

Mancuso posts best World Cup slalom finish since 2008

By U.S. Ski Team

COURCHEVEL, France – Julia Mancuso of Squaw Valley produced her best Audi FIS Alpine World Cup slalom result since 2008, finishing 21st with teammate Resi Stiegler of Jackson Hole in 23rd. Austrian Marlies Schild captured the victory Tuesday as an extremely tricky first run course set claimed 23 racers including World Cup leader Lindsey Vonn of Vail and Germany's Maria Riesch.

Schild is now tied with Finn Tanja Poutiainen, who finished second, for the slalom points lead.

"It was like a survival first run and I definitely got pretty lucky," said Mancuso. "I wanted to ski solid, but I guess I needed to be a little faster. It will be good to have a little break now over Christmas and then get back into it. I'm very fired up with how things are going."

With the exception of the Aspen slalom, Mancuso has surged since landing double silver at the Vancouver Olympics, scoring top 25 finishes in every World Cup race this season including a super G third two weeks ago in Lake Louise, Alberta.

"It was a good day for Julia to take advantage," said technical Head Coach Trevor Wagner. "She's been training great slalom and just took it to the hill today."

For Stiegler, who waved to the booming crowd of thousands then wished a worldwide television audience "Merry Christmas" after crossing the finish line, it was another huge leap toward regaining her World Cup form. She was 25th in Aspen, her first race back since suffering a severely broken leg two races into the Olympic season. Prior to that, she had been sidelined much

of the two previous winters with an injury string that began in December 2007.

Official results, Audi FIS Alpine World Cup, Courchevel, France, Slalom

1. Marlies Schild, Austria, 1:34.95
2. Tanja Poutiainen, Finland, 1:35.73
3. Tina Maze, Slovenia, 1:36.93
4. Maria Pietilae-Holmner, Sweden, 1:37.20
5. Kathrin Zettel, Austria, 1:37.21

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21. Julia Mancuso, Squaw Valley, CA, 1:39.53
23. Resi Stiegler, Jackson Hole, WY, 1:39.62

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Did not qualify for 2nd run: Sarah Schleper (Vail, CO), Hailey Duke (Boise, ID)

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Did not finish 1st run: Lindsey Vonn (Vail, CO).