

Mancuso speed picking up in super combined

By USSA

ST. MORITZ, Switzerland -â€ Lindsey Vonn (Vail, CO) reached her 11th Audi FIS Alpine World Cup podium of the season on Friday, taking third in a super combined won by Sweden's Anja Paerson. Julia Mancuso (Olympic Valley, CA) was 14th after the American pair went 2-3, respectively, in the first-run super G.

"It was important to make it down not only for the points, but for my mind going into the Olympics, because super combined is the first event," Vonn said. "Now I have that confidence, and I'm definitely going to risk more in the Olympics."

The 60 points give Vonn a 116-point lead in the overall standings heading into Saturday's downhill and Sunday's super G â€ the final World Cup races before the Olympics.

Vonn also holds a 10-point lead in the super combined standings with just one more race after the Olympics for the discipline title.

"It's a two-run event, and there's just three events for the [combined] globe," Women's Speed Coach Alex Hoedlmoser said, explaining why Vonn might have been slightly cautious on the Corviglia course. "If you pull out in one of those races, there's no chance for it."

"I was more concentrated on just making it down to the bottom and not really risking anything," Vonn said. "It's so easy in slalom to go out and a lot of girls had problems, especially at the top. It wasn't my best run, but it was solid, and that's all I was hoping for."

Mancuso had the second-fastest time in downhill training Wednesday and carried that speed into Friday.

“In speed she’s getting more and more confident now and doing some good things,” Hoedlmoser said of the 2006 giant slalom gold medalist. “She’s definitely pointed in the right direction.”

After tweaking her back in downhill training Thursday, Leanne Smith (Conway, NH) was 19th after the super G, but coaches opted to sit her for the slalom.

Vonn will go for her first-ever win at St. Moritz in the downhill, where Hoedlmoser said “anything can happen.” She is undefeated in downhill this season with a six-race winning streak going back to last year.

St. Moritz, Switzerland, Jan. 29, Women’s Super Combined

1. Anja Paerson, Sweden, 2:00.54
2. Michaela Kirchgasser, Austria, 2:00.97
3. Lindsey Vonn, Vail, CO, 2:01.46
4. Elisabeth Goergl, Austria, 2:01.51
5. Fabienne Suter, Switzerland, 2:02.13
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14. Julia Mancuso, Olympic Valley, CA, 2:02.75
34. Chelsea Marshall, Pittsfield, VT, 2:04.83
37. Stacey Cook, Mammoth Mountain, CA, 2:05.17
39. Megan McJames, Park City, UT, 2:06.08
- DNS 2 “ Leanne Smith, Conway, NH
- DNF 2 “ Kaylin Richardson, Edina, MN

Jitloff scores points in Slovenia World Cup

By USSA

KRANJSKA GORA, Slovenia -â€ With just two weeks remaining until Opening Ceremonies in Vancouver, 2006 combined gold medalist Ted Ligety (Park City, UT) rocketed to the top of the Audi FIS Alpine World Cup podium Friday with his third consecutive giant slalom victory at Kranjska Gora.

After finishing second on the first run, Ligety edged Austria's Marcel Hirscher by 0.34 seconds in the finale before early leader Aksel Lund Svindal fell to fourth. The race was a reschedule from the fog scratched event originally set for Adelboden, Switzerland in early January.

"First run, I skied really well at the top," Ligety said. "I was pretty psyched I was in second place, one hundredth back. It's a lot better than being in first place one hundredth ahead.

"I knew I had to go hard to beat Hirscher, and Aksel is such a great competitor so I knew I had to go hard. I didn't hold back at all."

It is the third podium of the season for Ligety, who won the World Cup GS title in 2008 and regains the discipline lead, 292-259 over Austria's Benjamin Raich, who is tied for second in the points with Italian Masimilliano Blardone. Ligety also moved up to sixth in the overall standings with another GS on tap at Kranjska on Saturday.

"It's nice to have this race right before the Olympics. It

kind of gives me a little extra confidence boost,” said Ligety, whose Rossignol ski tech, Ales Kalamar, is from nearby and enjoys strong support in Kranjska.

“It’s an awesome GS hill with such incredible terrain, so I really like that part of it. Plus, it’s always toward the end of the year, and that’s when I feel like I’m skiing the best. It always feels good to race here. I really feel blessed to have a hill like this to compete on.”

Ligety wasn’t the only American to rip into the finals. Newly-named Olympian Tommy Ford (Bend, OR) was 21st despite small mistakes on both runs.

“It showed that he’s fast and strong,” said Men’s Slalom Head Coach Rudi Soulard, pointing to his third-fastest time on the final pitch of the second run.

Teammate Tim Jitloff (Reno, NV) also took home points, taking 27th after a mistake on his second run cost him a chance at a higher result.

“It’s nice to see him get back on track,” Soulard said.

Ligety’s win marked the 101st World Cup victory for American men. Two-time overall champion Bode Miller (Franconia, NH), who secured No. 100 with his super combined win in Wengen, Switzerland, never planned to race in Kranjska and is stateside resting his ankle.

Kranjska Gora, Slovenia, Jan. 29, Men’s Giant Slalom

1. Ted Ligety (Park City, UT), 2:22.02
2. Marcel Hirscher, Austria, 2:22.36
3. Kjetil Jansrud, Norway, 2:22.53
4. Aksel Lund Svindal, Norway, 2:22.84
5. Davide Simoncelli, Italy, 2:23.00

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21. Tommy Ford, Bend, OR, 2:25.38

27. Tim Jitloff, Reno, NV, 2:26.18

DNQ 1 “ Nolan Kasper, Warren, VT; Jake Zamansky, Aspen, CO

DNF 1 “ Warner Nickerson, Gilford, NH

Lake Tahoe ski report, Jan. 29



Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe, says take yellow or bronze/rose tinted goggles today. Here is his ski report.

Nevada State Parks has money to give away

The Nevada Division of State Parks has approximately \$384,000 in federal funds available for local park and recreation capital improvement and acquisition projects through the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund program.

Local and tribal governments are potentially eligible for the 50:50 matching grants offered through the program. The due date for applications is April 1.

Application packages, including application forms and the grants manual are available on State Parks's website: <http://parks.nv.gov/lwcf.htm>.

Hard copies are available upon request.

Contact Jenny Scanland at (775) 684-2787 or Steve Weaver at (775) 684-2773 for additional information, or send an email to jscanland@parks.nv.gov or jsweaver@parks.nv.gov.

Hight, Teter place 3-4 in X Games' first night

By Lindsey Sine, USSA

ASPEN – In classic form, Olympic gold medalists Kelly Clark (Mt. Snow, VT) and Shaun White (Carlsbad, CA) topped the superpipe qualifications Thursday night during Winter X Games 14 in Aspen.

Both White and Clark went four for five in the U.S. Snowboarding Grand Prix tour to qualify first for the 2010 Olympic Team, and the X Games are their last competition stop before heading to Vancouver.

"This is all part of the plan and it's all about the momentum and confidence that the riders are building as we head to Vancouver," U.S. Snowboarding Halfpipe Head Coach Mike Jankowski said. "It's all working out and there's more great things to come."

Plans of greatness for the Games aside, the lights at Buttermilk Mountain shone bright for the U.S. women heading for Vancouver as the fabulous four of the Olympic Halfpipe

Team swept the top four qualification spots.

Coming in just behind Clark was Aspen's favorite girl-next-door Gretchen Bleiler (Aspen, CO) who threw down for the home crowd. In third, Elena Hight (South Lake Tahoe, CA) delt her trademark nines, and was followed in fourth by Hannah Teter (South Lake Tahoe, CA).

Over in the man cave, no one was a match for White, with Switzerland's Iouri Podladtchikov falling nearly 10 points behind White to make the second position. Olympic newcomer Greg Bretz (Mammoth Lakes, CA) put the field on notice with his runs, finishing in the third spot to round things out.

The action-sports fiesta continues Friday, starting with men's and women's snowboardcross eliminations at 9:30 a.m. MT and gets back into halfpipe for men's night finals at 7:30 p.m. MT.

Winter X Games 14, Aspen, Jan. 28, Halfpipe Qualifications

Men

1. Shaun White, Carlsbad, CA, 97.66
2. Iouri Podladtchikov, Switzerland, 88.33
3. Greg Bretz, Mammoth Lakes, CA, 87.66
4. Kazuhiro Kokubo, Japan, 84.00
5. JJ Thomas, Breckenridge, CO, 80.00
6. Luke Mitrani , Mammoth Lakes, CA, 79.66
7. Louie Vito, Sandy, UT, 77.66
8. Steve Fisher, Breckenridge, CO, 77.00
9. Antti Autti, Finland, 76.66

Women

1. Kelly Clark , Mt. Snow, VT, 96.00
 2. Gretchen Bleiler, Aspen, CO, 95.66
 3. Elena Hight, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 89.00
 4. Hannah Teter, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 84.33
 5. Ellery Hollingsworth, Stratton, VT, 80.66
 6. Soko Yamaoka, Japan, 76.00
 7. Queralt Castellet, Spain, 75.33
 8. Kaitlyn Farrington, Sun Valley, ID, 74.66
 9. Clair Bidez, Minturn, CO, 68.00
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Sierra, Northstar athletes going for gold at X Games

Look at the podium at Winter X Games Fourteen this weekend for athletes representing Sierra-at-Tahoe and Northstar-at-Tahoe.

Here's the line-up:

Hannah Teter – the reigning Women's Halfpipe gold medalist from Torino, Italy, Teter will try for a repeat gold this winter at the 2010 Winter Games. She will also go for the podium at Winter X Games. Teter rides for Sierra and competes in Pipe.

Elena Hight – recovering from injuries sustained last winter, Hight has a shot at the Winter X Games podium with back-to-back 900s in her bag of tricks. Hight is also on the U.S.

Women's Snowboarding Halfpipe team and will be traveling to the 2010 Winter Games after the Winter X Games. She rides for Northstar and will compete in Pipe.

Jamie Anderson – widely considered the best female snowboarder in the world, Anderson has won Slopestyle gold at Winter X Games twice and was the youngest Winter X gold medal winner ever in 2007. She rides for Sierra Resort and will compete in Slopestyle and Pipe.

Eero Ettala – more of a film snowboarder rather than a big competitor, Ettala can nail the switch double backflip and will be pulling one out at Winter X Games if conditions are right. Ettala rides for Northstar Resort and will compete in Slopestyle and Big Air.

Chas Guldemon – having taken the 2008-09 Burton Global Open Series championship and the U.S. Open in '09, Guldemon is on track to step it up at this year's Winter X Games. He rides for Northstar and will compete in Slopestyle and Big Air.

Bev Vuilleumier – up-and-coming on the competition circuit, she is making her way toward the podium one 720 at a time. Vuilleumier rides for Northstar and will compete in Slopestyle.

Jussi Oksanen – entering his 11th Winter X Games, Oksanen has medaled four times. Oksanen rides for Northstar and will compete in Slopestyle.

Elijah Teter – widely known as one of the most technical pipe riders competing today, he finished fourth at last winter's X Games. Teter rides for Sierra and will compete in Halfpipe.

Joanie Anderson – no stranger to Winter X Games gold medals, she has competed six times and medaled twice. Anderson rides for Sierra and will compete in Snowboarder X.

In addition to a strong athlete connection to Winter X Games

Fourteen, Sierra and Northstar also have a connection through SPT, the company responsible for designing and building all of the courses at Winter X Games. Sierra and Northstar are SPT resorts – meaning SPT provides training, guidelines, building resources and design ideas throughout the winter season. That same brainpower is now building and maintaining the Snowboarder X, Slopestyle, Big Air and Pipe for Winter X Games.

Lake Tahoe ski report, Jan. 28



This morning we have a welcome blue sky in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Clouds could roll in later – until then, enjoy the view! Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe, delivers his ski report.

Lake Tahoe ski report, Jan. 27



Partly cloudy with light winds today, and a slight chance of scattered showers – enjoy the break in the weather! Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe, delivers his ski report.

Tahoe's talk of Vancouver, Jan. 27 am edition

By Susan Wood

CALLAGHAN VALLEY, British Columbia – Free-heel skiers rejoice.

For the first time in history, there's a place and time to see the best of the best compete in all four Nordic disciplines – cross



A venue was created for Vancouver's Nordic events.

country, biathlon, ski jumping and Nordic combined – during the 2010 Vancouver Winter Games. The beauty and majesty of the Callaghan Valley, located 11 miles south of Whistler off the Sea to Sky Highway between the ski resort town and Vancouver, will become the backdrop for 28 medal events at Whistler Olympic Park.

The governments of Canada and British Columbia funded the \$120 million investment to develop 5,000 acres of the once-sleepy backcountry area of Callaghan Country. It is anchored by Mount Callaghan to the north and Callaghan Creek to the south. Even

as the world prepares to cast its eyes on the wilderness area, the place has not lost its charm. A six-mile drive up Callaghan Valley Road leads pre-Olympic visitors to a tiny, narrow bridge crossing with a funky cabin welcoming visitors.

With the Olympics fast approaching, construction crews are putting the finishing touches on the ski jumping venue, and the sign identifying this multi-sport complex has been erected. Athletes have gone out to test some of the grounds – 100km of groomed trails. Another 15km of snowshoeing trails are open. Two-thirds of the whole area is open to the public. All of it will be when the Games are over.

The place is a popular option for cross country skiers such as Walter and Sheila Frith who split their time between Whistler and Vancouver. The local residents have explored the area during the last decade.



Sheila and
Walter Frith
talk about
cross country
trails.

Photos/Kathryn
Reed

“We love cross country skiing, so this is indeed the jewel of the Olympics,” he told *Lake Tahoe News* on the couple’s return to their vehicle from the trail. He explained how few trails existed before Vancouver’s Organizing Committee won the bid to host the Winter Games.

The Friths enjoyed taking the entry to Inside Passage run to the appropriately named Around the World run, a 1-1/4-mile route which encircles the Top of the World climb to what the facility's brochure labels as the place for "fantastic views in all directions."

These runs lie outside the Olympic venue, so they're open to the public.

The Friths said they appreciated more trails developed than what Olympic officials intend to use. Being residents, they have seen a "hot and cold" reaction to an event of such magnitude enveloping their two towns.

"We knew enough about the Olympics that you don't like all of it, and certainly there's a reluctance to hosting it, but we expect all to come on board. And I think they've tried for a green Olympics," he said, illustrating an approval for the sustainability measures taken this year with the Games. (Read about some of these measures in upcoming Olympic coverage in *Lake Tahoe News*.)

Here at Callaghan Valley, Vanoc officials chose a site to develop where trees were previously harvested and cut their construction footprint in half from the initial design. An environmental assessment team reviewed the impact of wildlife, plants, wetlands, waterways and archaeological sites during building phases that started five years ago.

The organizing committee hopes to fill three stadiums with 12,000 spectators witnessing the spectacle of these lesser-known, yet equally thrilling sports.

Just a few notes on the subject:

Athletes competing in the 31 mile cross country race are expected in two hours to climb 2,000 vertical feet. That's more than double the vertical drop the men's downhill racers will cover at Whistler Creekside.

Ski jumpers reach a speed of more than 60mph before hurling their bodies into the air.

Chamonix, France, was the first Olympic city to host ski jumping and cross country skiing in 1924. The French city at the base of Mount Blanc touts a proud heritage of its glory days of the Winter Games.

The men's biathlon was first held as an Olympic event at the 1960 Winter Games in Squaw Valley. The Lake Tahoe-area resort hosted a slew of events marking its 50-year anniversary earlier this month, including a Nordic Legends dinner at Granlibakken Resort a little over a week ago. (Read all about it in the *Lake Tahoe News* archive.)

Squaw's neighboring ski resort, Northstar-at-Tahoe, did its part in commemorating the history of biathlon and Tahoe Olympic roots by installing the West Coast's one official course this year.

Guide to snowboarding competition



By Ron Judd, Seattle Times

Because of its fast-paced action, soaring jumps, and spectacular wipeouts, snowboarding has quickly grown from a stepchild Olympic sport to a true fan favorite.

Snowboarding is contested on slopes with heavy degrees of human shaping. The halfpipe, where freestyle snowboarding

takes place, is a carved snow trough, about 110 meters (360 feet) long and 13 to 17 meters (42 to 56 feet) wide, with walls about 3.5 meters (11.5 feet) high. The parallel giant slalom course is much like those used in alpine skiing for a giant slalom: A set of gates set 7 to 15 meters (23 to 50 feet) apart over a vertical drop of 120 to 250 meters (394 to 800 feet) so racers can compete side to side, making turns all the way down the course. Snowboard cross courses are long, undulating trailsâ€”just barely wide enough if all four competitors were to run side by sideâ€”with a series of whoop-de-do jumps.

Read the whole story