

Ganong top U.S. finisher in super G

By USSA

SAALBACH-HINTERGLEMM, Austria – In a turny, technical super G set by American coach Forest Carey that did not excuse any mistakes, the Austrian Matthias Mayer once again emerged victorious. That makes for two gold medals in two days for the Austrian who figured out this challenging track full of blind gates, fallaways and big jumps on an aggressive, bumpy surface. Travis Ganong (Squaw Valley) was the top American finisher, toughing out a ninth place finish after falling ill and missing the downhill.

France's Adrien Theaux, who launched off the final jump with flair into a spread eagle in Friday's downhill training run, finished second and Norway's Kjetil Jansrud in third.

While many racers battled visibility, with thick fog in the middle of the course, Ganong had a different battle to fight. A gnarly stomach bug kept him in bed all day Saturday, forcing him to miss the downhill on the challenging Schneekristall-Zwölfer track. Ganong, who hasn't been able to break into the top 20 this season in super G, battled the sickness to score his best result of the season – ninth place. With the exception of hitting a hole at the bottom of the course at a right foot double with a tricky fallaway that gave many competitors problems, Ganong maintained a good pace throughout his run.

"I really was not expecting anything," Ganong said. "Yesterday I was really sick – like the most sick I've felt in my life. I was throwing up and I spent the whole day in bed sleeping. I had to skip the downhill race. So this morning I didn't even spin on the bike or do any warm-up or anything. I just showed

up and skied and I had no plan, really, I just went gate to gate. Maybe that's a good thing. Maybe that's better for me, mentally, for super G."

This is a brand-new track for these guys, and with no training run and so much terrain, there is a lot to learn. What's more, athletes fought damp mist and thickening fog. Visibility worsened at the mid-section of course where the bumps and ruts were also at their worst. When Canada's Manuel Osborne-Paradis skied out in that section of the course, he exclaimed, "Can't see two gates!"

It was a deep American field, eight skiers competed in today's super G. Andrew Weibrecht (Lake Placid, N.Y.) finished 19, Jared Goldberg (Holladay, Utah) 30, Ted Ligety (Park City) 35, Wiley Maple (Aspen) 38, and Tim Jitloff (Reno) 42nd. Steven Nyman (Sundance, Utah) and Marco Sullivan (Squaw Valley) did not finish.