giant slalom racers will be busy in January with almost every weekend filled with races. Next up for the tech team is Adelboden, Switzerland.

"This is our time to go to work, slalom month. I'm a little nervous," said Cochran. "They come at you fast, if you are not dialed in for this month you can sort of blow your season. I feel pretty good and confident."

World Cup, Jan. 6 Men's slalom

1. Giuliano Razzoli, Italy, 1:50.00
2. Manfred Moelgg, Italy, 1:50.23
3. Julien Lizeroux, France, 1:50.49
4. Mitja Valencic, Slovenia, 1:50.75
5. Reinfried Herbst, Austria, 1:50.84

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25. Jimmy Cochran, Keene, NH, 1:55.43

DNF: Tim Jitloff, Reno, NV, Ted Ligety, Park City, UT, David Chodounsky, Crested Butte, CO

DNQ 1st Run: Paul McDonald, Bellevue, WA