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RACE REPORT # 7

Rounds 13 & 14

World Championship Complex of Eagle River

ISOC Snocross makes its return to the historic World Champion Derby Complex in over a decade of absence. Eagles weren't the only thing soaring as temperatures reached well above freezing. The battles also heated up on the track for the championship points race under perfect skies.

The pair of practices saw both of the teal twins post competitive times in the practices. Clearly, the fellow that made the rhythm section at the previous round was out again on another day pass. The rhythm section out of the opening corner posed to be a challenge to cleanly negotiate. This set the stage for some exciting racing later in the program. First round of qualifying saw the 221 machine of Benham lining up outside with the last pick on the line. With a glint of green mirrored in the lens of his Scott goggles he holds his sled pinned around the outside of the first turn and threads the needle. Entering the rhythm section in the lead, pounding out perfect laps to win the qualifier wire to wire. Frank in the following heat also gifted with the last pick of the gate is forced to line up on the long side of the corner. With a little shucking and jiving 220 is able to punch a hole in the pack. Entering the rhythm section in second he maintains his position until the mid-point of the heat. Shortly after being passed and moved back to third, the perpetrator of the pass goes into a gravity punched moment relinquishing the position back to Francis. Frank finishes up his heat in second behind the reigning champ having had set the fastest lap of the heat. The next round of qualifying sees Pelletier lining up once again on the outside due a less than ideal pick. Rounding the outside of the first corner in third position, Frank pins it in a full "send it" move through the difficult rhythm coming out on top! Head down 220 puts his race pace on to the ends it at the checkers with a seven second advantage to win. Round 2, heat 2 two-two-one unable to take advantage of his first gate pick rounds the corner in third following the reigning champ. The champ bobbles entering the rhythm section, Benham is forced to check up losing his drive. Both riders regain their composure and push their way forward, Benham finishing up the heat in the runner up position. The final was set up for a fierce battle, with an unforgiving race course ahead of them. When the light went green Pelletier was able to come out of the first few laps in second position. The pack of the top three which Pelletier was on the tail end by the mid-way point, had broken away from the rest of the field. Desperate to try and better his position on the podium Frank tried to make a pass happen on an optional line. Coming up short on the triple, 220 took a momentary optional off-track line but was able to safely re-enter the track in third where he finished for the night. Benham with a meager start entered the first rhythm section in second last had his work cut out for him. Determined Dan pushed himself for perfect laps and drove himself all the way up to fourth. With three laps remaining 221 had a momentary loss of focus and failed to negotiate the triple section. Again, the forces of gravity gripped his teal trousers and tore him to the track surface. Disappointed Dan dusted the snow from himself to pull across the line in 11th.

Saturday afternoon practice under perfectly clear skies saw a few refinements to the racing course. Both racers lined up in the second heat of round one. The pair did not fair well off the line, Dan was able to run his sled up to third while Frank was

unable to do better than fifth. Lining up for the second round once again the dynamic duo found themselves in the second heat. Francis having first gate pick was able to take full advantage of his inside gate. With every Stud Boy Power Point clamoring for grip Pelletier was able to lurch into the lead. Ferociously focused 220 clicked off perfect laps to secure another heat race win. 221 compiling his lines, lapped his way into the fourth position by the end of qualifying. With the entire field of pros all seeming to have hot and cold qualifiers, the qualifying results shuffled into Benham's advantage for first gate pick in the final. Benham didn't waste his resources, touching off the line with his Speedwerx tuned ski-doo RS. Entering the intricate rhythm section first with a clear track in front of him. 221 went to work clicking off some impressive clean laps never missing his mark. Pelletier after being used as a berm in the first turn had finally cleared the damage side panel from his sled, unobstructed went to work riding his race. The reigning champ recovered from an average start went to work on Benham's lead. They jostled back and forth for the lead, the champ finally making the pass stick seem to have Dan's number. As they round the last corner still only a couple sled lengths apart, the champ crosses up on the face of the finish line table top jump. Landing off the track plunging sideways gifting Benham the lead once again. All the action at the front was merely a distraction to the race unfolding behind for the final podium position. Pelletier in the zone had turned lemons into lemonade, working his way up to the lead group for podium position from a tenth-place start. Unfortunately, he wasn't alone and there were other racers wanting to climb some steps that evening. With some monster moves and daring lines 221 once again was under attack. Snow dust settling and the pre-session pushing towards the checkers Benham relinquished his lead and found himself now in third behind his teal teammate Pelletier. It appeared as there was about to be a double podium for the teal teammates, but no! One bad line choice and the birds of prey plucked away the final podium position on the final lap! At the podium an ecstatic Pelletier commented "The track was rough everywhere! People just all over the track trying to find smooth lines, I just put my head down held my line and hit my marks lap after lap. I had no idea I would end up second with that bad start!"

Next weekend the team returns to Eagle River for the final two rounds of Snocross action for 2021. Pelletier's hard work and consistent podium finishes has moved him into the 2nd position in the championship chase. Warm temperatures and rain are predicted so it could be a recipe for some more sensational competition.

Snocross – Eagle River, WI - Results

Friday

3rd - Francis Pelletier (Pro Class)

11th - Daniel Benham (Pro Class)

Saturday

2nd - Francis Pelletier (Pro Class)

5th - Daniel Benham (Pro Class)

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About Warnert Racing

Hill City, Minnesota-based Warnert Racing is the premier team in professional snocross racing and one of the sport's pioneering "superteams." After the most successful auto racing operations, the team models, managing the day-to-day operations of two snocross racers, including sponsorship, transportation, marketing, sled set-up, driver development, and technology development.