

Fletcher McDonald; Western Region FIS Coach
Men's D-Team Europe Notes - Fall 2020

I had the opportunity to travel with coach Sasha Rearick and the USST Men's D-team, along with several National Development Group athletes to Europe earlier this fall. Western Region athletes included Jack Smith (D-Team/SVSEF), Oliver Parazette (JHSC) and Jeremy Mathers (SBSEF). We had a great project that involved several different activities and training venues. Upon our arrival we spent two travel recovery days in Kitzbuhel, AUT. Our group had the opportunity to hike the Hahnenkamm DH track, which was an awesome experience.

From there we traveled to Belgium to ski indoors at SnowValley. There was an injected lane that provided a great, hard, consistent, and somewhat grippy surface. The main SL focus indoors was to understand impulse and releasing the ski. We also worked on clean skiing and finding speed. The moderate terrain helped a lot.

After spending time indoors, our group traveled to Saas Fee to get on winter snow. Here we were able to transition our same SL focus from indoor to outdoor. In GS we talked a lot about position in the transition and maintaining a high hip. We stayed a few extra days in Saas Fee as they had some of the best training in the world. We then finished in Pitztal, but unfortunately we found the weather there, too. The snow was on the softer side and we spent sometime in the fog. The focus here was to find balance and get exposure to a steeper more difficult slope. Parallel to some of the other national teams, there were good takeaways for the guys. This trip was a great learning experience for athletes and coaches.