

# Ganong, Sullivan lucky to finish difficult downhill

By USSA

KITZBUEHEL, Austria – Thirty racers started a fast, dark and bumpy Hahnenkamm Saturday at the Audi FIS Ski World Cup downhill, but only 24 made it to the finish line. Andrew Weibrecht (Lake Placid, N.Y.) led a trio of surviving Americans.

The race, which started from a lower start position due to weather conditions, was officially canceled after bib 30 crossed the line. Italy's Peter Fill was declared the official winner, with Switzerland's Beat Fuez and Carlo Janka in second and third, respectively.

Weibrecht finished 13, Travis Ganong (Squaw Valley) was 18 and Marco Sullivan (Squaw Valley) 22.

Just making it across the finish line was a victory for 24 racers today, as the story of the day was the challenging conditions that saw overall World Cup leader Aksel Lund Svindal or Norway, and three members of the Austrian team crash in spectacular fashion. Svindal, however, did walk away after his crash and appeared OK.

"It's been a wild ride watching this today," said Steven Nyman (Sundance, Utah), who also went down, but was fine. "Hannes (Reichelt) going down, (Georg) Streitberger going down – Austria has lost five guys on this course this week. So I'm glad to just be in one piece."

Nyman, who was fifth on the Hahnenkamm last year, was well on his way to what may have been a podium finish.

"I was five-tenths ahead when I went out – by far ahead in

first place ... it's a bummer," Nyman said. "But you have to risk it, and sometimes it doesn't pay off."

As for the rest of the American's, they battled the weather conditions and slowly deteriorating track conditions to make it across the line.

"I'm happy to be at the finish," Sullivan said. "Even though we're the best racers in the world, it's still stressful to run this thing. It's scary every time you kick out of the start, especially when you see guys like Aksel and Reichelt crash – those guys never crash."

"Tough conditions today – super dark, super bumpy and lots of wind, just really dangerous with the conditions," Ganong added. "I'm not satisfied at all, I have higher expectations, and I know that I am capable of a lot more. But I'm just happy that I'm alive, I'm here and moving on."