

Martin Carr

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Subject: Bates makes IOC Olympic Standard

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FIS Freestyle Skiing World Cup - Men's Moguls

20/01/06 Lake Placid, New York, USA

Lone Brit Simon Bates today proved that he is still on the up by scoring not just his personal best, but the best British Mogul Skiing result in over 10 years. Rapidly changing weather conditions over the past few days made for an extremely tough course on Lake Placid's Whiteface Mountain but Bates proved he was up to it, with his huge spin and backflip propelling him into the top 30. "Once I pushed off at the start I just kept accelerating until I hit the top jump. That gave me the height to float out the spin but when I landed I was right on the edge of control. I got my balance back just in time for the second air so I was able to launch the backflip, then it was just a case of hitting the turbo until I crossed the line. Definitely my fastest run to date, and one of the most fun - when I crossed the line I just started laughing. I'm absolutely stoked to have broken into the top 30 and scored my first World Cup Standing Points," said Bates.

Not only did Bates score points on the World Cup Standing, but this result also meets the Olympic qualification criteria required by the International Olympic Committee and the International Ski Federation. And what makes this even more outstanding is that Bates receives no funding of any description, in fact his total support this winter amounts to 2 pairs of ski socks and a ferry crossing. However there's no celebrating yet as Snowsport GB have set a tougher target of placing 25th in the World Cup. Bates remarked "The IOC/FIS criteria for Freestyle is already harder than what the ski racers have to do, so I don't know why they are making it even harder for me to qualify. They also haven't told me when the deadline is so I'm left kind of shooting in the dark. I've made 29th without any funding or support, so if they helped me then I'd be making 25th easily. I guess my message to Snowsport GB is either let me go to the Olympics or start funding me, preferably both."

This sentiment was echoed by many of the other athletes and coaches in the World Cup. As Murray Cluff, coach with the Canadian Team commented, "Simon can ski well and he proved that today. This was a tough field on a tough

course but he overcame that and put down a good run. He should be in the Olympics and Britain should be proud to have him represent them".

The next World Cup is on Sunday 22nd January on the same course where Bates is hoping to improve even further on this result.