

Tim Platt and Denis Osbaldeston report on the British Skibike Team 2006

The British Ski Bike team enjoyed an increase in numbers this year so much so that we were the second largest team at the 2006 World Championships! Representatives from England, Scotland and Wales added to the international rivalry!

The Swiss & British National Championships 2006: The Swiss kindly agreed to us competing in their guest class in their National Championships which consisted of a Giant Slalom in the morning followed by a Super G in the afternoon. The decision was taken to count the aggregate times over the 2 races as the official 2006 British National Championships.

The Giant Slalom was a straightforward course and we all relished the chance to attack it. Nic Platt, reigning British Champion in the Elite Men's Class, led the way and he powered down the run, this marker proved beyond us all and Nic won the first run by a clear 2 and a half seconds. Amongst the seniors the competition was fierce. Denis Osbaldeston won with Ric Platt and Simon Marsh finished in joint second place just under a second behind.

Race two; the Super G was run in the same order. Nic kept his cool and edged the field again, extending his lead over all and reclaiming the Elite title. His brother Tim snatched second place and Silver overall. Third spot was the race of the Welsh, Harry Dearden prevailing over Nic Jones. In the seniors, a fired up Marsh won the Super G by a fraction of a second but was unable to overturn his deficit to Denis whose solid second place performance secured the Seniors' title. Ric Platt finished third and claimed the Seniors' Bronze over all.

The 2006 Skibob World Championships, 2006: At the Skibob World Championships, consisting of 4 days racing, our times at the sharp end of the field were very competitive. As it transpired, our first 2 starters, Nic and Tim Platt decimated the rest of the field by a massive 8 seconds, with Tim taking top spot. The most noteworthy performance was by Scot Kenny Campbell, who in his first World Championships beat 4 Elite racers!

That evening fresh snowfall changed the situation: The pistes were hard and icy below a soft 6 inches of fresh snow. In addition the conditions at the start gate and warm up area had taken a turn for the worse. There was a foul gale blowing over the ridge! Thus we started the Super G. The course was a short one for Super G and the race felt more like a Giant Slalom. Nic won the race amongst the British contingent by nearly 2 and a half seconds. Second place was very tight between Tim and Harry Dearden. For the GS it was Nic leading the way over his brother Tim and Marsh in third.

The Slalom did not suffer from the same weather conditions and organisers were able to get both runs in. Run 1 had a few gates early on placed on sheet ice to really sort the men from the boys. They proved to be troublesome for all the competitors and unfortunately one of the German racers crashed in this section and needed airlifting to hospital. After the delay, we got our turns and set off in brilliant sunshine down the track. The icy sections looking blue in this light! Nic put the final nail into the coffin of the challenge with another solid performance, 2 and a half seconds clear! The second run was won by Tim and our British Champion and now B Nations champion, Nic, pushed into 5th place. The combined times for these 2 runs at the Slalom produced a 1-2-3 of Nic, Peter Marsh and Tim. For the B Nations' title, the combined times were used from the Downhill, Giant Slalom and Slalom. Nic held on to his title and beat Tim by 3 seconds with Peter Marsh third.

World Cup race in Nesselwang, Germany 2006 Nic and Tim Platt faced the task of having three separate races in one day in the Bavarian resort of Nesselwang; a Giant Slalom in the morning, then a Slalom in the afternoon, followed by a floodlight night slalom. On this occasion, it was Tim's turn to get one over his brother in the Giant Slalom, finishing in 21st place, just over two seconds ahead of Nic, who had inexplicably imagined an extra gate! Nic gained revenge in the Slalom beating Tim by just under three seconds, in 21st place. The pair then had the long wait until 8pm and despite the appalling weather, it was still an exciting race with Tim finishing in 23rd place, just under two seconds behind Nic, in 22nd place.

World Cup Final race in Westendorf, Austria In order to prepare for the Senior Championships, Denis Osbaldeston joined Nic and Tim Platt in Westendorf. Nic Platt finished the two runs in a consistently high standard ahead of Tim and Denis. Tim managed to knock nearly six seconds of his dismal first run, and Denis also finished quicker in the second run.

The final day's racing saw a qualifying session for a parallel slalom, complete with jump half the way down the course, an elimination competition followed in the afternoon. Denis crashed in qualification but recovered to finish before being controversially disqualified when he was judged to have missed the gate where he fell. The Platt's missed out on qualification for the main competition but were seeded as the top two finishers in to the B Nations finals. Both won their semi-finals but were denied the opportunity to battle it out head-to-head for first place, where instead a combined time was taken. Nic Platt finished the season on a high, winning the B Nations with Tim Platt close behind in 2nd Place.

Senior World Championships 2006: Lungötz, Austria. Due to heavy and continuous snowfall the championships were re-scheduled for Lungötz. The Super G was fast but fair on a course with plenty of snow. Osbaldeston had a good run to finish ninth and beating some racers who had beaten him regularly in the past!

Day two saw the G.S. on the same slope but by the time later runners go to go it was in a mess. Osbaldeston got into a hole at the first gate going as fast as he could and was spat out by the course just in time to cross the finishing line in what was a respectable time and more amazingly in sixth position!

At the team captains meeting that evening racers were told that the weather forecast was bad and to meet at the bottom of the course at 8 am to decide what to do. Arriving in torrential rain racers were told that there would be only one run. The course was in such a state after 70 racers had gone that racers were asked if the last twelve gates could be re-positioned as the course had deteriorated so much. With no chance to inspect the amended course self preservation was in order. Racers admitted to not seeing properly because of the rain and Denis swore that one of the gates had a hole at least 20 inches deep which couldn't be avoided. By the time Denis reached the bottom he had bruised ears from his knees battering them - but hey! World Champion Meyerhof fell over so Denis finished fifth overall. Some result!!

The team would like to thank: our travelling support for all their efforts throughout the season, especially Shirley Platt, Karen Osbaldeston and Richard Hollingsworth; the Federation Internationale de Skibob (FISB) and the various regional skibob clubs for organising another fantastic international racing season; our sponsors: Ski Bartlett (Uxbridge), Beans (Bicester), Skibike Ltd (www.skibike.net), Positive Altitude Clothing and Binatone Telecom. And last but not least, a big thank you for the continued support of the Skibob Association of Great Britain (SAGB - www.skibob.org.uk).

Nic Platt competing in the World Cup race in Nesselwang in Germany

