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WORLD CHAMPION BRITT COX WINS SEASON OPENER IN RUKA

MOGUL SKIING: 2017 World Champion mogul skier Britt Cox has picked up right where she left off, winning gold in the 2017/18 World Cup season opener in Ruka overnight.

On the same mountain she won her first World Cup a year ago, Cox topped the qualification round with a score of 77.47, and again in the first final with a score of 82.24, before securing the victory in the six-woman Super Final with a score of 80.32.

The 2017 Crystal Globe winner was ecstatic to be on top of the podium for the opening event of the Winter Olympic qualification period.

“Oh, it feels awesome to put that result down first event of the season,” the 23-year-old said.

“I got my first ever World Cup here at Ruka a year ago, so taking the win feels awesome.

“And it being an Olympic season it’s obviously very exciting, that’s the pinnacle event of the season and everyone’s motivated.”

After Cox’s top challenger and world number two, Frenchman Perrine Lafont, skied out of her line in the Super Final costing her a podium spot, Canada’s Audrey Robichaud won silver on 77.73 and Russia’s Marika Pertakhiya rounded out the podium on 74.59.

The Australian Mogul Skiing Team have been in Ruka for the past couple of weeks on a pre-competition training camp, but Cox said today’s race conditions were not what they were expecting.

“Fresh snow overnight meant that the course was soft which was a lot a lot of fun, [but] we had a lot of wind and the course was quite different to what we’ve been training on.

“I made the fine tuning and tweaks I needed to run-to-run and it ended up working well for me in the end.”

The majority of the Australian female mogul skiing contingent finished in the top-half of the field, with Jakara Anthony the next best place female, placing 12th in the first final with a score of 73.50.

Madii Himbury just missed a spot on the 16-woman final, finishing 17th with 69.42. Claudia Gueli finished 21st, Sochi Olympian Taylah O’Neill was 23rd and Krystle Yin placed 25th. Sophie Ash unfortunately crashed out in her first run and did not finish.

It was a bumpy start for the Australia’s male mogul skiers, with no one making it past the qualification rounds. Rohan Chapman-Davies was the top placed Aussie in 43rd, followed by Cooper

Woods-Topalovic in 44th and Matt Graham in 46th. James Matheson unfortunately crashed in qualification and did not finish.

“Today didn’t go as I planned,” Sochi Olympian Graham said after the event. “I crashed my second jump after getting a little out of control in the middle section of the course.

“The qualifications were pretty wild in the men’s field as the course deteriorated during the training session which made a lot of competitors make mistakes.

“Lucky for me, this wasn’t the big show this season so I can learn from today and make some changes moving forward.”

World Number one Mikael Kingsbury held true to form to top the men’s event, followed by the Kazakhstan duo of Dmitriy Reikherd and Pavel Kolmakov in second and third respectively.

The Australian team now make their way to China for the Thaiwoo World Cup kicking off on the 16th of December.