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## ALEX 'CHUMPY' PULLIN BACK ON TOP OF THE WORLD CUP PODIUM

As Australia's east coast sweltered, two-time World Champion Alex 'Chumpy' Pullin roared back onto the Snowboard Cross podium winning gold at the Feldberg World Cup in Germany yesterday in a dramatic race which saw fellow Aussie Jarryd Hughes claim the silver.

The one/two finish by Pullin and Hughes is a first for Australia on the World Cup Snowboard Cross tour.

Pullin's latest win marks seven World Cup victories in a successful career that has seen the 29-year-old remain consistently at or near the top of the Snowboard Cross world rankings since 2010.

Feldberg has solidified the momentum that Pullin says was building and feels "bloody awesome".

"I've had a couple of frustratingly close races this season. It's really nice to get a win."

The weekend had its ups and downs for Pullin, after he failed to qualify for the finals in the first World Cup on Saturday.

"That was a bummer but I learned a lot about the track."

The proven champion knew what he wanted after the disappointment of the day before.

"I came out pretty fired up. It was always going to be a long day and it was really important to put down a fast run in the in the heat."

So fast, that Pullin was the fastest qualifier by almost half a second on a 36 second track.

"To be able to pull that sort of margin gave me a boost. I raced a final in that first heat. To turn Saturday's bad race day to a good one the next day was important to me. I knew I had the potential and I had to prove it to myself."

The strong field included the who's who of Men's Snowboard Cross including the 2014 Sochi gold medallist, Pierre Vaultier (France) and current world ranked number one Omar Visitin (Italy).

"Racing is incredibly close at the moment. One of the best things was that I got to race all the best guys and beat the World Cup leader not once but twice."

“I wouldn’t have wanted to be anyone else today when I was in the gate. Winning was exactly what I wanted. To turn it around after yesterday makes me really happy.”

“The best rider is the one who can adapt – even if the course is not in their favour,” Pullin added.

Also adapting to the course was Jarryd Hughes, who took the silver but is no stranger to the podium having won a World Cup four years ago at just 17 and took gold in the X Games in 2016.

Hughes says his racing style is to focus on what he’s doing and to trust his instincts.

Those instincts paid off in Feldberg when he narrowly made it through to the semi-finals in a photo finish and then fought hard to make it to the big final.

“I go in without a set plan and let what I want to do take over. There’s a lot of intensity at the start gate and it’s the people who best deal with it that continue on,” Hughes said.

“It was a fun race. I was really struggling with the start and was always in fourth in turn two so it made for a fun day of racing for me and to walk away with two finals is just a cherry on top,” Hughes said.

Featuring in the top eight was another Aussie, Adam Lambert who, in his first World Cup event, won his heat and quarter final but had to settle for the small final, where he finished 7<sup>th</sup> overall. Cam Bolton placed 21<sup>st</sup> and Matt Thomas 29<sup>th</sup>.

In the Ladies Snowboard Cross, with two victories already this season, Belle Brockhoff, was unlucky not to medal, having made it to the final four – but she still holds the overall world number one ranking.

The fifth Snowboard Cross World Cup will be held in Kazan, Russia from 24 to 26 February.

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