Teller ends season 4th in skicross

By Freddy Perryman, U.S. Ski Team

MYRKDALEN-VOSS, Norway -– Winter X Games champion John Teller of Mammoth Lakes was fourth Saturday in the final World Cup skicross race of the season in Myrkdalen-Voss. Chris Del Bosco of Canada topped the men's podium with Anna Holmlund of Sweden the women's winner.

Teller qualified for Saturday's finals in fourth giving him a good bracket position for better start lanes through the heats. He blitzed through the first round and quarterfinals winning both. In the semifinal he was second to move on to the finals.

"I was trying to setup a pass on Del Bosco to go into first. I leaned in and caught a rut and my ski just came off," explained Teller.

Patrick Duran of Fayston, Vt., made his third finals appearance in Saturday's season finale finishing 30th.

With Saturday's results, Teller ended fourth in the FIS World Cup skicross standings. Andreas Matt of Austria topped the rankings with Del Bosco second, and Finland's Jouni Pellinen third.

"My goal was to stay fourth in the overall," said Teller. "I did that and I'm really happy – with no support and no coach, I was doing my own skis the whole year. To pull off a fourth place meant a lot."

The women's skicross the World Cup went to Holmlund with Heidi Zacher of Germany second and Kelsey Serwa of Canada third.

Official results, FIS World Cup, Myrkdalen-Voss, Norway,

Skicross

Men

1. Chris Del Bosco, Canada

2. Conradign Netzer, Switzerland

3. Tomas Kraus, Czech Republic

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4. John Teller, Mammoth Lakes, CA

30. Patrick Duran, Fayston, VT

Women

1. Anna Holmlund, Sweden

2. Kelsey Serwa, Canada

3. Katrin Mueller, Switzerland

Ski report: Super light powder



The storm is not over. It could be affecting lift operations.

Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Riesch takes title by 3 over Vonn

By U.S. Ski Team

LENZERHEIDE, Switzerland -– After five months of ski racing across a dozen countries, the Audi FIS Alpine World Cup title came down to a mere three points and a hundredth of a second. Germany's Maria Riesch took the title over the U.S. Ski Team's Lindsey Vonn of Vail Saturday when the much anticipated finale was canceled due to fog and soft snow, breaking the American's three-year title string.

Despite missing the overall crown, Vonn took home three discipline titles (downhill, super G, super combined) bringing her American record to 12. Vonn won eight World Cup races to extend her U.S. career mark to 41, further solidifying her place as America's winningest ski racer of all time.

"Win or lose I just wanted the chance," said Vonn. "I feel devastated. But I'm extremely proud to have been in the fight in what was one of the most exciting seasons in ski racing history."

Despite winning more races than Riesch, Vonn was behind nearly the entire season and had last led in late December. Just a few weeks ago she was over 200 points behind and heading into a string of technical events where the German star was heavily favored.

But Vonn came back, with a career first giant slalom podium last weekend in the Czech Republic, coming into the World Cup Finals just 23 points behind. In the Finals opener Wednesday, Vonn took advantage of Riesch's mistakes in the downhill to

move back into the lead by 27 points. Riesch flip-flopped it in Friday's slalom – a mere hundredth of a second giving her just enough points to get past Vonn – setting the stage for what many had hoped would be a head-to-head battle in the giant slalom final.

Much like what happened a day earlier with cancellation of the men's giant slalom, officials inspected the course early Saturday and made an immediate decision to cancel without trying to delay through the day in hope of improving conditions. Rain and warm temperatures have plagued the races all week. The super G, Vonn's strongest event, was also canceled Thursday.

"I feel so sorry for Lindsey," said U.S. Ski Team Head Coach Alex Hoedelmoser. "Just to call it in the morning wasn't the right way to go. We should have tried everything possible to get this race off. This is a tough day for Lindsey and the sport of ski racing."

"The cancellation of this race doesn't just hurt me, it hurts the fans and the sport of ski racing as a whole," said Vonn

It was bittersweet for Vonn, who has long been close friends with Riesch. "Maria had an outstanding season and again proved to be my biggest competitor," said Vonn. "She's worked really hard for this. I'm happy for her and every athlete who stood on the top step this season."

Vonn had accolades, too, for her own U.S. Ski Team teammates who had a strong season. Ted Ligety of Park City won the World Cup GS title an American record third time, as well as World Championship gold. Julia Mancuso of Squaw Valley had a resurgence, including a win in the World Cup Finals downhill.

"Ted continues to take GS to a new level, Julia was right back on the podium and the U.S. women won the downhill and super G standings," said Vonn. "I cannot thank my husband, coaches and our entire team enough for their support. This was a great

season.”

Desolation Wilderness permits to be available online only

Desolation Wilderness visitors will be able to make overnight permit reservations online starting March 23. The popular 64,000-acre wilderness area is located in the Eldorado National Forest and the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit.

The new online service will allow wilderness visitors to make reservations any time of the day. seven days per week. A call center will be available to assist with reservations daily from 7am-9pm in the summer and 7am-7pm in the winter.

The new reservation system will now allow visitors to change their permit or cancel it. as well as receive a refund as long as they do it a minimum of 15 days from the planned entry date. The cost of making a reservation will increase $1 to $6.

The number of people allowed each day in various areas of this popular wilderness is regulated during the summer months by a quota system.

Forest Service staff will still be available to assist visitors with local information and wilderness trip planning, however, they will no longer accept permit reservations over the phone, through the mail, or by fax. They will also no longer be mailing reserved permits.

Nevada wildlife officials implant microchip in bear cubs

By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal

How does one enter an occupied bear den?

Belly-down, face-first and with all due caution.

Nevada Department of Wildlife biologist Carl Lackey demonstrated his technique one day last week in the mountains west of Washoe Valley.

After first darting an irritated mother black bear with tranquilizer — an important step, that one — Lackey squirmed beneath a granite slab and into a den so confined he "couldn't do a push-up."

His instructions to a colleague were clear and spoken with emphasis.

"I'm going to have to go in head first and when I say pull me out, pull me out by my feet," Lackey said. "And pull me out."

After pushing aside the unconscious 130-pound mother bear, he was pulled free as asked.

Lackey emerged from the hole with the day's true goal — three yowling, newborn bear cubs.

The cubs, two females and one male, four or five weeks old and weighing a couple of pounds each, were the scientific prize sought by Lackey and biologist Jon Beckmann of the Wildlife Conservation Society.

The biologists are working to gain a better understanding of survival rates of bear cubs in the wild, part of an ongoing

body of research that started in 1997 when increasing human-bear conflicts were first noticed in the Lake Tahoe area.

Read the whole story

Holland on podium in snowboardcross

By Zac Amidan, U.S. Snowboarding

VALMALENCO, Italy -– Friday was a strong day for U.S. Snowboarding as Lindsey Jacobellis of Stratton Mountain, Vt., led the way for the women with a win and Jonathan Cheever of Saugus, Mass., moved into the top spot in SBX standings at a snowboardcross World Cup in Valmalenco, Italy.

Cheever, who had been injured during a training run crash with teammate Alex Deibold of Manchester Center, Vt., grabbed the yellow bib after Friday's race. Right before dropping in for his run, Cheever had eight stitches put into his elbow after colliding with Deibold's head during a training run.

Despite the injury, Cheever, who rides out of Utah's Canyons Resort, went on to finish second in a close race. The top three spots came down to a photo finish. Just edging out Cheever was Italy's Alberto Schiavon who took the top spot and finishing in third right behind Cheever was teammate Nate Holland of Squaw Valley.

"I have been racing for a very long time and don't ever remember a race this close between three athletes," said Holland. "When I went through the finish line I wanted to raise my hands for the victory because it was so close, but

the officials made the right call.”

After Friday’s race Cheever moves into the World Cup lead with two more events to come.

“I love the podium but I am sick of the bridesmaid spot,” said Cheever, who has been second for three competitions in a row. “I am in it to win it for the next couple of events.”

On the women’s side, Jacobellis grabbed the top spot after dealing with some tough conditions over the week. Snow and wind caused the course to slow down during time trials but on the final race day the sun came out and the course sped up setting up making for a great day of racing.

Official results, World Cup, Valmalenco, Italy, Snowboardcross

Men

1. Alberto Schiavon, Italy

2. Jonathan Cheever, Saugus, MA

3. Nate Holland, Squaw Valley, CA

—

9. Nick Baumgartner, Iron River, MI

11. Alex Deibold, Manchester Center, VT

21. Robert Minghini, South Lake Tahoe, CA

22. Jayson Hale, Sierraville, CA

30. Jarod Minghini, South Lake Tahoe, CA

Women

1. Lindsey Jacobellis, Stratton Mountain, VT

2. Eva Samkova, Czech Republic

3. Deborah Anthonioz, France

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10. Callan Chythlook-Sifsof, Girdwood, AK

19. Jenna Feldman, Linwood, NJ

23. Carrie Uren, Randle, WA

March Madness on the competitive ski slopes

By U.S. Ski Team

LENZERHEIDE, Switzerland -– Two days ago Lindsey Vonn stole the Audi FIS Alpine World Cup lead from Maria Riesch. Today, Maria Riesch took it back – by a slim three points. Now, an entire five-month season will come down to one race – Saturday's giant slalom.

"This is March madness on snow," said Universal Sports commentator Steve Porino after Friday's slalom where Riesch was fourth and Vonn 13th. "Imagine you're in the Final Four and you get sent to the line in the final seconds of the game to seal the lead. But you're a 43 percent shooter. That's Vonn's finish rate in slalom. Meanwhile Riesch has finished over 90 percent in the last two years and is among the fastest when she does. Problem is, Riesch skied out in the last two. It's almost as though the overall is starting from scratch and neither has any reason to feel confident. That's how the day started. In the end both lived up to the pressure."

A wild card in the picture is the weather. It resulted in the

men’s GS being canceled Friday, handing Ted Ligety an American record third GS crystal globe. But weather may be a factor in Saturday’s women’s GS.

“If the race gets canceled tomorrow, Riesch gets the globe by three points. Otherwise it’s a rock fight,” said Porino.

How close is it? Riesch was fourth, just a hundredth ahead of fifth. Without that hundredth, she would not be in the lead. Similarly, Vonn was just a tenth away from finishing out of the points. It’s that close.

Ski report: Winter continues to roar



If forecasters are correct, the afternoon could be miserable on the slopes.

Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Anderson’s consistency earns

her gold at European X Games

By Elizabeth Karam, U.S. Snowboarding

TIGNES, France -– South Lake Tahoe's Jamie Anderson put together a solid run to clinch the 2011 European X Games slopestyle snowboarding gold medal Friday morning in Tignes. The men's event was scheduled to follow directly after the women's but was canceled due to weather.

Anderson, who was the back-to-back Winter X Games champion in 2007 and 2008, regained the top spot Friday throwing down her trademark backside 540 to boost her to the win. Although her run didn't include the popular 720, Anderson's style and consistency separated her from the field.

Joining Anderson on the podium were Norway's Siljie Norendal and Finland's Enni Rukajarvi taking silver and bronze. Both women competed two of the five 720s that were launched during the contest. Norendal pulled a 720 frontside rodeo, while Rukajarvi dropped a cab 7.

With the men's slopstyle snowboarding event canceled, on tap next for the European X Games is women's halfpipe skiing and men's halfpipe snowboarding finals Friday late afternoon.

Snowboarding slopestyle is one of the events being considered by the International Olympic Committee for 2014 inclusion, along with halfpipe and slopestyle skiing.

Official results, European X Games, Tignes, France, Slopestyle Snowboarding

Gold: Jamie Anderson, (South Lake Tahoe, CA), 95.33

Silver: Silje Norendal, Norway, 94.00

Bronze: Enni Rukajarvi, Finland, 93.66

—

10 Jordie Karlinski, Snowmass Village, CO, 43.66

Celebrity golf tickets go on sale April 1

Early RSVPs for the July 12-17 American Century Championship indicate one of the strongest celebrity fields in the golf tournament’s 22-year history.

Super Bowl MVP Aaron Rodgers will join Michael Jordan, Charles Barkley, Rex Ryan, Tony Romo, Jerry Rice and a reunion of one of baseball’s greatest pitching rotations: Greg Maddox, Tom Glavine and John Smoltz in the field of 78 sports and entertainment stars at Edgewood Tahoe in Stateline.

Newcomers include Ryan, the volatile, quotable New York Jets head coach; Martin Brodeur, NHL All Star of the New Jersey Devils; Arian Foster, Houston Texans All-Pro running back; Deron Williams, New Jersey Nets All-Star guard; former Major League All-Stars Goose Gossage of the Yankees and Tom Glavine, Atlanta Braves; actors Tim Matheson of “Animal House” fame, and Rob Morrow of television dramas “Numb3rs” and “Northern Exposure”.

Defending champion and former NFL quarterback Billy Joe Tolliver will likely see his stiffest competition from eight-time winner Rick Rhoden, four-time winner Dan Quinn and previous champions Chris Chandler, Jack Wagner and Mark Rypien. Additional challenges can be expected from last year’s foursome of second place finishers Wagner, Romo, Smoltz and John Elway, NFL Hall of Famer who has played every year.

Tickets are available for advance purchase online beginning April 1. Prices are $15 each day for the Lake Tahoe Celebrity-Amateur on July 12, the practice round on July 13, and for the American Century Celebrity-Amateur on July 14; and $25 for each tournament round, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. A season pass for $60 provides admission for all six days. Kids 10 and under are free with a paid adult.

Discounted tickets for tournament rounds Friday through Sunday will be available starting June 1 at participating Raley’s, Nob Hill and Bel Air Foods supermarkets.