

Sullivan misses podium by half second

By USSA

KITZBUEHEL, Austria – Andrew Weibrecht (Lake Placid, NY) and Marco Sullivan (Squaw Valley, CA) stepped up their game in the Olympics hunt, tying for 11th Friday in Kitzbuehel, 0.70 seconds behind winner Didier Cuche of Switzerland.

The pair missed the podium by little more than half a second in a tight field, and Bode Miller (Franconia, NH) made a slight mistake but finished 17th, just .11 seconds back.

“It was a good day today for the team,” said Men’s Head Coach Sasha Rearick. “Maybe not the best results, but the guys stepped it up with their skiing.”

Weibrecht’s finish ties a career best in super G set in Kitzbuehel last year, and it also equals his best result this season.

“It was solid, nothing fancy,” Weibrecht said. “A decent run. I just stuck to my game plan and skied well.”

It also marked the best result of the season for the veteran Sullivan, who was 10th in the super G and 6th in the downhill at Kitzbuehel in 2008.

“I had a good start number (2nd), and the track was in great shape,” Sullivan said. “I’ve been frustrated by a lot of crap going on, but I just stopped thinking about it and had a solid run.”

Despite the speedy time, Sullivan bobbled coming across a traverse at the bottom, leading him to struggle for a few gates.

"Looking at the splits, I think I lost about three-tenths there," he said. "Overall, it's OK. I'm just happy to be in the finish and have a decent run."

Ted Ligety (Park City, UT) was 24th, while Steven Nyman (Sundance, UT) landed just outside the points in 33rd.

"I was pleased to see him charging, balanced on his outside ski," Rearick said of Nyman.

Miller won Thursday's training run in the downhill and is coming off a victory last weekend in the super combined at Wengen, so expectations are high for Saturday's speed test.

The pressure is weighing on everybody, however, as skiers try to make an impression before the selection of the U.S. Olympic Team early next week. Friday was the final super G before the Olympic Team announcement.

"Again tomorrow in the downhill, the bottom section is critical coming across the traverse and down onto the Zielschuss and up top coming off the Steilhang which leads onto the long road," Sullivan said. "I've kind of blown that in training, so that's where I need to improve. I just need to make good, solid turns up top and have good aerodynamics in the middle."

Kitzbuehel, Austria, Jan. 22, Men's Super G

1. Didier Cuche, Switzerland, 1:17.94
2. Michael Walchhofer, Austria, 1:18.22
3. Georg Streitberger, Austria, 1:18.23
4. Andrej Jerman, Slovenia, 1:18.30
5. Erik Guay, Canada, 1:18.33

T-11. Andrew Weibrecht, Lake Placid, NY; and Marco Sullivan, Squaw Valley, CA, 1:18.64

17. Bode Miller, Franconia, NH, 1:18.75

24. Ted Ligety, Park City, UT, 1:19.12

33. Steven Nyman, Sundance, UT, 1:19.79

DNF “ Erik Fisher, Middleton, ID; and Scott Macartney, Crystal Mountain, WA