Monster Energy’s Wise and Sigourney Take Second Place in Freeski Halfpipe and Totsuka Takes Second in Snowboard Halfpipe at the Grand Prix Copper Mountain

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COPPER MOUNTAIN, Colo. (PRWEB) December 18, 2019 -- Way to start the season! Monster Energy congratulates its freeski and snowboard athletes on a strong performance in the Land Rover U.S. Grand Prix at Copper Mountain Resort in Colorado this weekend. Televised on NBC, the official World Cup event sanctioned by the International Ski Federation (FIS) showcased the state of the art in freestyle ski and snowboard halfpipe riding.

In the Men’s Freeski Halfpipe competition on Friday, 29-year-old David Wise from Reno, Nevada, earned a strong second-place finish with a perfect run. In Women’s Freeski Halfpipe, 29-year-old Brita Sigourney from Carmel, California, took home the trophy for second place against an elite field of riders. And in Saturday’s Men’s Snowboard Halfpipe, 18-year-old rookie pro Yuto Totsuka from Yokohama, Japan, claimed second place. While Wise and Sigourney returned to competition after recovering from serious injuries, all riders battled adverse weather conditions on their way to the podium in Colorado this weekend.

Every year, the Land Rover U.S. Grand Prix kicks off the FIS Snowboard and Freeski Halfpipe World Cup season. The competition attracts a star-studded field of the world’s best riders, ready to unveil their latest tricks on Copper Mountain’s exceptional halfpipe and stack FIS World Cup ranking points. Here’s how the action unfolded at the official 2019/20 season opener this weekend:

Men’s Freeski Halfpipe: Monster Energy’s David Wise Returns to Podium from Serious Injury

David Wise entered the Copper Mountain Grand Prix looking to improve on last year’s third-place finish at the event. But it would prove an uphill battle. First, because Wise was returning to competition from a fractured femur suffered in May 2019, days after breaking the world’s highest air record for quarter pipe to banked landing. And second, because ten inches of fresh powder snow on Friday morning created challenging conditions in the 22-feet-high and 540-feet-long Woodward Copper Park superpipe.

Drawing on his experience as a freeski halfpipe veteran, the two-time Olympic gold medalist adjusted his strategy according to the adverse weather. Putting extra torque into his spins to compensate for lower-flying aerials due to snow in the pipe, Wise stomped a perfect run on his second attempt: A leftside double corks 1260 mute grab, rightside 1080 tail grab, switch leftside 720 Japan grab, rightside 900 tail grab and a leftside 900 Cuban grab earned Wise 85.25 points and second place behind American freeskier Aaron Blunck.

“Wow, that took everything I had,” said David Wise after landing his second-place run at Copper Mountain.

Wise started his career as a ski racer but made the switch to freestyle at a young age. He began dominating the sport as a teenager, winning his first U.S. national title at 15 before turning professional at 18. Wise claimed silver in Men’s Freeski SuperPipe at X Games Aspen 2019 in January, boosting his X Games medal count to
six (4 gold, 2 silver).

Before his injury, Wise ended his 2018/19 FIS World Cup season in third place overall and now ranks second in the current season on the strength of Friday’s second-place finish.

Women’s Freeski Halfpipe: Brita Sigourney Bounces Back from Injury into Second Place

Monster Energy’s Wise was not the only rider to bounce back from serious injury at Copper Mountain this weekend. His teammate and 2018 Olympic bronze medalist Brita Sigourney had suffered a tibia and fibula spiral fracture at Mammoth Mountain training camp in California this May. And much like Wise, she battled low visibility and fresh snowfall during the Women’s Freeski Halfpipe final on Friday.

Having qualified into the final in third place, Sigourney rose to the challenge with a perfect run on her third attempt: A leftside alley-oop Japan grab, leftside 900 tail grab, leftside alley-oop 540, leftside 540 mute grab and a technical rightside 720 – landing backwards after two full rotations – earned Sigourney a strong second-place finish with Great Britain skier Zoe Atkin taking the win.

Sigourney is one of the top female freeskiers in the world and made history as the first woman to land a 1080 in a competition halfpipe run. Hailing from Carmel, California, she earned a bronze medal in the 2018 Winter Olympic Games in PyeongChang, South Korea and owns three X Games medals (one silver, two bronze).

Men’s Snowboard Halfpipe: Yuto Totsuka Clinches Second Place Despite Adverse Weather

In the highly contested Men’s Snowboard Halfpipe final, Monster Energy’s Yuto Totsuka faced nine of the world’s top riders. Although fresh snow blanketed the superpipe on Copper Mountain throughout the entire final session, the 18-year-old came in charging with high-flying aerials and technical precision to battle Australian Scotty James for the top spot.

Ultimately, weather conditions worsened on Totsuka’s third and final run, causing the rookie pro to settle for second place based on his first run score of the day. A frontside double cork 1440 Indy grab, Cab 1080 nose grab, frontside double cork 1260 Indy grab, backside 900 mute grab, and frontside 1080 tail grab earned Totsuka a 94.50-point score, closely behind James’ winning score of 96.00 Points.

Despite his young age, Totsuka steps into the 2019/20 season as a podium threat on the international snowboard superpipe circuit. Last season’s highlights included back-to-back silver medals at X Games Aspen 2019 and the 2019 FIS Snowboard World Championships. Totsuka also took home a snowboard halfpipe win at the FIS Snowboard World Cup in Calgary in February and third place at the 2019 Burton U.S. Open Snowboarding Championships in March. Keep an eye on this next-generation ripper this season.

Fans in the United States who missed the action on Copper Mountain this weekend can watch all podium runs in the Land Rover U.S. Grand Prix on the official FIS Freeski YouTube channel and FIS Snowboarding YouTube channel.

Download photos for editorial use.

Also look forward to catching the entire Monster Energy snow team at the world’s biggest winter sports festival only a few weeks from now: X Games Aspen will bring together elite athletes across ski, snowboard,
snowmobile, and snow bike disciplines from January 23-26, 2020 at Buttermilk Mountain resort in Colorado.

Visit www.monsterenergy.com for more action as the 2020 snow sports season unfolds, including photos, videos, and contest results. Follow Monster Energy on Youtube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter for exclusive behind-the-scenes coverage at upcoming events.

About Monster Energy
Based in Corona, California, Monster Energy is the leading marketer and distributor of energy drinks and alternative beverages. Refusing to acknowledge the traditional, Monster Energy supports the scene and sport. Whether motocross, off-road, NASCAR, MMA, BMX, surf, snowboard, ski, skateboard, or the rock and roll lifestyle, Monster Energy is a brand that believes in authenticity and the core of what its sports, athletes and musicians represent. More than a drink, it’s the way of life lived by athletes, sports, bands, believers and fans. See more about Monster Energy including all of its drinks at www.monsterenergy.com.
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