



DAVID AND CLAUDIA HARDING
FOUNDATION

Bethany Widdup
Season 2015/16

Update: 4



I would like to begin by wishing you a Happy New Year and I hope that you have had a Happy Christmas. Thank you for your support last year and hope that this coming year will be a successful one, I will work my hardest to ensure that I give myself the best opportunity to do this.

Over the past few weeks I have been very lucky to have gained a new sponsor, Burnt Custard. Like Sock Mine, Burnt Custard are a British Company wanting to support homegrown athletes. For the remainder of the season I will be wearing Burnt Custard thermals, sunglasses, goggles and clothing off the hill. I am really looking forward to working alongside them to try and get them more known within the alpine skiing world. If you would like to have a look at their products and a bit more about the company please follow the attached link:

www.burntcustardclothing.co.uk

Since my last report we have had no snowfall and just increasingly warm weather for the past month. This is obviously not boding very well for the snow conditions for training and racing, causing many races to have been cancelled. Although the conditions have not been so good, we have again managed to make the best out of a bad situation by looking carefully at which races would not be cancelled and training on man made snow. For me it has been quite a frustrating time in terms of my performance in races, I have struggled to convert what I have been doing in training into a race situation. Although I haven't been entirely happy with my performances, on the whole I have had some very encouraging parts/turns/runs. It is important for me to build on these positives and learn from the mistakes that I have made to make sure that each race is better and closer to what I am capable of doing.





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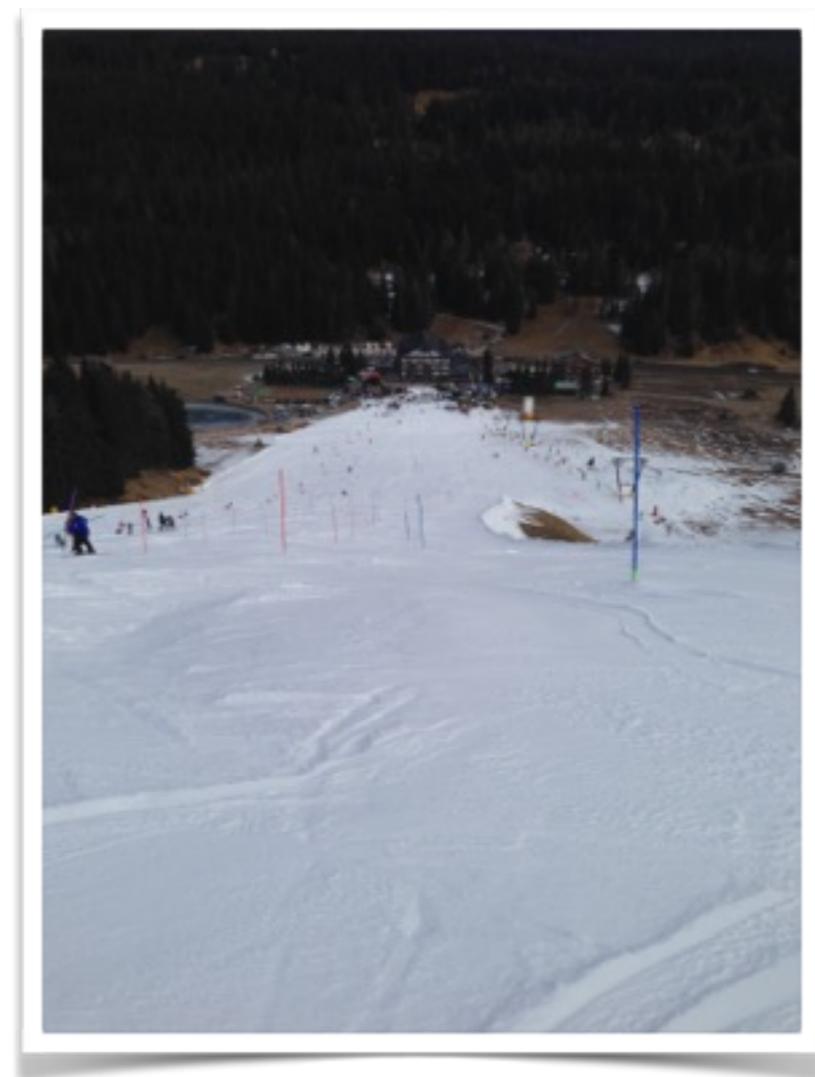
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Due to the lack of snow, the majority races have been slalom (most resorts don't want racers to ruin the pistes for their peak holiday time). It was really good to be back racing slalom, as this is my preferred discipline and I always look forward to getting back into the racing. At the moment I haven't managed to put together two runs in a race that I have been entirely happy with where I know that I have performed to my potential, however I have had some encouraging results even with a few mistakes, I had a 4th and a 9th in a NJR (National Junior Race) in Italy.



In terms of giant slalom (GS), we have not been able to race this very much at all. However just before the Christmas break we had two GS races in Leogang (our home races). I have been looking forward to racing some GS as I feel I have made some big improvements in training and was interested to see how I would do in a race situation. On the first of the two days, unfortunately I didn't read a roll/change in terrain right and ended up in the air and then missed the following gate. However on the second day, determined to have a good last day before heading home for Christmas, I managed to ski two runs which were not perfect by a long way but were a good starting point to build on. My skiing resulted in me coming from a start number of 26 and finishing 10th place and with a personal best result. I think it was important for me to end on a high so I could really enjoy the Christmas break and then be raring to come back out and get training.





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After a short break at home recharging my batteries, doing some university assignments and spending time with my family, I then travelled back out to Austria to start the New Year. I had a few days training followed by four days of British run races.

For me the races were a mixed bag of results, it turned out that the field was of a very high standard. This is something which I thrive upon as I can really see how close I can get to the girls who are that one or two steps further ahead. In the first Slalom I managed to have two runs where I skied the best that I have done so far this season. Although still not as good as it was previously in summer, I was very happy to see some form returning in a race situation. Unfortunately in the second Slalom I crashed although I used the rest of the day wisely by spending time free skiing and working on technique outside of the course.

The results from the Giant Slalom were pretty similar to that of the Slalom. On the first day I didn't manage to put two good runs together resulting in being too far off the winner. However the second day was a completely different story although my first run wasn't necessarily so good, I managed to put myself into 30th place which therefore meant I would be the first down the second run course. I knew that I would have to take advantage of an early start number as the snow was quite soft therefore for the faster girls it would get rutted up. Knowing this I just tried to take the straightest/fastest line I possibly could knowing that there would be no rutt in the way. Myself and my coach were very happy with my skiing and this actually resulted in my scoring a personal best of 53.03 a whole 10 points lower than my current points.





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By having a productive and successful few days in Reiteralm, this has really spurred me on to get my head down, keep working hard because I know that I am now capable of reducing my points lower and lower.

The alpine season is a very long season and what may not be working in December/January may well start to work really well at the end of the season as it becomes second nature. I will be travelling back to Reiteralm this weekend to compete in some more GS races followed by travelling to Switzerland for the Welsh Championships. Following on from here we will then have a training block of a few weeks, which of course will be beneficial for tweaking things to make improvements.

I will continue to work hard to make sure that I end the season happy with my progress but also know that I couldn't have put in any more effort.

