

2 Tahoe area juniors in top 11 at ski cross championships

By U.S. Ski Team

CARDRONA, New Zealand – Morganne Murphy (Truckee) led the United States today, finishing fifth in the FIS Junior World Freestyle Championships ski cross in Cardrona. Ethan Fortney (Tenino, Wash.) was seventh in the men's event. It was the second time ski cross has been on the program for the Junior World Championships.

Norway's Didrik Bastian Juell won the men's, while Fanny Smith of Switzerland took the women's gold. Kyle Smaine (South Lake Tahoe) just missed the top 10, finishing 11th, while Penn Lukens (Steamboat Springs, Colo.) was 19th.

A crash in the semi-finals was all that kept Murphy out of the finals. She didn't let it happen again, winning the small finals to take fifth.

"I was bummed about the run," said Murphy. "I crashed in the semi finals which put me in the small finals. But I made the best pass of my life and am so stoked about finishing fifth."

Fortney was also pleased with his showing. "It was awesome competing in my first international ski cross event," he said. "It was a non-stop, fun battle the whole time."

The championships wrap-up Sunday with ski halfpipe.