



Greetings to all from German European Cup venue! The area where we raced is called Bavarian Forest (Bayerischer Wald), which is not to be confused with the Black forest which is a whole different thing. Oh no, there is no black forest cake or black forest ham around. However they've got some excellent German butter cheese here and I love good cheese!

The second week-end of Europa Cup racing featured a 5km skate mass start race on Saturday and a classic sprint relay on Sunday.

This time, unlike last week I did not have the luxury of having my skis waxed by a pro Swiss serviceman, and instead I had to learn how to apply high-fluoro powder on my skis with an iron set at 150 degrees Celsius without scorching the ski base! Dave Nighbor and Graham Nishikawa, fellow Canadian skiers who also raced here in Bayerischer Wald, Germany showed me how to apply the race wax properly.

Funny enough my first ever self-waxed pair of race skis were really fast on Saturday! Of course, the skis themselves make a big difference in the performance (such ski attributes as ski stiffness, flex distribution, ski grind type...), but never the less I had great skis on Saturday and went on to finish 5th in the Open Women category.



Going into Sunday's team sprint event I was a lot more confident about my ski waxing skills and me and Rhonda Jewett, my sprint team partner spent about 45min testing different kick wax combinations and chatting with other team's wax technicians about the best wax for the day.

It was not easy to find the right wax combo as the temperature changed from 0 degrees at 8:30 am (arrival and ski testing time) to about +7 by 9:50am (our race time), and finally to +10 by the time the boys raced at 11am!

Rhonda and I ended up with slightly different kick wax combinations (basically each of us put on the stuff that she liked better), and I think at the end my kick was better than Rhonda's, but her skis were a bit faster on the downhill.

So long story short, we got another 5th on Sunday!

Overall, this week went ok, I did not achieve an amazing result (which always sucks a bit, considering that you always put all your efforts into the race and trying so hard), however my skiing was still pretty good and that is a positive.

Thank you very much for helping me out with this racing trip. It could not have happened without you.

Here is a lame analogy that I've come up with while doing my post-race cool-down today: Having this chance to compete in Europe is like being on a hockey team that only trains and plays together, then getting a chance to play against other teams on the international league.

So thank you once again for giving me this chance to compete here. I might not become a better hockey player, but this OPA cup racing will definitely make me a better ski racer.

Until next week,
- Dasha Gaiazova

Thanks to Graham Nishikawa for the pictures.



This one is of me and my sprint and wax partner Rhonda Jewett.