

World Juniors/U-23 Champs Report - DAY 3



The temperatures warmed up today in Estonia, but the wind and humidity were high.

Today the World Junior/Under-23 Championships moved from the middle distance into the classic sprint competition. In order to qualify for the head-to-head heats, athletes must place in the top-30 in the individual qualification round. The course was 1.2km for the women and 1.4km for the men, taking only 3 to 4 minutes.

In the Junior Women's field, Canada qualified 2 women, but both were eliminated in the ¼ finals.

Andy Shields was oh-so-close, but missed qualification by 0.19 seconds; and finished the day in 31st position.

Head Coach Eric Bailey stated after the race, "I'm fairly pleased with Andy's performance today. Sprinting is not necessarily his strongest format, so to have his placing 8 spots higher than the skate race shows that he is on the up-and-up and gives me reason to believe that the pursuit might be his best race of the championships. Time will tell..."

Andy is excited for the next set of races and was satisfied with today's result, "I have mixed feelings about today's race. After my poor performance in the skate race on Wednesday, I was out for redemption in the sprint. My goal was to qualify for the heats, so missing them by 0.19 seconds did leave bad taste in my mouth. Nonetheless I skied well and I felt great out there which gives me confidence for the pursuit and the relay. Hopefully we can really pull together as a team for the next two races".

Tomorrow is U-23 classic sprint. Michael Somppi will not start the sprint so that he can focus his energy on the pursuit race. Erin Tribe will start the women's race.

