

Press Release

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Personal bests and new British records have almost become part of the daily diet of Chemmy Alcott (21, Hove) of The British Land Alpine Ski Team during this Audi FIS Ski World Cup season.

The young English all rounder - who skis all four disciplines - skied to the best women's downhill World Cup result of modern times as she landed an inspirational ninth place in the Women's Downhill on the famous Olympia delle Tofane course in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy.

Alcott's result topped a physically demanding six days with four back to back races in the Italian resort and she admitted last night that she was exhausted after building up to her career-best result today when she finished less than a second behind France's winner Carole Montillet.

" I am really looking forward to a couple of days off. I am so pleased with this result today. In truth it is a bit of a surprise because I was thinking 10th-15th was my target in downhill this season but I really gave it everything after I made a mistake on the first section and just blanked my thoughts out of my mind after I got angry with myself and that really seemed to work." Grinned Alcott whose ninth is her fourth world cup downhill points score of the season from the six women's downhills so far.

" I was in the café at the start watching and saw my buddy Lindsey Kildow from the States 'put one down' and finish fourth and I just thought 'right I can do that as well' and went for it."

Alcott started bib 40 and was the only skier to make the top 15 placings from outside of the first 30 down the course, winning the WinStar award again as she did for her 11th in Super G in Lake Louise, until now her world cup best. "I don't want to say that I excel when it is flat light and snowy and bumpy but I seem to ski best when I have to ski intuitively and using my natural talent and that is how it was today again. I think that some of the other girls seem to hold back when it is like that but I just seem to be able to let my skis run and go for it. I find when I am thinking about it too much and looking for the perfect line then it is not as good."

Alcott now has a break before next weekend's Giant Slalom in Maribor, Slovenia.

" I feel like the pressure is really off now and it is good to be able to switch between disciplines. I am sure that the GS results will come too, in time. I have been skiing so quick in GS but just making the odd mistake. With a bit more experience I hope I will eliminate them, but overall I feel like I have achieved so much this season that any pressure will be from me."

With the programme in Wengen, Switzerland substantially reduced by heavy snowfalls it was left to the Baxter brothers Alain and Noel to pick up the points in today's Men's Slalom and for the first time ever in a World Cup race Britain had two men scoring World Cup points as Alain, who turned 30 on Boxing Day, took 19th place and Noel, 22, finished in 26th.

With deep ruts forming on both runs as the almost inevitable product of the heavy snowfall and milder weather it was a day for battlers and opportunists. Alain proved his mettle in the conditions and came back from a couple of big mistakes to hold it together to lie 17th after the first run while Noel unleashed a steely attack which gave him 30th place after the first run.

For Noel the new experience of racing first down the second course at World Cup proved as unsettling as it was exciting and fulfilling. A steady second heat replete with a couple of big mistakes saw him settle into 26th while Alain never really found his all-out attack but still scored his fourth successive set of world cup points.

" I am both happy and disappointed." Admitted Noel, " I think that tomorrow I will feel that the pressure has cleared a bit and I'll feel better. This has been a long time coming, but I felt I could have done a bit better on the second run. Now, maybe with that hurdle cleared I'll feel more confident. Still, it is all experience. ." Admitted Noel whose 11th World Cup slalom this was.

" It was a tough day. Again I'm glad to have finished but I really did not feel that happy with my second run. Too many mistakes to make it into the top 10." confirmed Alain.

Meanwhile the reunion this evening at the British Olympic Association's Winter Training Centre in Lofer, Austria should be very upbeat as Noel, Alain and Chemmy will meet up there with Lesley McKenna, currently World ranked No 1 in Women's Half pipe, who has just finished fourth overall in the Burton European Open in Livigno, Italy. McKenna was up against a full field of FIS ranked and non FIS riders.

Results: Audi FIS Ski World Cup: Women's Downhill, Cortina, Italy: 1. C Montillet (France) 1:16.27, 2 R Goetschl (Aut) 1:16.50, 3 L Kildow (USA) 1:16.51, 4 H Gerg (Ger) 1:16.81, 5 L Kirsten Clark (USA) 1:16.90, 9 C Alcott (GBR/Hove/The British Land Alpine Ski Team) 1:17.22.

Audi FIS Ski World Cup:Men's Slalom, Wengen: 1 B Raich (Aut) 51.50, 49.00 1:40.50, 2 R Schoenfelder (Aut) 52.01, 48.96 1:40.97, 3 I Kostelic (Cro) 52.94 48.60 1:41.54, 4 H Schilchegger (Aut) 52.22. 49.35 1:41.57, 5 T Grandi (Can)53.89 47.72, 1:41.61. 19 A Baxter (GBR/Aviemore/The British Land Alpine Ski Team) 53.50 49.37 1:42.87, 26 N Baxter (GBR/Aviemore/The British Land Alpine Ski Team) 53.98 50.08 1:44.06.

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