

Xscape Jubilee Snow Slalom  
3 November 2003  
*By Neil McQuoid*

London take team race; Hunt and Prince continue winning

After a summer of plastic racing, racing on snow in England was a new concept. The racing was tight and fast with a team element included it was also fun. With the order for the first run being youngest first, by the time the big guns headed down, the slope was fairly rutted – a new experience for the plastic experts!

With no advantage given to the girls, only two made it into the top 30 starters for the second run, Shanna Prince and Hannah Wright (both Eastern region) blazed the trail. The difference for the younger early numbers and later older numbers was the state of the course. The constant scrapping from an army of volunteers kept the course in good order for all. Despite the slope being open for practice on the Saturday night, many racers had a little difficulty adjusting.

With an open first course set by James Gilyead and a technical second run course by Willie Taunton Burnet, the growing Sunday morning crowd were treated to seeing some of England's best young (and old) regional racers. With a couple of the British Development Squad helping out their home region, there was talent on show! The usual suspects that had cleared up on the plastic races did not have it their own way on the snow. The different conditions caused many a few problems in adjusting to them. Although the England team train regularly at Xscape, the soft top layer caused problems to those who took the scenic route!

After dominating on the plastic, Georgie Hunt (Eastern Region) won both runs from Ed Drake and Jamie Miles (both London). Hunt's first run had been 'almost perfect but with a few mistakes' he commented afterwards, describing his second as 'awful!' All England Champion and member of the British development squad, Scott Bryson (North East) came fourth in the mens race. James Bennett all but secured the team race for London in taking fifth.

The girl's race was amalgamated into the mens race. With Prince and Wright in the top thirty after the first run, young Fern Barker took bronze after attacking the second run and pulling away from Mikaela Mills (London). Prince should be congratulated in finishing 17<sup>th</sup> overall. It would have been nice to see more girls racing but with numbers limited by team design, this was not possible.

In the team race, with four in the top ten, London got their tactics right in making sure that their top racers registered quick times. The much fancied North Eastern Team were beaten into second by 1.1 seconds. Despite having the quickest male and female, Eastern region could only manage third, hampered by a lack of strength in depth.

With this race looking to become a fixture in the calendar, interest in the race caught the imagination of both the public and ski industry. Support from Nevada, Swix, Manbi's, Campri and Dynastar as well as Xscape made such a race possible.