

## OLYMPIC TEST EVENT SECURES FIFTH GOLD MEDAL FOR COX

Britt Cox has continued her dominant World Cup season by winning her fifth World Cup gold medal at the home of the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympic Games.

Her 81.66 point final round victory was made more significant as the competition doubled as the official Test Event for next year's Games which 22-year-old Cox is hoping will be her third Olympic appearance.

Within minutes of Cox being awarded her gold medal at Bokwang Park last night, two other Australian female winter sport athletes stood upon the dais on the other side of the world.

Sami Kennedy-Sim won her first ever career medal when she raced to silver at the first of two events at the Idre Fjall Ski Cross World Cup in Sweden, while Belle Brockhoff claimed her fourth podium finish of the season, winning snowboard cross silver in Feldberg, Germany.

For Cox, her first time racing in Asia could not have been more picture perfect.

She topped both the qualifying round (81.83) and the first final (82.71) before tying the competition off in a neat package with an unwavering performance in the super final.

"I love having the day where it's nice and tidy," Cox said after the medal ceremony.

"I am really stoked to have put down three consistent runs and to do the things that I wanted to do from my video yesterday.

"I'm absolutely ecstatic to finish today on top."

Last night's victory adds to her collection of silverware off the back of gold in the dual moguls and bronze in the moguls at the Deer Valley World Cup last weekend in Utah.

The Victorian athlete has now medaled at six of the seven events this season, with two World Cups remaining in February and the World Championships in Sierra Nevada, Spain in March.

"I am really happy with this season. Obviously it has been my best to date, and I think really that I am just doing the skiing that I've been wanting to do for a long time now.

"To be successful consistently you have to be excellent at the basics, and from working on that over the years, that is now paying off for me in my competition."

Silver and bronze in the women's event went to Canadian skiers Justine Dufour-Lapointe and Andi Naude with scores of 78.35 and 78.16 respectively. Cox keeps the number one world cup series ranking and increases her lead for the end-of-season title to 171 points over Dufour-Lapointe.

Teammate Matt Graham was the only other Australian to qualify for the finals on the Olympic track. His score of 82.25 in the men's super final secured Graham sixth place overall.

The 22-year-old felt he put down a solid run, but was disappointed he didn't quite make it onto the podium.

"Overall I was pretty happy with how I skied, I felt pretty good on the course," Graham said.

"I would have liked to have been a few spots higher, so next week I'll just fix a few things up and put down some cleaner runs and hopefully the results will come through."

Both Cox and Graham said they relished their first taste of the Olympic venue.

"It's a plain vanilla course," Cox said.

"There is nothing really out of the ordinary with it, which all the athletes love because it means that you're not spending time trying to figure out the course; you're just skiing the run the best you can and having a lot of fun out there."

"The course is really awesome and it's a really cool stadium," added Graham.

"I feel very comfortable on the course and around the village here, so pretty keen to get back here in 12 months-time."

While the Australians celebrated in Korea, there were similar celebrations in Sweden and Germany.

Sami Kennedy-Sim was stoked with her career-best silver medal in Sweden.

"Today has been an awesome day," the 28-year-old said. "This has been my first podium.

"Usually my starts are my strength but on this track that is not the case. I skied the fast and technical track really well and the feeling of all the hard work that I have put in, and that my support team have put in, paying off is fantastic!"

Kennedy-Sim will hope to repeat her medal winning form at the second Idre Fjall World Cup this evening.

"Now that I have this under my belt I am so ready to repeat it. My plan is to get some good recovery done, I will review today, reset and try again tomorrow," she said after her performance last night.

Like Kennedy-Sim, Belle Brockhoff's silver medal celebrations will be short lived as she is also down to compete in the World Cup double this weekend.

Brockhoff will hope to repeat last night's performance when she wears the yellow world number one leader's bib in the second event in Felberg this evening.

## **Further Information:**

Belinda Noonan, OWIA

<u>Belinda.noonan@owia.org</u>

0411 157 063

Andrew.pattison, OWIA

Andrew.pattison@owia.org
0411 281 372