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Greenwood wins All England male title

🕒 5 September 2016 👤 Neil M 📁 Alpine Skiing 💬 0



James Greenwood of Aldershot Ski Race Club won the male overall All England title at Gloucester. There were 81 male racers at the Gloucester slope ready to compete for the biggest artificial race of the year. New and old faces were vying for the 41st All England championship title on a very wet September weekend. The wet weather played havoc with a lot of the male skiers throughout the day, as a lot skied out on each course.

Local Gloucester coach Richard Lambden set the first course of the day. The course had an early hairpin at the top of the course followed by a few tight offset turns going into a vertical over the flat middle section of the slope. The rest of the course had a relentless corridor of gates that varied in width and distance.

British Ski Academy coach, Bradley Morgan of Pendle was a late entry so that meant he was the first of the males to tackle the first All England course of the day. Morgan still had frightening pace but was not looking comfortable on his skis on the middle section of the course. He powered through despite a scrappy run by his standards with a time of 19.45.

Under 16 racer Josef Huppach had a fantastic first run from bib 21. A smooth run that was executed with precision throughout the whole course put him ahead of Morgan with a time of 19.25.

Greenwood was ranked outside the top 15 on the start list because of his lack of racing in recent years but he showed that he still had blistering pace and tactical skiing through a tough set. Where most struggled to stay in Greenwood glided with ease making slight adjustments to have a good line throughout the course. The Aldershot racer had an incredible first run time of 18.49 The top 15 had their work cut out to beat that time.

Seven of the top 15 skied out of the course by going to straight on key parts of the course, one of which was Christopher Corr who won the last All England in Sunderland. Oliver Weeks of Midlands made a slight mistake through the middle section but powered home to the finish line with a time of 19.72 behind Greenwood, Huppach and Morgan.

David Hatcher of Avon was the penultimate skier down on the first run. The zero-point skier's unique style of skating throughout the course helped on the top section to gain speed along the middle flat section. He struggled slightly where the slope fell away again but punched his way through the last set of turn with a time of 19.01 that put him in second place.

The last racer down was Ambition skier Ashley Hill. Hill attacked the top section with impressive accuracy and muscled through the tough offsets towards the end of the course. He slipped into second place with a time of 18.99 behind Greenwood with Hatcher in third. Greenwood had a half second advantage over Hill going into the final run with Hatcher not far behind in third.

Second run was set by Sunderland coach Lee Bennett. A rhythmical set of offset gates were at the top half of the course follow by a slight diagonal vertical. This led into an under-gate that brought the skier back to the middle of the slope. More offset turns that gradually increased in width finished off the course.

The male pack was reduced majorly for the second run and a lot of fast skiers that hiked previously were attacking from behind to hopefully scrape an age group podium.

Weeks, who has won a club national at Gloucester this year, put down a stunning second run charge. A combination of gutsy pushing on the top section and fast feet through the combinations put him miles in the lead with a time of 17.19 giving him a combined time of 36.91.

Up next was Morgan. He had a slightly better second run but was visibly struggling to produce speed on the under-gate on to the final offset turns. He slotted into second place behind Weeks with a time of 18.28 with a combined total of 37.73.

Hatcher was up next. The Avon skier was visibly slower than Weeks through the under-gate section of the course. He skated the final few turn but slotted into second with time of 17.95 giving him a combined total of 36.96.

Ambition racer Hill was the penultimate racer down on the second run. He struggled to generate speed on a less offset course. He slipped down two places on the overall with a time of 18.43 with a combined time of 37.42.

Finally it was James Greenwood's final run. The Aldershot skier this time had a lot more aggression through the slightly straight top section. He flowed well through the under-gate but was visibly hanging on through the last set of turn. He chucked his feet around the last gate and flew across

the finish line in the air. After a stylish backwards recovery to stop Greenwood saw his time of 17.68, which gave him the win with a combined total of 36.17.

Greenwood finished ahead of Weeks in second and Hatcher in third. Both courses saw many of the male racers struggle on tight offset turns. The winning formula was early preparation on the flats to be on top of the course for the harder offsets.

Age group winners:

U14: Jack Upton (Midlands)

U16: Oliver Weeks (Midlands)

U18: Adam Bannister (Aldershot)

U21: Rory Farren (Ravens)

SEN: James Greenwood (Aldershot)

MAS: David Hatcher (Avon)

Picture – James Greenwood – Credit Racer Ready / Ffyona Speed

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AMBITION

ASHLEY HILL

DAVID HATCHER

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OLIVER WEEKS

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