

U.S. women in top 15 at Beaver Creek

By USSA

BEAVER CREEK – The 2015 FIS Alpine World Ski Championships began Feb. 3 with the women's super G in Beaver Creek. In front of her hometown fans, Lindsey Vonn (Vail) skied her way to a podium spot, taking the bronze medal. All four American starters finished in the top 15.

The morning's forecast of windy conditions and snow flurries proved to be correct. The women's super G was slated to begin at 11am at the usual super G start on Beaver Creek's famed Birds of Prey course, but due to the weather, officials delayed the start time and moved the start gate down to the reserve start, making the course shorter than normal.

Once things got under way, the windy conditions proved to be challenging for the international field of 46 racers. Julia Mancuso (Squaw Valley) was the first U.S. racer to drop into the course, starting 11th. Mancuso skied aggressively, per usual, but made a few mistakes that kept her from a medaling.

"The super G was a lot of fun," said Mancuso. "I definitely had some mistakes on my run. It wasn't a perfect run, but it was a top-10 run."

Stacey Cook (Mammoth Mountain), who won Monday's downhill training run, skied soon after Mancuso, and also had a challenging run.

"Super G has been a tough event for me this year. I haven't yet found my groove," said Cook. "I'm happy with some of the turns that I made. Obviously, only medals count, but there were definitely some positives for me to take out of today."

Wearing bib 18, Vonn dropped in to the cheers of her hometown fans. She was a bit stiff and hesitant on the top turns, which was reflected in her first split's time – nearly half a second out of the lead.

However, as Vonn skied down the course she started to make up time towards the third split, creeping milliseconds under the leader's pace. As she crossed the finish line, Vonn had a tenth of a second lead. She held first place for a short time as Slovenia's Tina Maze immediately followed Vonn and quickly usurped Vonn by 0.12.

"I thought I skied really well. I'm happy with the way I skied and with the result. I just wish that the weather was a little bit better," said Vonn. "I definitely had a pretty strong headwind right out of the starting gate and for the first couple of gates. I fought my way down. On the bottom part where there wasn't any wind, I was pretty fast."

In the end, Austria's Anna Fenninger skied the fastest time of the day. Always a viable contender in super G, Fenninger skied a nearly flawless race down the shortened Raptor course. "Anna [Fenninger] skied very well and I'm very proud to be on the podium with those two," said Vonn.