

Mancuso third in super G behind Ross, Cook

By USSA

OLYMPIC VALLEY – Laurene Ross (Bend, Ore.) captured the first U.S. title of her career with a mere 0.01 second super G victory over Stacey Cook (Mammoth Mountain) on Friday at the Nature Valley U.S. Alpine Championships at Squaw Valley.

The incredibly tight race saw favorite and defending champion Julia Mancuso (Squaw Valley) land third, 0.08 seconds behind Ross. Mancuso was skiing on borrowed equipment because her skis didn't make it to Squaw from World Cup Finals.

Thousands were on hand as California sun continued to produce perfect spring race conditions at the home of the 1960 Olympic Winter Games.

Top junior honors went to Abby Ghent (Edwards, Colo.) followed by Paula Moltzan (Lakeville, Minn.) and Lauren Samuels (Golden Valley, Minn.).

The challenging super G course starts in the shadow of the fabled KT22 and going down Julia's Gold, named after Mancuso. It was a bumpy course with a tricky jump toward the finish.

The race served as the first half of the combined title, pairing the fastest times from super G and slalom.