

# Clark on top of podium in halfpipe

By USSA

LAAX, Switzerland – Kelly Clark (Mammoth Lakes) and and Chloe Kim (Torrance) continued their battle for queen of the hill at the Burton European Open in this weekend taking first and second, respectively, in women's halfpipe – flipping the results from X Games a week ago.

Heavy snowfall had been a factor for the entire week, causing canceled practices and challenging competition conditions.

“It pretty much hasn't stopped snowing since we got to Switzerland” Clark explained, “I knew it was going to be challenging conditions and that I needed to be smart and put down a solid run first.”

Which is exactly what she did, putting down a run with a crippler and backside 540 along with back-to-back 720s, a conservative run for Clark who's known for landing the only 1080 in the business.

“Today was more about smart snowboarding than progressive snowboarding. It was just one of those days, and my experience paid off,” Clark said.

Kim, 16 years Clark's junior and last weekend's X Games gold medalist, opted for a more progressive route putting together a run that included a switch straight air and and a switch backside 540. Switzerland's Nadja Purtschert finished third.

On the men's side Olympic gold and silver medalist, Iouri Padladtchikov of Switzerland and Ayumu Hirano of Japan, had a repeat showing finishing first and second with David Habluetzel of Switzerland taking third. Taylor Gold (Steamboat

Springs) and rookie U.S. Snowboarding team rider, Jake Pates (Eagle, Colo.), were the sole American's in finals and struggled to land their runs, finishing eighth and tenth respectively.