

French Junior Moguls Championships

Press release

Place: Chatel. France
Athletes: Ellie Koyander **NEW FRENCH JUNIOR FEMALE CHAMPION !**

Date: 1 – 2nd April 2006

Over the weekend , Ellie Koyander from Great Britain travelled to Chatel in France and stunned many French competitors , national coaches, talent scouts and spectators to become the new Junior French Moguls Champion 2006 ! She not only took gold medal in the female singles event but also claimed bronze in the duals moguls event – a major ‘coup’ for any competitor!



The two days of competition were the Finals of the French National Championships. This is the most important event on the French moguls calendar for the under 16s with nearly 70 competitors taking part .

After a day of practice on the Friday the temperature rose and the first day of competition on the Saturday saw the racers take to the start gate with a fine drizzle in the air and slush forming underfoot making conditions treacherous. In the qualifying round of the Duals Ellie showed what makes her such an exciting talent not only coming in first place for the females but also coming in 3rd place overall with 17.78 points (i.e. including both male and female competitors !).

Thoroughly professional and undeterred by the deteriorating conditions Ellie battled intelligently through the preliminary rounds of the duals showing great skill and adaptability to read the rapidly changing snow. Although down to the last four and showing a strong lead in the semi-finals , a minor loss of balance in the slush cost her a place in the final and she had to settle for a Bronze medal.

Both weather and fortune were kinder the next day as the temperature dropped overnight , the slush froze and blue skies opened. Ellie excelled this time in the singles event taking Gold Medal and gaining her French Championship title. The French were a little surprised that a British skier had done so well but were exemplary in their enthusiasm for great technical skiing, friendship and unbiased judging.

The result is unprecedented for an under 16s British skier in moguls skiing and perhaps in any skiing discipline.

The competition was also attended by 5 other Brits, although Heather Thexton, Jack Smith and Ben Parkes were all slightly too old to take part and so were forerunners for both events. Having been helicoptered off the mountain the previous weekend at the British moguls Championships, fellow England Team member Kate Williams still suffering from a neck injury, did not start in the duals but put in a good performance to come 8th overall in the singles. David Thexton, one of the youngest up and coming moguls skiers in the event, put in good performances in both the duals and singles beating off over 30 rival competitors to come in a very respectable 25th overall.

This was the last race of the European season and in two weeks time the England Moguls team start their dry land training phase for next year. This kicks off with a spring camp at the British Olympic Association's 'Olympic Training Centre' in Lofer, Austria, followed up by glacier skiing and water ramp training over the summer.

Ellie Koyander a lifelong member of Sharks Ski club in Sheffield is quoted as saying :-

'this has been a fantastic way to end what's been a really strong race season for me. After becoming the Australian Junior Champion in August, getting 5th in the Swiss Nationals, and 24th in the Worlds in Russia, this result has been the icing on the cake! I reckon the sponsorship and training at Xscape on their snow moguls has been really helped my development over the autumn and Jet2.coms support for the team has enabled us all to get out to competitions like this I can't wait till next season! '

The future is very bright and promising for the England Moguls team who are all on the BOA's 'Generation 2010' Olympic programme. Full race results and contact information are given on www.freestylesnowsports.co.uk