

Vonn makes history with downhill win

By USSA

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy – With a powerful run through sunshine and fog, Lindsey Vonn (Vail) etched her name into the ski racing history book, winning her 62nd career Audi FIS Ski World Cup at the Cortina downhill by 0.32 over Austria's Elisabeth Goergl. The win by Vonn matched the seemingly unbeatable record of 62 World Cup wins set by Austrian great Annemarie Moser-Proell that had stood for 35 years.

"It's a pretty special moment for me," said Vonn, whose parents were in Cortina. "These records mean a lot to me and my family."

After two days of snowfall, a patchwork of clouds against the blue sky were mixed with bands of fog on the Olympia delle Tofane course in the 1956 Olympic city of Cortina d'Ampezzo. Vonn took the early lead coming off a steep face into a band of fog and kept it through the finish, building continually down the course on which she had won seven times previously. It was the same day on which 11 years ago a 19-year-old then Lindsey Kildow scored her first World Cup podium, finishing third in the Cortina downhill.

Many thought that Moser-Proell's string of 62 wins from 1970-1980 would never be broken.

"When I won my first podium here I never thought I would make it this far in my career," said Vonn. "That was the first time I thought I could be a contender. Never in a million years would I have believed I could tie the record."

Vonn was a little shaky out of the start, but quickly found her rhythm in the soft snow. "The snow was really soft and I'm

not good when it's soft. I'm from Minnesota and we used to race on ice. i wasn't very fast on the top."

Her biggest challenge came from Austrian Elisabeth Goergl running two racers later. Goergl jumped out to a lead and looked to challenge, but didn't have the speed Vonn had coming into the finish.

Five Americans finished in the top 18 including Laureenne Ross (Bend, Ore.) in ninth, Alice McKennis (Glenwood Springs, Colo.) 11, Stacey Cook (Mammoth Mountain) 16 and Julia Mancuso (Squaw Valley) 18. It was McKennis' best finish of her injury comeback season.