

# Holland wins Olympic test event

By USSA

BOKWANG, South Korea – The American snowboardcross men dominated at the official Olympic test event for the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Games, where Nate Holland (Squaw Valley) took the win and Nick Baumgartner (Iron River, Mich.) was third. Lindsey Jacobellis (Stratton Mountain, Vt.) made the women's final, finishing just off the podium in fourth.

Holland has had great success in his snowboardcross career, including seven X Games gold medals, but it was his first World Cup win in four years, when he won at Veysonnaz, Switzerland. It was a big win for the 37 year old, who was sidelined for the first part of the season with injury.

"This season's been brutal for me," Holland said. "I sprained my pelvis in December and basically sat on a couch for a month so I'm not the strongest I've been and I still have some hip pain. It's a long injury but I just have to wake up early and get the bones moving—once you're in the gate all that goes away."

Baumgartner overcame a low qualifying result to make it all the way to a World Cup podium for the 12th time in his career.

"Today was unbelievable," he said. "I started out wearing bib 34, so I wasn't super stoked on my time trial. I didn't get to pick my lane all day. I only got the outsides, but I think I was winning every heat going down the first straightaway after turn one. I had great starts. Are you kidding me? I'm 34 years old—to beat these young kids at starts? That's exactly what I wanted. I trained all summer for that and it's paying off. I couldn't be more stoked."

By all accounts the 2018 Olympic event is sure to be an exciting one, as the athletes are very happy with the course, which is big with lots of passing opportunities.

“The slope is perfect, the jumps were big and there are some tactics and strategy involved,” Holland said. “I like courses that are big and wide open with strategy—it makes you think a little more versus a holeshot scenario. And I’m stoked to see that this hill has the DNA of tactics, big jumps and fast speeds.”

American Robert Minghini (Snowshoe, W.Va.) placed 12th out of the small final, Hagen Kearney (Telluride, Colo.) was 18th, Mick Dierdorff (Steamboat Springs, Colo.) was 28th and Jonathan Cheever (Saugus, Mass.) was 32nd.

The American women were very close to making the podium. Though she didn’t get the start she wanted, Jacobellis made the final and was in a good race position until she cased the last double coming into the finish. It looked like Faye Gulin (Salt Lake City) was going to make the final, winning the lead-up heat until she knocked boards with someone. She finished ninth out of the small final. Meghan Tierney (Edwards, Colo.) finished 12th and Rosina Mancari (Anchorage) was 16th.