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DANIELLE SCOTT TAKES WORLD CUP SILVER AND NUMBER ONE IN THE WORLD AS LYDIA MAKES SUCCESSFUL RETURN

Being first to jump in the Aerial Skiing World Cup final in Lake Placid didn't phase Danielle Scott who opened up the medal round with a smooth back double full full, scoring 92 points, taking silver and moving into outright World number one after an exciting day's competition for all the Australians.

Scott just made it into the top six after Final 1 and needed to 'reset' to make it to the podium.

"It was a close call to make the final," Scott said. "All week we had funny training and we train to 'reset' after each phase of the event. I thought – 'this is it – do what I want to do'."

"I was really happy with my jump in the Super Final and think it's one of the best double full fulls I've done."

Being the world number one has been a goal for the Sydney-sider.

"I had two goals going into this World Cup. To make the top six and keep the yellow bib – so I'm excited that that has been the result today," she said from Lake Placid.

The Flying Kangaroos Aerial Team showed their combined strength early in the day when Dave Morris and all four women Danielle Scott, Lydia Lassila, Laura Peel and Samantha Wells qualified into the top 12 Final, initially led by **an improved Samantha Wells** who scored 89.14 and led the 27-strong field.

Qualifying second behind Wells was Danielle Scott.

Jumping for the top six, Wells was not able to replicate the landing form from the qualifying round and had to settle for 12th but the improvement keeps happening she said.

"A number of people have commented to me here about how much better I am jumping. It shows that the feedback I get from our coaches is exactly what the judges are rewarding me for," Wells said.

"Because of a cold during the week, I only managed four jumps on site – so despite the 'punch front' landing in the Final it was a pretty good result. Coming first in the qualifying round definitely is confidence building."

All eyes were on Lydia Lassila's return to competition and they were not disappointed as the dual Olympic medallist jumped her way into the top 12 with a back, full, full and 86.31 points, pumped

her fists into the air after a smooth landing and deservedly looked pleased with her first competitive jump in three years.

Lassila's attention to detail, air, form and execution were all on display as if she had never been away, nor had a second child. Her jump in Final 1 was a carbon copy of the first for an almost identical score of 86.62, resulting in 3rd and a place in the top six to jump for a medal.

A fairy-tale podium finish was not on the cards after the landing in the Super Final went "over the handle bars" on the landing of her back double full full, leaving Lydia in 6th place overall.

"I'm happy I did enough to make the super final, but not super excited. I overstretched in the Super Final. It's just a little error – not reading the conditions well enough, but I'm happy with the quality and slowly building," Lydia said.

"It was really good that all four of us made it to Final 1 and then had three Aussies in the Super Final. We have two more weeks in Lake Placid to be able to get in a good training block and I will get more mileage before Deer Valley."

Quietly moving up the ladder with each World Cup is Laura Peel, who continues to strengthen and showed everyone today why, when she qualified 9th (81.27), then came second in Final 1 scoring 87.25 for the same jump behind eventual winner Ashley Caldwell (102.22).

"I definitely did a better job than in China," Laura said of her final 5th placing. "My goal was to make the Super Final. I'm pretty good with my 'full' and should have landed it. However, I'm getting there and still have some time."

Australia's lone male Aerial skier at an elite level, Dave Morris is a happy man after his third World Cup for the season.

His run to the Super Final started with a fourth in the qualifying, then solid Final 1 where he came in fifth with 110.18 points. The Super Final is where Morris went for the harder quad twist that landed him in sixth overall after a saved landing.

"I'm very happy with today's result after adding the first quad twist for this season – particularly because I'd only done one in practise," Morris said.

"In the Super Final I went a little too big (in height and flip rotation), but I have to say that all that working out in the off season paid off with a less than ideal landing which I was able to save just.

"I will have a few sore muscles but all-in-all it's good and couple of lessons have been learned."

The Flying Kangaroos will train in Lake Placid for two weeks before heading to the fourth World Cup this season at Deer Valley on February 3.

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