

Across The Pond



"British English and Scottish Freestyle team members have scattered across the globe on their individual missions of preparing/qualifying for the Olympics or just climbing the International Ladder. On a shoe string, they move from country to country, continent to continent working their way up the International rankings. Andy David and Martin Nankoo, both British Development and England Squad members tell their own stories of what it's like to train and compete on either side of the pond.

Letter From Switzerland

Since arriving out in Verbier in early November things have been very frustrating due to the snow drought that seems to be following us around the world at present. Things have all started in much the same way as the Australian winter with us turning up in a ski resort where green and brown seem to be the

dominant shades that one sees out of your window, rather than the crystalline white beauty of fresh powder fields that Verbier is known for.

We have seen only a couple of days snow fall now in the two months that we have been here and they really did not amount to much. We continue to survive at present on the efforts of the snow making machines which have been working over time of late. There is only a tiny amount of the area open currently which has meant that all the public have been squeezed into the few small areas that are still skiable. As a result everywhere has been over crowded and tempers all around the resort have been tested.

As a result the opportunity to train constructively has been almost impossible. Even flat work has been difficult because of over crowding and congestion on the piste. It is like

trying to train on the M25 in rush hour. In addition to bits of flat work the only other thing I have been able to do was the occasional jump session. However, even those rare moments did not go entirely without incident. Due to sheer boredom and frustration I was attempting to do a few new tricks to entertain myself. When attempting to perfect my Misty Fives I managed to put my knees into my face with great velocity, which resulted in a black eye. That was exactly what I wanted for Christmas, NOT !

The rest of the time around work I have spent my time trying to stay strong and fit by any means possible. This was normally consisted of cross country running, weights and long night out with energetic chalet girls. Well I figure all those activities will build the staying power that will hopefully hold me in good stead when or should I say if the snow ever does arrive so that we can start

to train and compete . Having not been able to train I decided to save some funds and not bother with the first Europa Cup of the season in Livigno. However as there has still been no change in conditions I now feel that I have to take a chance and attend the Andermatt camp as we do not know how many more comps will get called off this year. This event should mark the start of a very busy period for me as only a couple of days later I will make my debut on the European Freeride scene in The Verbier Ride. Then shortly after that I will have another Mogul event which will be a good training opportunity as it is only a Swiss cup. This will I hope give me a chance to try out a couple of new trick combinations that I have been developing over the last few weeks. So fingers crossed it will all go according to plan unlike the rest of the season so far.

I will be in touch again soon to keep you up to date with all proceedings as they unfold. Peace and elbow grease , respect ! Andy David, British Freestyle Ski Team.

Letter from America

Howdy partners, from four British guys in Steamboat Springs, CO. The season started off pretty bad but its getting back to what it's supposed to be. There are a few bare patches but that doesn't bother us as we only ski one run all day, the World Cup course on Voo Doo. Training is tough as we ski five days a week, with Monday and Thursday off. Tuesday and Friday evenings we pump some iron in the gym and on Wednesday evening we do some jump training on the trampoline. Three of the Brits Stuart Greenshields, Andy Bennett and Euan Stobie have been out here training since November to train hard for the competitions coming up. On the 14th December there was a Sprint Big Air competition in Steamboat with Andy and Stuart competing. Andy Bennett pulled a massive Misty 540 for his first jump, then a Tail grab 900 for his second finishing in a fantastic 2nd place winning \$1500 US dollars, which he was pretty pleased with. Stuart Greenshields was winding himself up for 180 and almost landed it. His second jump was a 720 mute grab

which this time he landed and finished in 3rd place winning \$1000 US dollars.

On the same day was the Suzuki Freestyle World Cup, where we cheered on three other British Athletes. Sam Temple, Joanne Bromfield and Simon Bates. Sam and Jo both did well and have also already qualified for the Olympics. Simon Bates pushed too hard and missed out on qualification, luckily he has a few more events to meet the tight qualifying standard. I was training in France with the Australian Team and finally arrived in Steamboat on New Years Eve after a frustrating trip to Sauze d'Oulx. I had travelled there for a Europa Cup but it was cancelled due to lack of snow - the nightmare season for snow continues in Europe. At the beginning of January Stuart and Andy headed down to Vail to compete in Moguls, Dual Moguls and Slopestyle. Both Andy and Stuart got some solid results in the bummps comps but the pick of the day was Andy's repeat 2nd place in Slopestyle (Big Air), whupping the Yanks at their own game and in their own back yard!

With a lot of training under our belts we were ready for the next competition at home in Steamboat springs over the weekend of 11-13 January. Training was great for everyone who was competing as the course was as soft as feather bead. Over night it was clear sky, so when we turned up at the course the next day it was as solid as bonfire toffee. All of a sudden where everyone had been flying down the course, caution was the name of the game, though it did get a little softer (More like Mcowans Highland Toffee) later on. I managed to keep Andy's challenge at bay as top Brit at 24th, Andy came in at 25th closely followed by Stuart and Euan Stobie, Stuart had absolutely steamed it with even the crowd shouting slow down. One day that boy will put in a full on run and win an event by miles! The next competition is in Monarch, Colorado where we aim to show our American cousins that they have a little bit of competition.

So until then.
Martin Nankoo, British Freestyle Ski Team"

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