

Ad's a bad break for Andrew

Skiing by Pat Scott

HUNTLY'S podium-placed skier Andrew Young was taken out of the final runnings of the opening race of the Tour de Ski in Switzerland after becoming tangled in an advertisement guide rope.

Young had delivered in the prologue, posting the second-fastest time behind Toblach winner, Pellegrino of Italy.

The finals however, ended for Young in the quarters after the guide rope from an advertisement banner caught his arm, causing him to fall at the top of the first climb.

"I was lucky the rope hit my arm first and not my neck, said Young, who called for the course to be made safer for subsequent races.

He said: "I felt good on the up-hill. The French guy, Renaud Jay, left me room on the inside so I went for it - maybe he'd seen the rope, but I hadn't, it was white."

Young pulled out of the race to avoid getting in the way of

the other competitors on their second lap. As a result his placing dropped from 26th to 30th. However he is now concentrating on moving on to the second stage of the Tour along with fellow team members Andrew Musgrave, Callum Smith and Annika Taylor.

Coach Roy Young said: "I reviewed the incident with the jury and it is very clear and agreed by them that there was a white rope or cord hanging from the Audi banner.

"The rope went diagonally across the skiers left of the course towards the fencing. The race started in twilight so no one saw the rope.

"If you stop the video just before Youngy falls you can just see it dangling down over the hat badge.

"His hand hit the rope when he raised them to pole; travelling at speed this spun him off to his left and into the advertising.

"He got up pretty quickly but was floored again because his skis stuck in the advertising.

"The head coach of Norway

helped him up and checked he was okay.

"Shaken he skied on, but didn't want to use his left arm, so then worried that he would be in the way of the rest of the field, he retired from the race.

"He was a bit shocked by the whole thing and there was a concern in the back of his mind about what would be said with him messing up the TV schedule.

"None of the racers did anything wrong, Andrew was in a good position but unfortunately it turned out to be the wrong position because of how the advertising arch had been set up."

Other Britons starting in the Tour, Andrew Musgrave, Callum Smith and Annika Taylor finished 45th; 98th and 70th respectively.

Andrew is hoping to battle his way through to the final of the Tour on Sunday January 10.

Callum and Annika are using the Tour to build their experience of World Cup racing before moving to target races for the season in Scandinavian Cup next week.



Andrew Young whose opening round in the Tour de Ski in Switzerland came to an abrupt stop.