



## A LITTLE SNOW RUINS THE PLANS OF THE DH CHAMPIONS

Today's training on the Deborah Compagnoni was cancelled - Scary accident but without consequences for the first forerunner from Bormio at the Crap del Ricc jump - Tomorrow at 11.30 the long-awaited for and spectacular World Cup DH of Santa Caterina - Paris says: "It's a really hard course"

SANTA CATERINA VALFURVA, DECEMBER 27TH - It was still snowing when the evening shadow covered the village of Santa Caterina Valfurva. A thin, fragile snow. That kind of snow that slides sideways in your face and in your eyes as well. This is the reason why, together with the thick fog and low clouds, that the second training of DH World Cup was cancelled after several delays, at 12.30. The training was due to start an hour before with the start lowered to 2530 meters, at Muro Sobretta.

That's where women usually start, avoiding the jumps between the rocks and the first super-G curves. Skewered shrimps, piadina bread and the music by Lorenzo: that's how people waiting at the parterre passed their time. The group of lifeguards and the sailors from Riccione have been in Alta Valtellina for many years, almost every year, since Deborah Compagnoni was still an athlete. Mario - Bichina is his nickname - was so cool while cooking. Irresistible sea feelings among the mountains Sobretta and Königspitze.

Too bad that an accident - luckily without serious consequences - convinced even more the people responsible for the track to cancel the training. From Cresta Sobretta green light was given to the forerunner just few minutes before 11:30. Marco Forli (Marchino is his nickname) an eighteen years old athlete from Bormio and Italian DH aspirants' champion - a really nice and outgoing guy - had just crossed the starting gate with bib F1 and boldly faced the first "S" when he flew off the track and was kept by the safety nets. It all happened at the jump of Crap del Ricc, between two small rocks, and because of the hard impact he lost the helmet. And for a few seconds he even passed out. He was immediately rescued by the security managers and taken to the Emergency at Morelli hospital in Sondalo. A little facial trauma, but fear was a lot. Even the CAT gave negative results. Andrea Panzeri, the doctor of the "Azzurri" confirmed it.

Only a little snow. Very little or nothing. Or, as they say here "l'è scarsa". A little, just to whiten the meadows on the north side - where the sun always shines - and to give a touch of tradition to the end of the year. It shouldn't snow tomorrow, so there is no reason why the DH World Cup race shouldn't happen. The sun could be away and the visibility could be not the best one, but people at the finish area will enjoy the race thanks to the giant screen or the course's border. "A real DH race at least, the first of the season," said Christof Innerhofer who couldn't stand being in room number 9 at Hotel Genzianella anymore. He wanted to reach his team-mates at the starting gate of the Deborah Compagnoni slope. And Dominik Paris somehow changed his mind today: "I didn't want to say that this is an easy track. Indeed, it is very difficult. But you know that: I'm what I am and the curves in the higher part of the track are not what I like."



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