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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tough Day for Nishikawa

“It was the worst race of my life” said a dejected Graham Nishikawa after finishing over four minutes off the pace against the best in the world on Saturday.

Nishikawa had just completed a tough 30 km World Cup pursuit race, which combined 15 km of classic technique with 15 km of skate racing on the Whistler Olympic courses. He fell off the back of the pack in the second lap of the classic portion of the event and was never able to regain contact with the elite field.

He eventually placed 26th, with Italian Pietro Piller Cottrer, a triple Olympic medallist, taking top honours in a time of 1:13:01.

It was a better day for a few other Canadian skiers who all posted top 12 performances in the pursuit.

In the men’s race, Ivan Babikov posted a sixth place finish. Babikov, still tired from a recent appearance at the grueling Tour de Ski event in Europe, was joined in the top ten by Devon Kershaw from Sudbury. Meanwhile, the talented Alex Harvey, who Nishikawa outsprinted in a similar race a few weeks ago to win the opportunity to get to this World Cup, finished in 12th position, his best showing to date in a World Cup.

Harvey, along with partner George Grey, went on to win a bronze medal before an ecstatic crowd in the team competition on Sunday.

In the women’s 15 km pursuit, Sara Renner, coming back from taking a year off to have a baby, posted a sixth place position as she works to regain her Olympic medal fitness.

It was also a tough weekend for Emily Nishikawa.

After winning a last minute spot in the sprint competition, the nineteen year old was disappointed with her performance as she missed out on making the cut to advance from the qualifying round to the heats in the classic sprint competition on Friday.

“I felt really strong on the uphill, but my downhill just weren’t good” she noted.

Emily has been fighting injury all season. and didn’t have too many expectations going into her second World Cup appearance. However, she definitely wasn’t happy with her 55th place finish in the sprint, traditionally a strong event for her.

Graham Nishikawa goes back to the race trails this coming weekend as he moves back to the Noram circuit. He will be competing in a series of races in Rossland BC.

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