

Ganong on top of podium for first time

By USSA

SANTA CATERINA, Italy – Travis Ganong (Squaw Valley) took advantage of a new course for the men's Audi FIS Ski World Cup tour and punched through for his career first victory on Dec. 17, winning the Santa Caterina downhill.

Austria's Matthias Mayer was the only one who got close to Ganong, finishing in second, nine-hundredths back. Italy's Dominick Paris was third.

A traditional site for women's downhill including World Championships in 1985 and 2005, it was first time for the men on the Deborah Campognini downhill, which Ganong used to his advantage.

"It was a perfect run." said Ganong. "I love to take on a new challenge and a new slope. I love the hill – the mountains are huge here and it's fun skiing."

Ganong took advantage of information from teammate Steven Nyman (Sundance, Utah), who won last weekend's Val Gardena downhill and was on the podium in Beaver Creek. Nyman started out for the U.S. in the eighth starting position, executing his planned line but finding clearly where time could be gained. His radioed advice to Ganong that proved beneficial. Starting 16th, Ganong took charge of the race from the outset. He skied a very straight line to build a lead, then nailed a perfect sweeping turn through the final carousel to take the lead. It was his second career podium after finishing third in Kvitfjell, Norway, last February.

Nyman ended up 15 as the Americans notched back-to-back downhill wins. Jared Goldberg (Holladay, Utah) was 24 with

Marco Sullivan (Squaw Valley) 29. Bryce Bennett (Squaw Valley) was 50, while Andrew Weibrecht (Lake Placid, N.Y.) did not finish.