Squaw’s Holland wins boardercross in Austria

By Lindsey Sine, USSA

BAD GASTEIN, Austria – It wasn’t a question of if, as much as when Nate Holland (Squaw Valley, CA) and Lindsey Jacobellis (Stratton, VT) were going to shred their way to a podium. That question was answered Sunday as both won the snowboardcross World Cup in Austria.

“This totally amps me for the Olympics â€“ it’s my ticket to Vancouver! ” said Holland, who wore a 2006 jersey under his racing suit for luck. “I dropped the hammer and survived. It was a course which I like â€“ with a lot of body contact. And I know how to play this game”



Nate Holland

Holland led, followed in second by Pierre Vaultier of France and Mario Fuchs of Austria in third.

For Jacobellis, the win was much anticipated and comes with a bit of relief and a lot of excitement.

“I’m stoked. I definitely needed that. I’ve been in kindof a little slump lately, and this felt great,” Jacobellis said. “It takes off a lot of the pressure that this has happened. It supports my confidence and helps me go into the next one.”

Joining Jacobellis on the podium were Helene Olafsen of Norway in second and Switzerland’s Sandra Frei in third.

According to the X Games gold medalist, a huge part of the race was being able to make it through a difficult first bank turn.

“I was having trouble with the first bank turn because there was so much g force going in and the pressure all builds up at the end. For finals I was worried about that and thought if I just give it a little more belly of room I won’t have so much pressure,” Jacobellis said. “It’s a sketchy thing to do because you’re opening up the door for someone else, but I felt like I had a good holeshot.”

And, of course, someone tried to make the pass. If it weren’t for some quick maneuvering and patience, Jacobellis could have gone down.

“Helene [Olafsen, Norway] tried to come inside and she buckled at the waist, and almost crashed into me. I grabbed her and picked her up so she didn’t fall because it would have taken me out, too,” Jacobellis said. “So then I was just shadowing her down through the next turn and over the jump. But she got squirley going over the rollers and that’s when I took the opportunity to pass her on the left side. It was smooth sailing from there.”

And, as a special gift for her win, Jacobellis got to hear the “Star Spangled Banner” twice.

“They had to play the national anthem twice for me. I had to go up and get my stuff from the start, so they played it twice while I came down,” Jacobellis said.

While the spotlight was on Holland and Jacobellis, two other Americans cracked the top 10. Nick Baumgartner (Iron River, MI) was eighth in the men’s, as was Ski and Snowboard Club Vail rider Faye Gulini (Salt Lake City).

Two events remain in the Olympic qualifying period and no spots have been mathematically clinched. The World Cup heads

to Switzerland Friday with a final event in Canada Jan. 21 before the team is named Jan. 25.

Bad Gastein, Austria, Jan. 10, Snowboardcross

Men

1. Nate Holland, Squaw Valley, CA

2. Pierre Vaultier, France

3. Mario Fuchs, Austria

4. Markus Schairer, Austria

5. Tony Ramoin, France

—

8. Nick Baumgartner, Iron River, MI

19. Shaun Palmer, South Lake Tahoe, CA

20. Graham Watanabe, Sun Valley, ID

24. Ross Powers, Okemo, VT

26. Jonathan Cheever, Saugus, MA

33. Pat Holland, Squaw Valley, CA

52. Mick Dierdorff, Steamboat Springs, CO

54. Jason Smith, Basalt, CO

56. Seth Wescott, Sugarloaf, ME

Women

1. Lindsey Jacobellis, Stratton, VT

2. Helene Olafsen, Norway

3. Sandra Frei, Switzerland

4. Nelly Moenne Loccoz, France

5. Mellie Francon, Switzerland

–

8. Faye Gulini, Salt Lake City

16. Callan Chythlook Sifsof, Girdwood, AK

STHS athletic realignment

Don Borges, South Tahoe High School athletic director, reports that STHS is scheduled to compete in the 4A for the 2010-11 athletic season.

On Monday, he will be in Winnemucca to observe the 3A-2A AD meeting and their discussion about realignment for next year.

On Tuesday, the NIAA is expected to send him the proposal and LTUSDâ€™s options for realignment.

Rahlves skips France race; Truckee’s Horn places 77th

By USSA

LES CONTAMINES, France -â€“ A turn away from the first World Cup win of his career, Casey Puckett (Aspen, CO) had to settle for fourth when he crashed Sunday morning in Les Contamines.

Puckett led in his second final group of the 2010 ski cross season â€“ originally scheduled for Saturday but delayed due to heavy fog â€“ from the outset, and appeared to be home free when he lost control squatting into a turn and suffered the fluky fall.

Ski cross coach Tyler Shepherd said he wasn't sure what happened, and he would look at the replay later.

â€œIt's ski cross, sometimes that's the way it goes,â€ he said.

France's Xavier Kuhn skied past Puckett for the win.

Caitlin Ciccone (Littleton, NH) was 23rd in a woman's race won by Canada's Ashleigh McIvor, marking the best result of Ciccone's career.

"We just need to figure out how to get her out of the start faster," Shepherd said. â€œShe's a fast skier, we just have to get her up in front."

Daron Rahlves (Sugar Bowl, CA) skipped out on the chance to improve on a career-best second place in St. Johann, Austria, last week, opting instead to train at home before a return to the World Cup circuit in Lake Placid on Jan. 21.

The U.S. squad has one more event â€“ in Alpe d'Huez, France, on Wednesday â€“ before a return to North America for races in Blue Mountain, ON, and Lake Placid.

Les Contamines, France, Jan. 10, skiercross

Men

1. Xavier Kuhn, France

2. Stanley Hayer, Canada

3. Tomas Kraus, Czech Republic

4. Casey Puckett, Aspen, CO

5. Michael Schmid, Switzerland

–

56. Justin Johnson, Park City, UT

62. John Teller, Mammoth Lakes, CA

67. Jean Christophe Rudigoz, Sun Valley, ID

77. Scott Horn, Truckee, CA

DNF â€“ Patrick Duran, Fayston, VT

Women

1. Ashleigh McIvor, Canada

2. Julia Murray, Canada

3. Karin Huttary, Austria

4. Ophelie David, France

5. Katrin Mueller, Switzerland

–

23. Caitlin Ciccone, Littleton, NH

Vonn wins 3 days in a row; Mancuso 10th

By Matthew Piper, USSA

HAUS IM ENNSTAL, Austria – Finally, third tryâ€™s a charm for Lindsey Vonn (Vail, CO). After near misses in hat trick bids at Val dâ€™Isere, France (third in the super G), and Lake Louise, AB (second in the super G), the skier with a vice grip on the early World Cup points standings followed two consecutive downhill wins with a triumph in the super G on Sunday in Haus Im Ennstal, Austria, besting the field by more than a half second.

“Itâ€™s good to know that I can do it,” Vonn said. “There was definitely a little bit more pressure today because everybody was wanting me to do the three in a row, and I wanted to do it myself, so itâ€™s just good to know that I can ski well under pressure, and it just gives me more and more confidence going into Vancouver.”

Vonn becomes the first American â€“ man or woman â€“ ever to win on three straight days. The last time an international woman accomplished the feat was Dec. 4-6, 1997, when German Katja Seizinger won a speed trio in Lake Louise.

And as if thatâ€™s not reward enough, Vonnâ€™s picture will adorn three gondolas at the resort to commemorate her 26th, 27th and 28th World Cup wins.

“The course was awesome, I had so much fun,” Vonn said. “The snow was in perfect condition and I just let it go. I didnâ€™t concentrate too much on all the tactics, I just tried to really charge as much as I could.

“Everythingâ€™s fitting really well together â€“ my serviceman, my skis, my tactics, my coaches, everythingâ€™s going so well, and I couldnâ€™t be more thankful.”

Vonn, who trailed Swedenâ€™s Anja Paerson at the first interval but picked up steam through the middle section of the course and crossed the line 0.53 seconds ahead, said she just tried to keep it simple and ski a clean run.

“Itâ€™s an incredible performance,” said womenâ€™s speed coach Alex Hoedelmoser. “From the midway down it gets really technical and steep. She had a perfect line and was aggressive enough to master the final part.”

The victory also moved the two-time defending overall champion to second all time for Americans with her 28th win, passing Phil Mahre (Bode Miller has 31).

“Iâ€™m proud of myself,” Vonn said of achieving the trifecta. “Itâ€™s not easy to do. I was tired today, and itâ€™s hard to stay focused, but I did it, now Iâ€™m done – now Iâ€™m just going to try to recover for the slalom in two days.”

She now leads the overall World Cup by 192 points over Maria Riesch of Germany, the downhill by 164 over Riesch, the super G by 95 over Swiss Nadia Styger, and the super combined by 20 points â€“ also over Riesch.

As for the bone bruise on her left arm that has her in a cheetah brace, Hoedelmoser said it shouldnâ€™t be an issue outside of the slalom, where she brushes up against gates.

“It doesnâ€™t really bother her too much anymore at the start,” he said.

Julia Mancuso (Olympic Valley, CA) was 10th for the U.S., with Chelsea Marshall (Pittsfield, VT) also finishing in the points at 21st.

Next up for the U.S. women is a slalom in Flachau, Austria on Tuesday.

Haus Im Ennstal, Austria, Jan. 10, Womenâ€™s Super G

1. Lindsey Vonn, Vail, CO, 1:26.69

2. Anja Paerson, Sweden, 1:27.22

3T. Nadia Fanchini, Italy, 1:27.54

3T. Martina Schild, Switzerland, 1:27.54

5. Andrea Fischbacher, Austria, 1:27.86

–

10. Julia Mancuso, Olympic Valley, CA, 1:28.45

21. Chelsea Marshall, Pittsfield, VT, 1:29.10

32. Leanne Smith, North Conway, NH, 1:30.06

35. Stacey Cook, Mammoth Mountain, CA, 1:30.36

37. Keely Kelleher, Big Sky, MT, 1:30.53

46. Alice McKennis, Glenwood Springs, CO, 1:31.33

Lake Tahoe ski report, Jan. 10



Don’t let the yucky weather in the Lake Tahoe Basin scare you from the slopes. While South Lake had fog on Saturday, Sierra-at-Tahoe had some sun. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Hotdogger Wong captures

Olympic spirit

Reno resident and legendary freestyle skier Wayne Wong will be the athlete of honor at the Olympic Heritage mogul competition Jan. 12 at Alpine Meadows Ski Resort.

As part of a series of this winterâ€™s Olympic Heritage events which celebrate the 50th anniversary as Lake Tahoeâ€™s Olympics, the Olympic Heritage Mogul Competition gets back to the roots of ski competition during the 1960s.



Hotdogger Wayne Wong in his prime. Photo/Alpine Meadows

Event registration is from 8-10am in the Alpine Meadows base lodge near



Wayne Wong

the fireplace, and is $25. The registration fee includes lunch; a beer or soda; a commemorative T-shirt; live concert;

access to the post-competitions festivities and awards ceremony at the Alpine Meadows Mid Mountain Chalet (adjacent to the competition course); and a chance to ski with Wong.

The competition will take place on Yellow Trail from 11am-2pm, and competitors receive points for both 1960s ski style – and more important, 1960s fashion.

Fashion was all the rage during this era, so competitors who dig out their 1960s (and 1970s) ski duds have as much opportunity to take the gold as any legendary ski great.

For more information about the Olympic Heritage Mogul Competition at Alpine Meadows, visit SkiAlpine.com or call the Alpine Meadows events department at (530) 581.8332.

Wayne Wong, the skiing legend

In 2006, *Powder* magazine named Wong one of the greatest skiers of our time for his influence over the evolution of freestyle skiing, widely known as â€œhotdoggingâ€ during the 1960s. Hotdoggingâ€™s emerging and unorthodox ski style infused traditional skiing with fun, creative tricks; and Wongâ€™s ability to hotdog better than the entire freestyle field was evident from the get-go.

Because of his talent, the style caught like wildfire and became the popular way to be cool on the slopes throughout the 1960s and well into the 1970s – so much so that in 1979, the International Ski Federation recognized hotdogging as an official winter ski discipline, and a new World Cup and Olympic sport was born.

The term hotdogging eventually became known as freestyle skiing, paving the way for Olympic athletes such as Jonny Moseley and Shannon Bahrke.

Fast forward to 2010, and Wongâ€™s style on the slopes is unmistakable – and can be spotted in every freestyle skier on

the slopes. To this day, he is one of the best skiers on the mountain. Wayne invites all skiers to celebrate the genesis of todayâ€™s mogul and freestyle skiing in this fun flashback competition on Jan. 12.

Rahlves turns it up a notch in skiercross



Daron Rahlves left the world of downhill competition to start a second career in skiercross. The 36-year-old trains at Sugar Bowl.

Why did you choose this resort?: For the skiing and to work with the Sugar Bowl Ski Team and Academy. Sugar Bowl has an outstanding race arena for training and the team has full support from the resort. The terrain at the Bowl is awesome and there is a ton of back country terrain waiting just out of the resort.

How often are you in Lake Tahoe?: I live in Truckee 9 months of the year and get in the lake during the summer to water ski, wake board, SUP and swim.

When you arenâ€™t training and competing where can we find you and what would you be doing?: Spending time with Michelle and our twins Miley and Dreyson at home riding bikes, walking in the woods, skiing, at the lake, going out to lunch at Moodyâ€™s and playing with our two huskies. I also like to ride my sled in the winter and in summer dirtbike and mountain bike.

After you win gold in Vancouver, what is your next goal?: To compete in the Silver Belt Banzai March 14-15 at the Bowl and film big mountain skiing around Tahoe and in Alaska.

How long have you been participating in your sport?: Iâ€™ve skied since I was 3. Raced DH, SG and GS for 13 years on the USST and now ski cross on a limited schedule for the last 3 years. I donâ€™t compete in many ski cross events due to the time it takes away from my family. Iâ€™ve been on the road most of the winter during my racing career so now itâ€™s all about days skiing in Tahoe.

Who inspires you most and why?: I get inspired by those who have confidence and a positive attitude.

Your life is devoted to an event that is over in minutes, how do you prepare for that thrill of victory or agony of defeat?: I never prepare for the outcome, but for the chance I get.

Anything else you would like to add?: Iâ€™d like to thank all the people who follow me in competitions and free ski films. Iâ€™d like to thank my sponsors Red Bull, Atomic, Spyder, Sugar Bowl Resort, Oakley, Swix, Giro, Start Haus, Le Chamois, the USST, my sister Shannon, Mom, Dad and most of all Michelle, Miley and Dreyson.

Publisher's note: *On Jan. 11 read about what it was like for a Tahoe reporter to cover the 1960 Olympics.*

Sierra Avalanche Center ski days

Sierra Avalanche Center ski days are SAC's largest fund-

raising events.

Each of the participating ski areas have donated a set number of lift tickets to SAC that are only valid on a specific day. SAC is selling these lift tickets at a discounted price. SAC retains the proceeds from each ticket sale. Fund raising from these events makes up the majority of SAC's annual budget.

Upcoming SAC Events:

* Bear Valley Ski Day Jan. 15

* Northstar Ski Day Jan. 24

* Kirkwood Ski Day Feb. 20

* Mt. Rose Ski Day Feb. 21

For more information, go to www.sierraavalanchecenter.org.

Mixed results for Tahoe area mogulists

By USSA

CALGARY – The U.S. Freestyle Ski Team's women's moguls squad gave Calgary a Saturday-night encore with three skiers in the top six, led by Park City's Heather McPhie, who grabbed another all-important top five with her second consecutive fourth-place finish.

"I'm knocking at the door, repeatedly," said McPhie, who is in competition for the final Olympic spot, give her two top-5's. "I definitely don't feel my work is over."

McPhie was a discretionary choice to compete in Suomo, Finland, in December, finding out she'd be a part of the FIS World Cup circuit on Nov. 19, a date she said she won't forget.

"I get goosebumps talking about it," she said.

McPhie said she wasn't totally overwhelmed in her first action, but still had room to improve.

"I made some big gains mentally this week," she said. "You want to do so well, but at the same time you know that there's a lot to learn. I'll keep chipping away at both my strengths and my weaknesses until they're all strengths."

Shelly Robertson (Reno, NV) moved up to fifth from eighth Friday, and 2002 Olympic silver medalist Shannon Bahrke (Tahoe City, CA) followed a seventh-place performance with sixth.

Already assured a spot on the Olympic squad, U.S. Olympic Trial winner Hannah Kearney (Norwich, VT) crashed on her bottom air, missing finals.

U.S. Olympic Trial champion Patrick Deneen (Cle Elum, WA) was the top performer on the men?s side in ninth place.

"It was a very difficult course," said moguls head coach Scott Rawles. "You had to be really super focused and on your game to do well with it."

Canada's Jennifer Heil won for the second consecutive day, moving to first place in the FIS World Cup standings over country mate Kristi Richards, and Australia's Dale Begg-Smith also made it two-for-two in Calgary on the men?s side.

Three events remain for the moguls athletes to secure a desperately sought trip to Vancouver – two in Park City, Utah, at Deer Valley Resort and one in Lake Placid and there are a plethora of athletes vying for the honor on both sides.

“In a lot of ways, it’s a good problem to have,” Rawles said. “We’re psyched to get back to the States for three weeks.”

Calgary, Jan. 9, Moguls

Men

1. Dale Begg-Smith, Australia, 25.25

2. Alexandre Bilodeau, Canada, 24.70

3. Alexandr Smyshlyaev, Russia, 24.42

4. Dmitriy Reiherd, Kazakhstan, 23.68

5. Anthony Benna, France, 23.67

—

9. Patrick Deneen, Cle Elum, WA, 23.14

11. Sho Kashima, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 22.40

16. Bryon Wilson, Butte, MT, 10.77

18. Michael Morse, Duxbury, MA, 21.32

30. David Babic, Washington, VT, 19.77

52. Nate Roberts, Park City, UT, 4.96

Women

1. Jennifer Heil, Canada, 24.94

2. Aiko Uemura, Japan, 24.03

3. Nikola Sudova, Czech Republic, 23.90

4. Heather McPhie, Park City, UT, 23.69

5. Shelly Robertson, Reno, NV, 23.30

6. Shannon Bahrke, Tahoe City, CA, 23.73

–

16. Emiko Torito, Denver, 4.56

20. Michelle Roark, Denver, 18.33

33. Eliza Outtrim, Steamboat Springs, CO,

Hight, Teter on podium in Mammoth

By Lindsey Sine, USSA

MAMMOTH – Olympic gold medalist Shaun White (Carlsbad, CA) can book a ticket to Vancouver now as he won his second Sprint U.S. Snowboarding Grand Prix competition to lock down his team spot for the Games. White was joined in the winners circle by Olympic Silver medalist Gretchen Bleiler (Aspen, CO) whose win, along with a second place in Copper, brought her a step closer to reaching her Olympic dreams.



Elena Hight

“I’m happy to be on the team and secure that spot. Now I can just work on my stuff and get dialed,” White said. “I was feeling great because I had a second and a first, and that’s pretty strong hold on getting on the team. But a first and a first is guaranteed, so I’m really excited.”

White was followed in second by Louie Vito (Sandy, UT) and JJ Thomas (Golden, CO) in third.

The legend solidified his win in the first run, but when it came to his victory lap he decided it was time to throw something fresh out and nearly landed.

“It’s a double cork McTwist 1080, but that last one I went 1260, so I’m going to have to pick and chose if I want to take it 12 or keep it 10,” White said. “It’s been a trick that’s been messing with me for a while, but I’m excited to try to put it down in Park City and hopefully at the Games.”

And with the pressure off to make the Olympic Team, White’s plan is to dial in new tricks and try to have some fun with it.

“It’s not that far away. I’m just trying to have fun this time, do my best, and put down heavy runs. Today was a good day, I put down some good stuff and I was holding my best back on that last run,” White said. “I feel like if I hang tight and keep riding the way I am, I’m just going to keep getting better and better.”

For Vito, two second-place finishes have him closing in on an Olympic spot and, while not solidified yet, he’s happy with where he’s standing.

“I can’t really do much more, I just have to keep riding strong and keep getting better. I hope two seconds get me through, I have another contest and I could get a first, but I’m just going to try to be consistent,” Vito said.

Vito put down a double cork, cab double cork, air, backside 9, frontside air for his spot on the podium and he plans to keep upping the ante to make it to the Games.

“I landed, I got a top three. That’s all I really wanted and all I could hope for. Everyone’s riding well and I have to

keep stepping it up and I’m hoping for the best and what gets me to Vancouver,” Vito said.

For Bleiler, the win was a breath of fresh air, especially as she accomplished it by landing a run that was new to her competition repertoire.

“I feel awesome. This whole season I’ve just been trying to figure out a run for myself, and today I switched it up completely and figured out a run that I’ve never done before, and it worked for me,” Bleiler said. “It feels really good to win today and I feel so much more confident.”

The frontside 9, backside 5, crippler 720, cab 7, strainght air also helps edge Bleiler closer to Vancouver, which has the rider feeling solid.

“With a win today and a second in Copper, I’m pretty good right now. I’m excited to go back to the Olympics and represent our country in women’s snowboarding,” Bleiler said.

As for her game plan to get there, it involves grabbing and air.

“I am looking to just improve on that run and make sure the 9 is grabbed all the way around. I’m also going to keep working on my amplitude and the cab 7,” Bleiler said.

Following Bleiler up in the second spot was 2006 Olympian Elena Hight (South Lake Tahoe, CA), who said the Olympics seem closer now that she’s made her mark on the podium.

“I’m really happy about today. Making the podium makes the Olympics seem much more real. There’s a lot of pressure on this year, but I’m just stoked to be doing well, having fun, and I’m looking forward to Park City,” Hight said.

Hight threw out back to back 9s, which she says sets her apart in her riding style.

“The judges are always looking for amplitude and people stepping it up in different ways. Amplitude has never been my strongest point, but I’ve been spinning 9s for a long time,” Hight said. “I learned them when I was pretty young, so they’re a really solid easy trick for me. It’s something no one else does and it’s nice to go out there and land a run no one has.”

Hight was followed in third by 2006 Olympic gold medalist Hannah Teter (South Lake Tahoe, CA).

The Sprint U.S. Snowboarding Grand Prix continues Sunday with a slopestyle competition before heading to the final two events at Park City Mountain Resort Jan. 22 and 23.

Mammoth Mountain, Jan. 9, Halfpipe

Men

1. Shaun White, Carlsbad, CA, 47.00

2. Louie Vito, Sandy, UT, 45.60

3. JJ Thomas, Golden, CO, 45.00

4. Luke Mitrani, Mammoth Mountain, CA, 44.20

5. Zack Black, Breckenridge, CO, 43.30

6. Steve Fisher, Breckenridge, CO, 41.90

7. Scotty Lago, Seabrook, NH, 39.40

8. Matt Ladley, Steamboat Springs, CO, 39.30

9. Elijah Teter, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 37.90

10. Dylan Bidez, Minturn, CO, 30.40

Women

1. Gretchen Bleiler, Aspen, CO, 44.10

2. Elena Hight, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 43.30

3. Hannah Teter, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 42.80

4. Kelly Clark, Mt. Snow, VT, 41.80

5. Ellery Hollingsworth, Stratton, VT, 41.60

6. Holly Crawford, Australia, 33.30

7. Clair Bidez, Minturn, CO, 26.50

8. Maddy Schaffrick, Steamboat Springs, CO