

The "Traum" Team

By Jimmy Gunka
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This latest NDC Camp update is a continuation of the last article which was written about the first half of the Dachstein glacier camp by Dudley Coulter. I will now be taking over the reins for the rest of the camp update. Where we left off was a nice hard interval session the day before our anticipated rest day. During the rest day we were planning to go do some Downhill (7km of it) go-karting but when we awoke, at a later time than usual, we were greeted with a steady stream of rain falling. As a result of the rain, it turned out to be an indoor dominated rest day with most people opting to hammer out some much needed schoolwork. Some athletes also decided that some ping pong was in order and I heard that some people ended up playing for a couple of hours! I definitely wouldn't have liked to walk into that Ping pong room after this ordeal as there wasn't much ventilation within the room.



After the rest day, it was back to our solid training routine. On the schedule we had 6 days of skiing, a day of hiking, and some rollerski and running sessions before our next rest day. After a first week of some mediocre conditions on the Glacier, we had some luck with the rest of the camp. It turned out to be almost perfect conditions – clear skies, fresh tracks, and beautiful sun!! This definitely added to the morale of the team and I think we were all feeding off the great atmosphere that Austria has to offer skiers in October. At this time of year, it is the mecca for cross country skiers.



One of the first things on the agenda after our rest day was to do a nice long hike up one of the many surrounding mountains. The hike that our team ended up doing took us about 4 hours. We ended up covering a total of 18km and reached about 2300 meters in elevation - just as the snowline on the mountain started to appear. Overall, the day was dominated by the easy hike and a Milka bar for myself as well as some ping pong where I even won 1 set against a certain Andy Sheilds... unfortunately, we did not play 15 sets... so my odds of winning were pretty slim but I pulled one out in the end.

I think that one of the biggest things that strike people is that some days on the glacier there are upwards to 300 people skiing around on an 8km loop....It's crazy!! And some days if you're lucky you get to see some very accomplished cross country ski racers out on the trail. Some examples of the people you see are Olympic Champion Justyna Kowalczyk of Poland and Andrus Veerpalu, Olympic Champion and classic skier extraordinaire of Estonia. Being able to ski beside these great skiers increased my motivation. Seeing how they are just regular people but knowing that they are champions, drives me to become the best I can be and to hopefully be like them one day.



The spectacular view on the glacier

This concept of so many people training also happens if you go rollerskiing on any given afternoon on the awesome roads of Ramsau. One day we did a rollerski and I have never before seen such large amounts of people out rollerskiing, let alone training, in my entire life. It kind of hits you and lets you know that you're not the only one training. It makes me and my teammates push harder and try to be better than the rest. Our team came up with a new slogan, which we named after a delicious lactose based drink: the Traum Team, literal translation to English: The Dream Team. Throughout this camp, I think our team showed that we can achieve this because everyone was positive throughout every situation. Each athlete encouraged and pushed each other every single day.

Overall, the whole camp was a huge success. The team was healthy for most of the camp, everyone put in the hours of solid and super beneficial training that you get in Austria on the Dachstien Glacier. The benefits far out-weigh the cost of going, and I trust that all of the team will only pay dividends within the next 2 months into the start of the ski season.

With somewhat of a newly developed motivation, the "Traum Team" is ready to take the final stretch of training to the next level and be ready to go for a great season!