

2019 ENGLISH ALPINE CHAMPIONSHIPS

English Alpine Champs 2019 - Day 1

We're back in Bormio – where the brilliant sun blazed down from glassy blue sky and a bevy of young stars strutted their stuff on opening day at the English Alpine Championships. Over 440 athletes, not to mention their coaches, families and friends, have descended on the resort for six days of competition to savour. And after Saturday night's magical opening parade set the scene, the key actors had their say with three races on Stelvio and Stella Alpina.



Ambition Racing's Abi Bruce underlined her Dolomites pedigree with silver in the FIS Giant Slalom, an outstanding result in a competitive and experienced field. The former English giant slalom and alpine combined U18 champion, ninth racer out, conquered rough conditions on first run with a searing 50.57s, leading at the

flip. "I've built up confidence this season and that definitely showed in the first run, it was my best performance of the season," said the 18-year-old. "I've always performed in Bormio. It's always nice to lead a run, it would have been nice to win but I'm just really happy with how I've performed. "My mum is with me and my sister has been constantly messaging me today! It's always nice to come to British races, to know everyone and experience the atmosphere."

Fellow Ambition racer Sarah Woodward, FIS overall fourth last year, clocked 57.70s on second run to reach the rostrum with bronze. Fresh from the Winter Youth Olympics, Scot Owen Vinter began Bormio in assured fashion as the top Brit in the men's GS, seventh overall.



Speed was the watchword and youth was given its head on the beast that is Stelvio with a Super-G double header capturing the imagination of the Under-14s. Luca Carrick-Smith, 12, grabbed the title of top English racer and gold in both Super-G races with 49.35s in the first and 49.29 in the championship second. "It was fun. The sun hadn't come out on the first run, but it ruttled up more for the second and softened up so it was easier," said the British Ski Academy racer. "I felt I skied really well. This week, my main goal is to stay in! I sometimes ski out trying to win everything."

In the first race Alex Ogden, recently enrolled at Aiglon, pushed him close 1.10s up in the silver medal position with George Black bagging bronze. Black scooped a double with silver at the second time of asking, Sandown Park's Ben Aldridge-Bate impressing for bronze. The key for the youngsters was to find the right line on a tricky top phase of the course, with the closing stages sympathetic aside from a challenging final roll.

Ambition's Honor Bartlett roared back from a first-race DNF to claim championship gold, a 51.15s run sending her clear of the field. "It was a rollercoaster of a day," said Bartlett. "In the first run I just skied straight over a roll and missed the next gate. "My coaches had warned me so I knew what I had done wrong, it was great to go out and put it right."

British Ski Academy swept the board in the first run, with Madison Spence, Molly Butler and Anna Kamaly-Asl dominating the podium. Kamaly-Asl, a firm contender for the overall title, was behind Bartlett with silver in the second run where Evolution Racing's Charlotte Holmes secured bronze.

Sunday's action whet the appetite for the week ahead, starting on Monday with NJR GS on Stella Alpina, two Super-G races on Stelvio for the Under-16s and an U14/16 night parallel.

English Alpine Champs 2019 - Day 2

The Under-16's entered the fray and NJR on Stella Alpina meant plenty of medals as the English Alpine Championships continued to enthrall on day two. A spellbinding floodlight team parallel drew the curtain on a topsy-turvy day of racing across Stella Alpina and Stelvio with Team Ambition the big winners. Marc Telling's outfit claimed victory in the night parallel, with outstanding individual displays from Katie Stuart, Lois Jackson and Sophie Foster making it a day to remember for those in light blue. Ambition's A team, consisting of Foster, Arthur Bartlett, Ryan Pye, Gregor Munro and Kaylan Huisman took the spoils in three hours of head-to-head drama in the team event.



Stella was in all of her glory in the early morning, course-setters performing their magic on the powder to allow U18 and U21 racers to let go of the shackles in the giant slalom. Sarah Woodward made hay before the sun rose with an opening-run 53.75s, but the Hampshire racer sadly didn't finish her second run after a tantalising taste of her talent. It was instead

left to Ambition colleague Katie Stuart to take the honour of top Brit, recovering from the loss of her skis on opening day for overall 11th in a combined 1:53.68. "It's my fourth time in Bormio - I've always liked the hills here, it's always sunny and the atmosphere is great," said the Scot. "I think my target this week would be just to improve on previous years and keep totting up my points, getting closer to the leaders all the time."

Lois Jackson scooped the honour of first English in the under-18's with a particularly impressive first run that saw her swoop into sixth from bib 18. "I came into sixth and I was quite surprised by that. My second run I was skiing really well too," said the 17-year-old, closely followed by Ciorstaidh Struthers. "I came into the bottom and got caught on the back seat, that struck a lot of speed, but I was pleased. I think I just skied well – I think I was clean and went for it." Suffolk's Kath Bailey grabbed first English in the under-21's, where Elsa Powell-Dooley and Cerys Gorringe also excelled to finish second and third on the rostrum.

Among the men Leonidas Karavasili roared over Stella, skiing clean and underscoring his giant slalom reputation by claiming overall third in the NJR. The Team Evolution racer, first English at U21, upgraded an opening-day finish of 21st with times of 50.92s first up and then 51.44s. "I was just trying to ski clean because I made some costly mistakes on Sunday," he said. "I was just trying not to get in any trouble and I pulled it off."

Owen Vinter was Mr. Consistent in clocking 51.95s and 51.42s for 17th, first British at U18 with Tom Hudson first English in that age bracket. The 16's is a fiercely contested field this year, replete with GB racers and the standard of competition was commensurately high on Stelvio. British team-mates Elliott Bennett and Ted Slade led out the field with a one-two in the opening rubber, but the Championships race went to the impressive Scott Johns.



It was Foster who stole the show on Stelvio, however, 58.03s in the afternoon's Championship race representing a towering effort after disqualification in the morning race. "I'm so happy, I didn't think I could pull it out of the bag, with the nerves and worrying about whether I would crash again," said Foster. "Super-G is one of my favourites, with the adrenalin and the fear, but I love all the events so I'm so excited for the rest of the week."

English Alpine Champs 2019 - Day 3

Roles were reversed on day three in Bormio as senior racers took on Stelvio and ski lifts full of smiles climbed onto Stella Alpina in the shape of the U10s and U12s. Pure pace was also on the agenda as competition sponsors Vitalini ran a popular speed test on Stelvio, assessing the ability of youngsters to tuck and fly down the slope. Course conditions remained exceptional – a slight drop in temperature over the last 24 hours making for sumptuous skiing and a challenging setting on Stelvio testing the best.

And it wasn't just on our morning cappuccinos that the cream rose to the top, with Zak Vinter



imperious in the NJR slalom. A mere 48 hours after making his World Championship debut in Are, the Glasgow Ski Racing ace made a tough course look a lot easier than it was with 46.09s and 48.91s. The 20-year-old, a late entry, was 1.73s clear of the precocious Thomas Lardon and Cedric Pinturault, whose illustrious brother Alexis raced in the same field as Zak in

Sweden. Vinter said: “I really enjoy Bormio – it’s a good hill and it was by no means easy out there today. “I haven’t raced with Owen yet this season, either, so it’s good to see him ski and spend some time with the family.” Owen is enjoying an excellent week, building on a FIS top-ten on opening day and an NJR giant slalom gold with 48.88s first up followed by a DNF. On a remarkable day of racing when 60 of the 96-strong field failed to finish, Charles Rankin should be delighted by eighth overall and top Brit at U18 with 1:40.17s combined. Other assured displays came from Rory Farren, first English at U18 with two excellent runs, and Duncan Kuwall who posted exactly 50.51s on both occasions to place 11th.

Among the female field, Sarah Woodward reached the rostrum for the second day in succession, bagging slalom bronze. The 17-year-old’s first-run 47.99s saw her lead at the flip and the only other competitor to better that time was Marika Mascherona, who went on to claim silver. Woodward said: “It’s competitive between the British girls, it’s nice to be pushing each other on. It’s always someone to beat, or someone chasing you. “I thought my first run was really good but there was one error on the second. My coach is happy and I think I skied well today.” Lois Jackson backed up Monday’s NJR U18 giant slalom gold with silver and an overall top ten finish, while second-season FIS racer Shannon Potter roared into 12th.

Families flocked to Stella to watch the U12s and U10s strut their stuff, with goodie bags and hugs galore for the sport’s next generation. Team Evolution claimed both giant slalom gold medals on offer in the ladies races, Emily Magnani and Katie Saunders prevailing in the U10s and U12s respectively. Saunders said: “I was really happy – I got a good first run in the bag, I was a bit skiddy on the second but it was fun. “This is the second time I’ve been to Bormio. It’s a really nice place and slope is very good.”



Kandahar’s Joshua Sundin surged 0.96s clear of the field to earn U10 victory and there was a Carrick-Smith double with Freddy and Zak ending with gold and silver at U12. Sundin said: ““This is the first time I’ve been to Bormio. I like the piste and the snow is good. “I’ve been on snow quite a lot in the past, it’s not too soft, the snow, but it’s perfect.”

English Alpine Champs 2019 - Day 4

Every single skier at this year's English Alpine Championships was on piste thanks to a monumental effort from all involved in Bormio. There wasn't a piece of powder left unturned across Stelvio and Stella Alpina - whether you were Nicole Ritchie in her ninth FIS season or an under-10 transfixed by sights and sounds. And once again the weather didn't let anyone down, the week's first clouds flitting into the skyline but failing to at any stage obscure a sublime scene. Appropriately, it was the best day of the Championships so far for Brits in FIS racing.



The ladies led the charge and there a heartening half of the top ten in the slalom on Stelvio was comprised of British athletes of varying valences. Sarah Woodward should take out a lease on the podium after medalling for the third day in a row – and but for 0.09s it could have been gold despite an excellent combined 1:43.50s. The Ambition star was

closely followed by Scot Ritchie, returning to action after figuring in Sunday's giant slalom in fourth and her compatriot Katie Stuart in seventh. Shannon Potter, 17, hasn't stopped grinning all week and came ninth, while Lois Jackson is a growing authority at senior level and finished eighth for the second day in a row.

Zak Vinter remains without parallel in the men's field and a first-run 47.58s formed the backbone of a second slalom gold in as many days. It must be said the French contingent have skied superbly over the last few days with Elliott Piccard and Thomas Lardon adding to their medal haul. Angus Wills continues to find vindication for his technical adjustments and he was the next best Brit in 11th, with Owen Vinter the foremost U18 thanks to his 49.70s first up.

The ski lifts were groaning under the weight of hoards that made their way up to Stella Alpina for a packed day of racing across U10, U12, U14 and U16 age-groups. Sophie Foster appears a shoo-in for the overall U16 girls title and she sparkled to hold off Ambition team-mate Giselle Gorringer. And Ted Slade upgraded super-G bronze to GS



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gold thanks to a second-run charge, coming in at a mere 43.79s. There were a pair of races for the under-14s, Honor Bartlett blowing away the female field with 42.47s that was well over three seconds clear of her nearest rival Molly Butler, Anna Kamaly-Asl claiming the other.

Luca Carrick-Smith was given a run for his money in the second men's race, Adam Radwan coming within 0.21s of getting gold after the BSA star cruised to victory in the opening rubber. 'Rocket' Ryan Faber and Joshua Sundin once again went one-two in the 10's combi and there was a Carrick-Smith double in the U12 with Freddy and Zak getting to keep the trophy.

Evolution's Emily Magnani topped the podium in the sunshine in the 10's, her combined 1:15.76s comfortably ahead of the pack and Isabel Nowell claimed 12's glory.

English Alpine Champs 2019- Day 5

The sound of crisp, early-morning snow under booted foot was a fitting soundtrack as the English Alpine Championships reached its crunch on the fifth day of racing in Bormio. Stella Alpina has been a forest of humanity in recent days and that only continued with slalom for the U14s and U16s, final races offering the chance to make a lasting impression.



Giselle Gorringe swooped to conquer in the U16 ladies, a commanding first-run 45.42s when others struggled followed by 49.18s leaving her comfortable winner. Gorringe, who holds a Welsh passport, climbed onto the podium with super-G bronze on Monday and hasn't been deposed, upgrading to silver in GS and then gold on Thursday. The 15-year-old was a cavernous 3.19s ahead of Tilly Black in the silver medal spot, gaining ground in the overall stakes after Sophie Foster and Alexa Eliff both failed to finish first runs. "It's a perfect way to finish the week – I was super happy with today," said Gorringe. "It was a great fight from all of us. I think it was quite hot, everyone was a bit tired but there were so many good runs on that second course. "Everyone has their day, Sophie was unlucky to come out first run, but we're all happy with how it's turned out and we've all done well in our individual way."

And the men's slalom crown deservedly went to BSA's Ted Slade - head and shoulders above the rest of his age-group, aside from close chum Elliott Bennett, in every sense. Hearts were still in mouths when Slade slipped midway through his final run but the Devonian held on to pip Bennett by just over half a second in a combined 1:30.31s. "The schedule this week has suited me because the super-G isn't really my event but I've been able to build my momentum as it's gone on," he said. "I was a bit more nervous at the start of the GS and slalom but I'm over the moon to get wins in both."

The denouement to the U14s week saw both men's and ladies slalom races come to tight conclusions with both gold medallists enjoy less than a second cushion. BSA's Luca Carrick-Smith went three from three this week, winning in all disciplines to collect maximum points but he was given a stern test on Stella Alpina. Alex Ogden's best effort of 49.53s was 0.62s behind and Evolution's Kieran Woolley the same distance behind him in bronze.

Meanwhile the mercurial Honor Bartlett got the job done with 48.97s enough to hold off Evolution pair Charlotte Holmes and Olivia Howeson. "It's been a brilliant week. I've been pleased with my performances, I wasn't expecting much in the GS so that was pleasing," she said. "The weather's been so nice and I've enjoyed coming back to Bormio."



The FIS contingent were once again in action and it was a brilliant day for the Brits. Owen Vinter snaffled super-G gold and Sarah Woodward helped wrap up a home one-two with Abi Bruce in the ladies race. A memorable week of action concludes on Friday, when FIS super-G and U10/U12 parallel slalom will be followed by the closing presentation.

2019 English Alpine Championships Biggest Yet!

Hundreds of competitors and their families enjoyed another action-packed week of skiing in Bormio, Italy where they gathered last week for the 23rd English Alpine Championships.

Over 430 competitors took part, with skiers ranging from under-10s to senior athletes from England, Scotland and Wales.

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The conditions were fantastic (albeit a little hot at times!) and it was great to see so much talent hitting the slopes - this year was our biggest and best yet! To view all the race results please visit the Snowsport England Results.

Tim Fawke, CEO of Snowsport England, said: "It was fantastic to have the opportunity to return to Bormio for the 2019 English Alpine Championships and enjoy another incredible week of skiing out on the stunning Italian slopes!

"As expected, the week was jam-packed with action and talent from all ages which meant we saw some fantastic racing! We were incredibly lucky with the weather, and although it was a bit too hot at times, the snow conditions were perfect for skiing – and as always, the Italian hospitality was second to none."

The English Alpine Championships act as a gateway for future British alpine skiing stars and in the past have featured competitors such as World Cup alpine ski racer Dave Ryding (aka 'The Rocket').

Tim added: "This year was our biggest and best event yet. Congratulations to the British Ski Academy which took the trophy for overall academy and to Glasgow Ski Racing which won the award for overall club.

Dates for the 2020 championships should be announced at the beginning of March once our contract with Bormio for 2020 - 2022 has been finalised so watch this space!

Thank you to all the athletes who took part in the championships. Snowsport England would like to wish you all the best for the rest of the season and hopefully we will see you at next year's English Alpine Championships.

As always, a big thank you to our sponsors who very kindly supported us with the event:

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