

2 Squaw skiers in top 10 in downhill

By USSA

VAL GARDENA, Italy – Steven Nyman (Sundance, Utah) snagged the podium on his favorite Audi FIS Ski World Cup track, finishing in third in Val Gardena. Travis Ganong (Squaw Valley) and Bryce Bennett (Squaw Valley) nailed the top 10.

It looked like Aksel Lund Svindal of Norway was going to take his first downhill win since his injury last season, but Max Franz of Austria spoiled his celebration, coming from bib 26 to win the race—his first World Cup victory of his career and the first Austrian win on the Saslong in eight years.

It was another beautiful day in the Dolomites with the U.S. men performing well on the open downhill track. Nyman had a wild ride—threatening first place even after landing on his tails off a jump. But the hill is a perfect set up for the big man—built for strong gliders like Nyman. “I’m really happy with the performance,” said Nyman. “Val d’Isere was a big disappointment—I had some equipment issues I was dialing in. To resurrect that here and know I can ski at the top is really, really good and I want to carry that into Caterina.”

Ganong also had a great day, putting down an aggressive line to finish in seventh place. But his eyes are looking toward the win at Santa Caterina. “I know I have speed to be faster than anybody, but it’s having all the splits add up at the end,” said Ganong. “It’s close, it’s super close. I have to keep working at it and keep trying and it’ll come.”

The race was thrilling to the end, with Bennett skiing from bib 54 to finish eighth, right behind Ganong. This wasn’t Bennett’s first bibbo rodeo at Val Gardena. Last season, he started 57th to finish sixth on the track.