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Hallett and Corr win Stoke GBR

🕒 6 July 2016 👤 Neil M 📁 Alpine Skiing 💬 0



A healthy amount of racers made the trip to Stoke for the third round of the GBR Series. Stoke has been off the calendar for a few seasons now but it's back with a new look. The slope now has new matting and a decent finish area, along with a brand new café area.

For the first run Ambition coach TJ Baldwin set the course. There were two reasonable offset turns at the top of the course into a hairpin; that had a tough exit. The rest of the course flowed well into the flat bottom section to the finish line.

Jenny Davies, Georgia Hallett, Nicole Shering and Bella Hathway were the pre-race favourites going into the third round of the female GBR overall. Hallett was the first of the four to tackle the course. The Gloucester racer had a smooth run with no hiccups and ended up with a time of 12.37.

Next up was zero point skier Jenny Davies; she battled her way through the course to take the lead from Hallett with a time of 12.19. Hathway had a solid run too but couldn't better her Aldershot teammate or Hallett's time with a 12.52.

Full of confidence after her wins at Gloucester last weekend, Shering attacked the first run with great aggression. This approach gave her a good reward as she took the lead by 0.13 seconds with a

time of 12.06. Could this be a third overall win in a row for the Snowtrax racer?

Sally Bartlett set the second course of the day. There were three reasonably straight turns into a diagonal vertical. The middle offset turns were the testing part of the course. Towards the bottom of the course the distance between each turn was slightly compressed.

Hathway looked visibly quicker on run two with a time of 12.36. However, Hallett who had a flyer would better this with an impressive time of 11.99, giving her a combined time of 24.36. The pressure was on Shering and Davies to produce quick runs. Davies had a similar smooth run and finished with a time of 12.20 with a combined time of 24.39. This meant Hallett was in the lead by 0.03 seconds with one racer to go.

Shering had another fast start but didn't quite nail the rhythm of the middle section of the course. She finished with a time of 12.40, giving her a combined time of 24.46. This meant that Hallett had won the female overall ahead of Davies in second with Shering in third.

It'll be interesting to see this battle continue in the female GBR races at Pontypool next weekend.

The male race was much like the female competition because a lot of racers traded places between each run.

Aldershot's Peter Davies had a surprisingly fast first run, with a time of 11.60 that many of the top 15 couldn't beat for a while. Loughbrough's Christopher Corr then took the lead with another typical gutsy run of 11.30. Harvey Charlton, also of Aldershot, came close with a with a time of 11.56. Corr also fended off zero-point skier David Hatcher who came down with a time of 11.41.

Next up was Oliver Weeks, who was definitely the racer to watch after his first overall win at Gloucester last weekend. The Midlands skier had a storming run with a time of 11.04. This meant Corr would have to produce something special on his second run to challenge Weeks.

After Weeks was Chatham skier Daniel Symons. He produced a clean but powerful first run with a time of 11.15. Not far off Weeks and ahead of Corr. Weeks was in the lead by a margin of 0.11 seconds, with Symons in second and Corr in third, after the first run.

The mid pack chopped and changed a lot, showing that different styles suited each course. Callum Witts had a much better second run and held the lead for a few racers with a combined time of 22.80. Hatcher took the lead from Witts with a much more affective run, his combined time was 22.47.

Hatcher's lead was short lived though because Corr produced an outstanding second run charge. The Loughbrough skier got a time of 10.86, giving him a combined time of 22.16. This certainly put some pressure on the last two racers. Symons was up next and he had a similar smooth run to his first. He got a combined time of 22.31 putting him in second place for the time being.

Last up was Weeks, who wanted to get another overall win under his belt. The Midlands skier skied yet again skied with great aggression but his second run time was only the fifth fastest. This meant it was enough for Corr to take the overall lead by 0.09 seconds over Weeks with Symons in third.

There was spectacular racing by both the male and female racers. Both runs showed the benefits of different styles of skiing. It was nice to have Stoke back on the race calendar and a lot of the field will look forward to having many more national races there in years to come.

Group Winners:

U10:

Amber Fennell MID

Liam Atkinson CHT

U12:

Lauren Bloom WCS

Charlie Deem MID

U14:

Ella Giles MID

Jack Upton MID

U16:

Ellie Jackson MID

Oliver Weeks MID

U18:

Nicole Shering TSN

Craig Speed ASR

U21:

Georgia Hallett GLO

Callum Witts PND

SEN:

Rachel Symons CHT

Christopher Corr LSU

MAS:

Sarah Campbell-Woodward

David Hatcher AVO

By Peter Davies

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