



Andrew Young first from left

Saturday 16 February 2008 was a particularly eventful date for British Cross Country Ski racing. The British Nordic Development Squad members racing for their Austrian Club, St Martin Bei Lofer showed a strong performance in the individual time trial race in free technique, ie skating, at the Austrian National Youth Cross Country Ski Championships.

Excellent performances across the board were topped by the first place achieved by Andrew Young in the Youth Category - Jugend 1. Andrew had posted a very good time in his qualifying sprint race on Thursday 14 February, and the Austrian organisation had marked him as favourite to win the individual time trial, or Einzellauf. If the intention was to add pressure it was to no avail. Andrew produced the performance of his career, and improved on his second place in last year's competition. Andrew's winning margin of 10 seconds hides the drama of the race in which he was taken out by a fallen skier at a bad corner leading into an uphill climb. It was nip and tuck with only seconds between the leading contenders. The drama, and effort was too much for one of those chasing Andrew, and he retired leaving Andrew to battle it out with one of the co favourites. Andrew skied the race of his life to put the result beyond question, and now holds the title of Austrian Meister - Jugend 1. This performance also led to Salzburgerland being the top medal winning Land(state) in the Austrian Championships.

The British skiers continued their outstanding performances the following day when they were invited to represent Salzburgerland in various age category relay races. Ruaridh Newman had a superb race beating one of his Austrian team mates in one of the fastest legs in their relay.

Andrew's and the team's performance is a major step forward for British Cross Country Ski Racing as these results were achieved against a top snow nation. The older members now have their sights set on qualification for the European Youth Olympics in 2009 where they intend to continue their success.

The full squad were:

Andrew Young
Ruaridh Newman
Deborah May

Callum Smith
William Newman
Michael May

Lauren Spencer
Jim Davidson (Manager)
Roy Young (Head Coach)