



BROCKHOFF CONFIDENT DESPITE KNEE INJURY

After three World Cup victories in 12 months, Belle Brockhoff's best season of her career has ended abruptly because of a serious knee injury.

The Sochi Olympian crashed while testing the World Championships course in Sierra Nevada, Spain.

"I didn't think much of it at the time, it felt like another crash."

However, after tests and a quick realisation that she lacked the movement to turn her board, Brockhoff decided to withdraw from the 2017 World Championships.

An MRI scan later revealed, the worst result, she had torn her ACL apart.

Australia's top female boardercross rider miscalculated a feature, smashing her into the snow.

"I didn't have the speed for it when I was approaching it," Brockhoff said.

"So I made a different move which slammed me onto the up ramp of a roller and spat me upside down off the back of it."

She said everything else felt fine, but her knee was sore and she anticipated a decent sprain or at worst bone bruising.

"I've had a lot of issues with my knee in the past and I believe it has been slowly tearing bit by bit," said Brockhoff who has never had a season ending injury before.

"This is my first injury that has made me pull out from the season.

"All my other seasons have been consistently healthy and climbing up the ranks."

But the 24-year-old won't let a torn ACL keep her from making her second Olympic appearance, and her positive attitude may be her ticket to success in 2018 in PyeongChang.

"Yeah look it sucks but it doesn't," she said.

"There's a positive side coming out of the season with no World Champ title or as the tour leader.

"It means I have nothing coming into PyeongChang and I'll be hunting for it.

"I'll also be a lot stronger physically - with a new knee - and mentally," said Brockhoff who is still adjusting to being home on Australian soil three weeks earlier than anticipated.

The Olympic Winter Institute Scholarship holder now faces a solid nine-month recovery period but is thankful the injury happened when it did.

"I'm excited for this process. I'm not worried or nervous.

"I believe this knee injury is going to put me in a better path than before and I am already looking forward to next season to kick off."

Helping her through the up and downs of being an elite athlete is fellow snowboard cross rider and Sochi Olympian Alex 'Chumpy' Pullin.

"We get closer each year. We have a good friendship going on in the team and it just makes snowboard that much more fun," said Brockhoff who often turns to the two-time World Championships title holder for tips and advice.

"It's also really cool that we have been able to share some pretty sweet success in the last few years together too."

Currently sitting in the number 2 spot in the FIS world rankings, Brockhoff understands this latest injury will cost her the number one ranking, but is determined to put that out of her mind.

"It's a bit emotionally confusing if I think too much about the injury.

"I'll probably drop down to rank 3 like last year but if I did do the last World Cup and did well then I probably would have gotten back up to the number 1 spot."

Despite this bump on the road to PyeongChang 2018, Brockhoff knows she sits amongst the world's best snowboard cross athletes.

"That gives me confidence in knowing I can be the best. It was just a mix of bad and good timing for the knee injury."

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