

Travelling through the Alps



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Hello! Sorry I have been away for a few weeks – but now that means I just have that much more to write about! Most places over here haven't caught onto the whole "internet" phenomenon!

It has been a pretty busy couple of weeks. I have now been in Europe for a month and I'm really not sure where the time has gone. When I last wrote the team had just left home and was headed to a few Giant Slalom races. That feels like quite a while ago. The GS races in Maribor, Slovenia went quite well, but after that I was then ready to get back on my speed skis and do a little downhill and super G!

The next stop on the speed circuit was Cortina D'Ampezzo. When we arrived it was dumping, and it didn't let up. There were two training runs planned followed by one downhill race on the Saturday as well as super G races on Friday and Sunday. Both downhill training runs were cancelled, resulting in a slight schedule change. Organizers postponed Friday's super G race and moved a training run to that day. On Thursday, when our training run was cancelled because it was snowing even harder than the previous day, we felt that it was time again — just like in Aspen — to get out for a little free ski! We ventured out on our little slalom skis and decided to explore a little. Leading the way was our trusty guide, Rob Boyd, with our team doctor following!

On our first run we quickly ventured into the trees, but there hadn't been much snow prior to that week so it was a little tricky. Larisa Yurkiw, the doctor, and myself got a little separated from the group partway down. We hiked a little, got a few turns and eventually found our way back to the ski lift where we skied right into two police officers. We basically skied right to their feet. Now, do you think if we had known it wasn't legal to ski in the trees in Italy that we would have skied right into them? Nope!

They quickly asked us for our documents, because I always ski with my passport on me, and then told us to stay put. Luckily the rest of the group was waiting in the lift line for us.

Our Sud-Tiroler coach Heinz-Peter came over to our rescue. He spoke with the officers for us and eventually they let us go with a slap on the wrist. Phew! That let us go off on the next run. We started at the top and made our way right to the very bottom. It was knee-deep powder and I was choking on it — absolutely wonderful. Oh, I think I forgot to mention that the whole run was also in the trees, but this time we didn't get caught.

The races went quite well in Cortina; Emily Brydon podiumed in the downhill on Saturday and both super G races got underway. I finished in the top 6 everyday with a fifth place finish on the final day. The whole team was having a great time and the powder skiing at the beginning of the weekend really set the tone. It was great.

While we were in Cortina, the men were racing the classic Hannenkam in Kitzbuhel. Whistler's Robbie Dixon made his first top 30 finish in super G and decided to start things off with a sixth place

– not too bad! We were very excited for him. This past weekend in Chamonix he also made his first top 30 finish in downhill, which is just amazing for a rookie.

My brother had a bit of a fan club over for a week to watch both the Kitzbuhel slalom and the classic Schladming night slalom. And, whadaya know, I was able to squeeze in a trip to Schladming to join in the festivities. There were 12 of them in total, all from the Vancouver and Whistler area, that Michael and I and had grown up skiing with. I had such a blast. January can be a long month over here so it was really nice to see some friendly faces.

We had a great time, and enjoyed seeing how crazy the Austrian fans are. Wow!

This week I am in St Moritz where we will be racing a downhill and super G this weekend. We were already here back in December when events in Val D'Isere France were cancelled. We will be running a different track than before which is great because I didn't really enjoy the other one! In another few weeks the whole circus will be in Whistler. See you then!