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Davies and Hatcher win Pontypool GBR Round 4

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



Aldershot's Jenny Davies and David Hatcher of Avon won the female and male GBR round four overalls at Pontypool.

There was a reasonable turnout out at the Welsh slope for the final weekend of the GBR series. There was a constant sprinkling of rain throughout the morning of the race, which was a relief for many people's burning skis in practice.

David Eaves set the first course for the day. A long stretching corridor lulled racers into a quick hairpin before the drop into a banana gate on the ridge. The first major turn was set on the ridge that caused a fair few hikes and ski outs. Further on down the mid section had pretty straight and rhythmical off set turns until a wider offset on the exit of the final verticalli before the finish.

In the female race it was set up to be another battle between top seeds Davies and Nicole Shering of Snowtrax. Shering was the first of the top 15 to attempt the first course. The U18 racer had a powerful top section but didn't have the right line going into the banana on the ridge, this resulted in a ski out on her first run.

Eva Pascoe of Torquay was up next and she had a smooth line over the ridge and glided to the finish with a time of 21.06. The under 16 racer had a great chance to make an overall podium.

Davies knowing her main rival had skied out had a no thrills run. Lots of pushes on the top flat but a sensible but affective line over the ridge to get a time of 20.56.

Penultimate skier Joley Side split Davies and Pascoe on the podium. The Pendle skier had a tight line on the ridge and quick feet towards the bottom of the course to put her in second place with a time of 20.90. After the first run Davies had a gap of 0.44 seconds ahead of Side with Pascoe in third.

Robin Kellen set the second course of the day. It had another long corridor on the flat leading onto a hairpin before the ridge. This time there was an offset before the drop away on the ridge, which then dropped into more rhythmical offsets. A diagonal verticalli was set towards the bottom before hitting a few straight turns on the bumps near the finish.

Victoria Gatty moved up a couple of places on the second run. She was visibly more comfortable with the second course set which meant she was more aggressive throughout her run. She got a time of 20.72 with a combined time of 42.11.

Pascoe too had a much better second run performance. The less aggressive turn on the ridge gave the Torquay skier a lot more confidence to attack the rest of the course. She took the lead from Gatty with a time of 20.61 with a combined time of 41.67.

Joely was yet again the penultimate racer to come down but couldn't take the lead. It was a smooth run but she couldn't take advantage of the space on the middle offset turns. She finished with a time of 20.85 with a combined time of 41.75.

Davies was the last to go. Another cleanly executed run furthered her lead advantage with a time of 20.34, which gave her a combined time of 40.90. The Aldershot racer beat Pascoe by 0.77 seconds with Side in third place.

In the male race there were a fair few hikes and ski outs on the first run. The banana caused particular havoc over the ridge.

Callum Witts was the first of the top 15 to attempt the course. The Pendle racer flowed effortlessly through the banana giving him great speed through to the finish. He got a time of 18.38, which you could tell was a tough time to beat.

Aldershot racer Harvey Charlton came close to Witts' time. An aggressive start mixed with a radical carve over the ridge gave the U21 racer a time of 18.45.

Avon racer Hatcher used his unique style on the top few offsets, but unusually for him kept his feet on the floor for most of his run. A perfectly executed line on the ridge combined with a gutsy final section gave him the lead over Witts with a time of 18.28.

Oliver Weeks was the next racer to challenge the podium. After he navigated his way through the banana without any hiccups his punchy quick feet built speed through to the finish. He didn't take the lead but finished on the same 18.45 time as Charlton.

After the first run Hatcher had a lead of 0.1 seconds over Witts in second with Charlton and Weeks in joint third.

A different course style on the second run saw the leader board chop and change throughout the race.

Midlands racer Mark Hawkins had second run flyer. He let his skis run and kept a tight line, which gave him a time of 19.25 with a combined total of 38.33.

Hawkins run was short lived though when Craig Speed of Aldershot pulled out a stunning run. The U18 racer went all guns blazing along the top section and relentlessly attacked to the finish line. He finished with a time of 18.99 giving him a combined time of 37.79.

Declan Huppach of Pendle had a consistently smooth run top to bottom. He couldn't beat Speed but got a time of 19.33 giving him a combined time of 38.09.

Next up was Weeks. The Midlands racer looked more passive than normal over the ridge and that showed up noticeably on his second run time of 19.71, which gave him a combined total of 38.16. Putting him behind both Speed and Huppach.

It was the same story for Charlton too. A passive approach to the ridge cost him time on the course. He got a time of 19.84 with a combined total of 38.29. This meant he dropped off the podium spot.

Witts was the penultimate racer on the second run. The Pendle skier unfortunately caught an edge on the second gate. After a hike on the flat he completed the course with a time of 38.18 putting him way out of contention for the overall.

Last racer down was zero point skier Hatcher. A full attack on the top flat section followed by smooth turns through the middle offsets, gave him momentum to chuck his body through the final turns of the course. He equaled Speed's second run time of 18.99, which gave him a combined time of 37.27.

Hatcher won the GBR fourth round by 0.52 seconds over Speed with Huppach in third.

There was some impressive skiing on both courses with a mixture of skiers getting impressive times on certain courses. Both zero point skiers won with a healthy margin in the male and female races.

Age group winners:

U10:

Amber Fennell MID

Liam Atkinson CHT

U12:

Lauren Bloom WCS

Ryan Bunton HEM

U14:

Emma Trust ASR

Jack Upton MID

U16:

Eva Pascoe TOQ

Oliver Weeks MID

U18:

Victoria Gatty PND

Craig Speed ASR

U21:

Jenny Davies ASR

Harvey Charlton ASR

SEN:

Rachel Symons CHT

Daniel Symons CHT

MAS:

David Hatcher AVO

By Peter Davies

Picture – Jenny Davies competing at the 2015 Welsh National Championships

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JENNY DAVIES

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