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MATT GRAHAM BOUNCES BACK ~~FROM RUKA~~ TO CLAIM SILVER IN THAIWOO

Matt Graham has claimed silver in the second Mogul Skiing World Cup of the season at China's Thaiwoo resort, a location earmarked to host several medal events in the 2022 Olympic Games.

It's the second time the 23-year-old has stepped up onto the podium at Thaiwoo in less than twelve months, claiming bronze at the resort in February this year.

After his 11th World Cup podium finish, the Sochi Olympian said that he was "really happy to bounce back and put a couple of good runs down" on Thursday after a bumpy start to the season in Ruka, Finland.

"To get back up on the podium is definitely something I really wanted and I'm very happy," he said.

"I didn't start off the season the way I wanted to in Ruka so I've been itching to get back into the start gate fort he past two weeks and today didn't go exactly the way I wanted to. The qualification was pretty rusty and training this morning was quite difficult.

"The way I came out and handled myself in the finals and put down two solid final runs – you can't ask for too much more than that after how I was skiing this morning."

Coming in first, World Number One Mikael Kingsbruy won gold for the third time at the Chinese resort while American Troy Murphy earned Bronze.

With no less than 50 days until the PyeongChang Winter Games, Graham said that his main goal is to "hopefully walk away with many more podiums this season and try and peak at the Games".

"There's still a long way to go, today's 50 days out to the Olympics so that means it's coming up quick and there's still al ot of work I need to do and a lot of screws and bolts that I need to tighten between now and Pyeongchang," he said.

"I've just got to maximise every day and try and put run after run down."

NSWIS athletes Rohan Chapman-Davies and James Matheson also made impressive comebacks in Thaiwoo after no Aussie men made it past qualifications in Ruka.

Matheson finished in the top 10 taking 7th place in a big personal best, while Chapman-Davies was also a PB in ranked 13th and rookie Cooper Woods-Topalovic finished inside the top 30 for the first time.29th.

As the only Australian woman to make it through to the finals on Thursday, Jakara Anthony finished 14th and is itching for Day 2 of the competition.

“It was pretty good, it was nice to have made finals at the first two events,” she said.

“I’m skiing pretty consistently at the moment which is good for the start of the season. We’ve got an early start tomorrow but hopefully I can do something similar, maybe even something a little bit better than today.”

World Champion Britt Cox made an uncharacteristic mistake at the bottom of the course and missed finals action in 25th place.

Unable to also secure a spot in the 16-woman final, Claudia Gueli finished 19th, ~~Britt Cox 25th~~ and Madii Himbury, ~~who wasn’t far behind, finished~~ 26th.

Sochi Olympian Taylah O’Neill finished 31st while 21-year-old Sophie Ash was 32nd and unfortunately, Krystle Yin did not finish.

Day Two of the World Cup kicks off on Friday before the Aussies get a well deserved break ahead of their next competition in Calgary, Canada early in 2018.

“I’m pretty keen to kick these boots off and go inside, lay down – I’m pretty sore and tired,” Graham said.

“Tomorrow’s a new day, I’ll get as much rest as I can tonight and muster up as much energy as I can for tomorrow and put my heart and soul into it. [Then] we’ve got a little Christmas break coming up so that’ll be nice.”

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