

Martin Carr

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Subject: British Freestyle Turns Up The Heat In Tignes

British Freestyle Turns Up The Heat In Tignes

British Freestyle skiers stormed Tignes this summer, training in the bumps and funpark on the glacier, which has melted back to record levels. With temperatures soaring to over 40 degrees most of the British, English and Scottish Freestyle teams spun, bumped and flipped under the watchful eye of Eric Berthon, who coached the French Team to the podium at the Deer Valley Olympics in 2002. The sizzling temperatures wrecked the pistes for recreational skiers but the athletes didn't care as it made for softer landings to their unbelievable manoeuvres. The three week camp ended with the British Freestyle Championships on 1st August.

Simon Bates (26, Edinburgh, British Moguls A Team) regained the Men's Moguls Champion title after knee surgery prevented him competing in the 2002 event. A heli iron cross with rocket grab and heli twister spread in his final run down the World Cup piste on the glacier gave him a score of 24.86, beating all other contenders.

Tom Last (18, Sheffield, British New School Development Team) continued his winning streak from the Saas Fee Ride two weeks previously, beating team-mate Andy Bennett into third place. Tom's winning tricks in the Big Air were a Cork 9 and D Spin.

Emma Lonsdale (19, Settle, English Freestyle Team) was the top female in both Moguls and Big Air.

Mark Tilston, Snowsport GB Performance Director, came out to watch the competition and was impressed by the way British Freestyle skiing is totally co-ordinated, with all the home nations working together.

The teams continue training back in Britain on trampolines, water ramp and various dry-slope fun parks across the country. Eric Berthon said that the increasing importance of gymnastic performance in Freestyle skiing gives a great opportunity to British athletes who make full use of these non-snow facilities. Snowsport GB are still looking for a sponsor for the Freestyle Team so that British participation in this exciting snowsport can reach its full potential.