

Bahrke 24th in aerials in Belarus

By Freddy Perryman, U.S. Ski Team

MINSK, Belarus -- Last season's Rookie of the Year Ashley Caldwell of Charleston, S.C., rebounded from her injury last week to finish second in the aerials World Cup Saturday in Minsk. It was the second podium of her young career.

Hometown hero Anton Kushnir of Belarus won the men's event, with China's World Champion Shuang Cheng the women's winner. It was an especially important victory for Kushnir, the World Championship bronze medalist, taking the first World Cup ever in his country of Belarus at an amazing new aerials facility near Minsk.

Caldwell, who did not compete last week in Moscow, Russia after a crash in training, came back strong for the final event of the season. She threw a full-full, followed by a full double full-full in the finals to score her second career World Cup podium having earned her first with a win in Lake Placid. Her jumps were clean and performed with technical precision, but her degree of difficulty was just below that of Cheng, allowing the Chinese aerialist to edge Caldwell for the win.

Emily Cook of Belmont, Mass., coming off her second career World Cup victory in Moscow, jumped well in training. But in her qualification run she came off the jump a little bit forward, losing points and failing to make finals by one spot.

Dylan Ferguson of Amesbury, Mass., ended 11th after a tough landing to a very clean final jump. Ferguson jumped well, but with slower takeoff speeds was unable to get the amplitude needed and he was forced to drag his hands on the landing. He was the only American man to qualify for Saturday's finals.

Scotty Bahrke of Tahoe City was 24th.

Official results, World Cup, Minsk, Belarus, Aerials

Men

1. Anton Kushnir, Belarus, 256.31

2. Stanislav Kravchuk, Ukraine, 244.49

3. Denis Osipau, Belarus, 237.42

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11. Dylan Ferguson, Amesbury, MA, 193.57

24. Scotty Bahrke, Tahoe City, CA, 82.08

Women

1. Shuang Cheng, China, 187.87

2. Ashley Caldwell, Charleston, SC, 183.96

3. Fanyu Kong, China, 178.28

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13. Emily Cook, Belmont, MA, 72.96