

SHAKLEE HELPS FUEL U.S FREESTYLE SKI TEAM

Scott Higgins, Team Physiologist, U.S. Freestyle Ski Team

It isn't easy battling for a podium spot (top three) on the FIS Freestyle Skiing World Cup when finishes are determined by mere tenths of points. When athletes must ski down a course on a twenty-eight degree pitch in 23-24 seconds for men and 28-30 seconds for women, everything counts! All competitors get one run to let it all hang out. Each athlete must have a run good enough to progress to finals which is composed of the top twelve competitors from preliminary runs held early on race morning. At this point, finals, it is all or nothing to make the podium! Take a look at the picture on the left and you will have a small idea of what it is like to stare down the Blackcomb, B.C mogul course; home to next year's World Freestyle Championships. Did I mention the bumps are three to four feet tall?



To help gain an edge over the tough international competition, various members of the USFST (United States Freestyle Ski Team) mogul team sought private support from Shaklee Coordinators for the 1999-2000 season. Thanks to the vision of Senior Master Coordinator Bob Ferguson various Shaklee leaders have secured some big time skiing names.

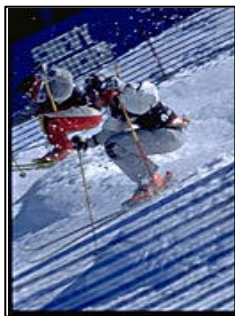
Evan Dybvig a 1998 Olympian hailing from Tumbidge, Vermont and nicknamed the "Vermonster" is part of the SASP (Shaklee Athlete Support Program) program sponsored by Senior Master Coordinator, George Shaw. Another great name Caleb "Mogul" Martin, Telluride, Colorado, and presently ranked third in the World is part of the SASP has been sponsored by Senior Master Coordinator Peter Christoff.

Additionally, upcoming World Cups stars Ryan Riley, Steamboat Springs, Colorado, sponsored by the Fergusons and Toby Dawson, Vail, Colorado, sponsored by Senior Master Coordinators Linda and Donald Causey, are also with the program. Serious about maintaining his longevity and prowess in the sport of mogul skiing, dual mogul specialist and Freestyle World Cup veteran Garth Hager, Bothell Washington and Justine Van Houte, Telluride, Colorado, sponsored by Senior Master Coordinators Frank and Cindy Frey are also making the Shaklee Sports Nutrition line an integral part of their training and competitive program.

The sport of Freestyle is composed of mogul and inverted aerial skiing. The mogul competitions are run in two formats, a singles competition, and dual competition. Skiers compete both on a NorAm or North American (Development) and World Cup Level. The toughest and most elite skiers compete on the FIS Freestyle World Cup. The mogul events require each athlete to ski a 220m course completing two jumps of varying difficulty. Each athlete is judged on overall time i.e., how fast each completes the course, their turns-how technically proficient each turn was, and the height, distance, and degree of difficulty of each jump or "air".

Thus the judging is broken down as follows 50% form/body position or turns, 25% air, and 25% speed. Ryan Riley (Right) illustrates perfect position during a "Heli-Iron Cross" air maneuver in competition. The Duals competition is predominantly a race to the bottom of the course. However competitors are still scored by the single standards.





Garth Hager (lower left) shows us how to tear a duals course. Garth a.k.a. “G-Money”, sponsored by Senior Key Coordinator Dan Henderson, had a big finish last week at the Sprint Bumps and Jumps Series finishing second in the duals format event against a stacked international field.

Why is sports nutrition so important and why are some members of the U.S.F.S.T mogul team using Shaklee? When an athlete is racing at an elite level, it’s all about fine-tuning. A solid well-planned sports nutrition program is part of the tuning process. Let’s take the area of post exercise recovery for the SASP team.

During the season with on-snow and physical conditioning training volumes high, it is essential; absolutely critical, that athletes maximize the recovery time between all facets of training and competition. The faster an athlete can promote inter and intra workout/competition recovery, the harder and more consistent can training and performance can be on a daily basis.

Moguls, a.k.a. the “motor cross” of skiing is no easy task on the lightest training days. Athletes regularly take 8-10 runs daily in pre-competition training. The high impact of hitting four-foot bumps coupled with the intense strength demands and forces off the snow easily create physiological havoc on the fittest skiers. Additionally this does not account for the twenty- hour travel days that sometimes take place prior to the first day of official training. The repeated depletion of muscle glycogen stores and hydration can be even bigger competitors than the field if athletes are not following a customized nutritional strategy geared toward optimizing performance day to day and training session to training session.

“It’s Physique time”, stated Evan Dybvig after a recent gym session at the Winterstart World Cup in Whistler, B.C. The importance of that first twenty-minute window to optimize recovery continues to drive Evan and other members to keep pace with an aggressive workout to workout strategy using Shaklee products; most important of which is Physique. That’s the kind of attitude and team accountability which will help keep placing Evan Dybvig (below left) and others on the World Cup podium as in the opener in Tandadalden, Sweden November 27^{T.H.}...

Make no mistake, just like in competition, these guys have to work to make recovery happen. Many times a mogul course is high up on the mountain or a substantial distance from the lodging. It may take thirty to forty-five minutes for an athlete to get from the course to the bottom of the mountain with multiple chairs or gondolas. This is not an ideal situation for recovery. The time it takes an athlete to download off the mountain or to travel back to the hotel is often too late.

Our strategy to optimize recovery is to bring Physique pre-mixed and ready to drink immediately after athlete finishes training and competition. When Caleb Martin takes his physique prior to the download, he is ensuring his body gets what it needs immediately so he can perform at his best the next day or later in the evening during a in-season conditioning session. The team members have also been successful at implementing other Shaklee’s products like Performance in a variety of competitive and training situations. We’ll talk more about those and what’s it’s like to travel with the U.S. team in future updates.

Special thanks to Bob Ferguson again for his vision, and the Shaklee Leaders supporting the U.S. freestyle Skiers in their pursuit of excellence. Check out the US Ski Team at www.USSA.org!

