

WACHTER WINS COMBINED SLALOM IN JAPAN

Favored for world title

SHIZUKUISHI, Japan (AP) — Anita Wachter of Austria, showing why she's the leader in the World Cup overall standings, won the women's combined slalom race today and stamped herself as one of the favorites for the combined gold medal in the world alpine ski championships.

ALPINE SKIING

Wachter completed two runs through weather ranging from balmy sunshine to blizzard in one minute 8.88 seconds. But to win the combined, she'll have to excel in the downhill portion, and her chief foe will be German Miriam Vogt.

Vogt, one of the world's best downhillers, was second in the slalom, only 2-100ths of a second behind Wachter.

"Some specialists from the downhill fell out, so that will make it easier," Wachter said.

"It's going to be very difficult for me," Vogt said.

When their private battle will be waged remained unknown. Because of the almost constant wind and occasional heavy snow, practice sessions have been cancelled and races postponed all week.

The combined slalom was the first actual race to be contested in the championships, which began with the postponement of the women's combined downhill Wednesday. The combined downhill and the women's open downhill, previously scheduled for today, have yet to be rescheduled.

The defending world combined champion, Chantal Bournissen of Switzerland, skied herself out of contention with a two-run time of 1:14.77.

Although a downhill specialist — she won the 1991 World Cup title and is second in the standings this year — there's no way she can make up the six-second deficit behind Wachter and Vogt.

While Wachter and Vogt appear to have gold and silver locked up, the fight for the bronze medal appeared wide open.

The only speed racer among the remaining skiers in the top 10



Anita Wachter of Austria crashes through a gate at the combined slalom in Shizukuishi, Japan.

was Austrian Ulrike Maier, eighth in 1:10.68. To get the bronze, she'll have to overcome a 1.49-second deficit behind third-place slalom finisher Titti Rodling of Sweden.

Just getting in two slalom runs was a chore.

"It was a joke," said a disgusted Kerrin Lee-Gartner of Calgary, the Olympic downhill

champion. She had to ski through a virtual whiteout in the first run and had no chance of fighting back into medal contention.

Lee-Gartner eventually placed 24th in the field of 51 starters, clocking 1:18.57.

Michelle Ruthven of Vancouver was the top Canadian, 18th in 1:15.04. Lindsey Roberts of Rossland, B.C., was 33rd in 1:24.39, while Melanie Turgeon of Que-

bec City was unable to finish her run.

The forecast for Friday was for improving conditions with some sun and temperatures rising to near freezing. A break in the weather could allow organizers to catch up with the schedule heading into the weekend and the glamor event of this two-week meet, the men's downhill on Sunday.

Senators no longer worst team

by Canadian Press

The NHL begins its annual all-star break today, giving clubs a chance to ponder their respective state of affairs with 10 weeks left in the season.

The Ottawa Senators, for example, are taking pride in the fact they are no longer the worst team in the league after beating the visiting Edmonton Oilers 3-2 for their second win in four games.

That "distinction" now goes to the San Jose Sharks, who lost their 15th game in a row, 7-3 to the Minnesota North Stars, and are just two defeats shy of matching the league record for futility set by the 1974-75 Washington Capitals.

Buffalo boasts the first 50-goal man of the season, Alexander Mogilny, and are also smiling over the acquisition of veteran goalie Grant Fuhr, who made 26 saves in his first game for the Sabres, a 3-2 win over Hartford.

And Toronto was pleased with ex-Sabre Dave Andreychuk's first game as a Maple Leaf — his 30th goal of the season — but goalie Felix Potvin was a little suspect in a 3-2 loss to the New York Islanders.

Elsewhere, it was: Boston 4, Quebec 1; Montreal 7, Los Angeles 2; Calgary 5, New Jersey 4; St. Louis 4, Winnipeg 2; Philadelphia 2, N.Y. Rangers 2; and Detroit 5, Chicago 0.

The NHL takes a four-day

NHL

break, with the All-Star game scheduled Saturday in Montreal. Play resumes Monday with three games.

"I don't know if we've jelled yet," veteran Doug Smail said with a smile after scoring Ottawa's opening goal, his first in 117 days.

Bob Kudelski scored twice, his 12th and 13th goals in 21 games as a Senator.

The Oilers had back-to-back road victories coming into Ottawa but played as if they were already on the plane home.

"We showed too little, too late," said defenceman Luke Richardson, whose short-handed goal with 48 seconds left in regulation made the game appear close.

Islanders 3 Leafs 2

"As the game went on, we clicked a little bit better," said Andreychuk, who played with sniper Doug Gilmour and showed the pairing's potential with a goal in the third period and several other good chances foiled by Islander goalie Mark Fitzpatrick.

"At the beginning, I wasn't sure where he (Gilmour) was going to go and where I was going to go."

Islanders forward Benoit Hogue scored twice and then was off to the Laurentians north of Montreal

for some fun in the snow during the break.

"They had some snow and it's time to go ski-dooing," said Hogue.

Sabres 3 Whalers 2

Mogilny stuffed home the winner with 28 seconds remaining when he one-timed a pass from behind the Hartford net to beat goalie Sean Burke.

"When you build a hockey club, you need game-breakers: Alex is a game-breaker," Sabres coach John Muckler said.

Fuhr stopped all 14 Hartford shots in the first period when Buffalo took a 2-0 lead.

"He kept us in there all night long," Muckler said.

Blues 4 Jets 2

St. Louis closed within two points of fourth-place Toronto in the Norris Division as Brett Hull scored his 37th of the season and set up two other goals. The Blues are on a 4-0-2 streak.

"I think we're all going in the right direction now," said Craig Janney, who added two goals for the Blues.

Flames 5 Devils 4

Joel Otto capped a three-goal Calgary third period, scoring with 6:24 to play as the Flames won their fourth straight in beating New Jersey. Bernie Nicholls scored a goal in his first game for the Devils since deciding to re-

move his critically ill infant son from a respirator.

Canadiens 7 Kings 2

Kirk Muller scored two goals and Montreal went into the break with a three-game winning streak. Muller's 25th and 26th goals both came on power plays as the Canadiens scored four times with the man advantage.

Bruins 4 Nordiques 1

Don Sweeney scored two goals, one short-handed and the other into an empty net, as Boston ended Quebec's five-game unbeaten string and closed within two points of the second-place Nordiques in the Adams Division.

Red Wings 5 Blackhawks 0

Paul Coffey, playing his first home game for Detroit, had one goal and two assists against Chicago. Tim Cheveldae made 23 saves for his fourth shutout of the year.

Flyers 2 Rangers 2

Philadelphia rookie Tommy Soderstrom matched New York veteran John Vanbiesbrouck nearly shot for shot in a great goaltending battle. Soderstrom made 36 saves and Vanbiesbrouck came up with 39 saves.

North Stars 7 Sharks 3

Dave Gagner had two goals and two assists for Minnesota, which handed San Jose its 15th straight defeat. The Philadelphia Quakers also lost 15 straight in 1930-31.

Jazz 100 Nuggets 96

John Stockton scored 22 points, including the go-ahead basket with 40 seconds left, lifting Utah over Denver.

Suns 122 Wolves 102

Danny Ainge scored 10 of his 19 points in the fourth quarter and Phoenix remained a perfect 15-0 against Minnesota.

Bulls 107 Kings 88

Michael Jordan scored 36 points and Chicago evened its eight-game road trip at 3-3 by beating Sacramento.

The Chicago Bulls meet the Clippers at 7:30 p.m. on WGN (Cable 25).

A bad day for Bryan

by GORDON HOEKSTRA
Citizen Staff

Dennis Bryan had a disappointing day at his first-ever national championship.

The 17-year-old skater finished 15th in a 16-competitor field in figures on the first day of the novice men's competition in Hamilton, Ont.

"(Figures) didn't turn out as well as I wanted them to, and there's more competitors here than I thought there would be," said Bryan from Hamilton Wednesday afternoon.

Louis-Georges Dufour from Quebec City placed first in figures. Ryan Hill of Red Deer, Alta. and Collin Thompson of Toronto tied for second. Mark Vanderklove of North Vancouver, placed 11th.

Bryan, who is a strong artistic skater, considers figures his weakest event.

In qualifying for the national championship in Calgary at the Western championship, Bryan finished sixth in figures, fifth in the short program, third in the long program and third overall.

Bryan couldn't pinpoint what had happened, saying he hadn't felt nervous before the competition started.

"In figures it's either you're on it or you're not — and I guess I wasn't."

But he is not discouraged.

"It could be interesting from now on with the figures out of the way. Now I'm going to go out and have fun with it because my figures are finished."

And he said the competition level wasn't overly high.

FIGURE SKATING

"I'm at the same level they are, definitely — I haven't seen a lot of consistency here."

In order to do well now, he feels he has to skate clean the rest of the way.

One of the favorites, Dufour, and Vanderklove have some triples planned, he said.

And although Bryan has never attempted a triple in competition, he said he is planning to put one in his routine.

"I sort of have to," he said.

Bryan, who had a chance to practice on Tuesday and again Wednesday afternoon, said he hadn't tried a triple in practice at Hamilton yet but might try one this week.

Bryan, trying to take his first national event in stride, said it was a little overwhelming at first.

"Actually last night at the opening banquet, I sort of felt like that when we were walking in — the lights all are off, and there's these spotlights and stuff on us."

"Now I'm trying to say 'enough with that, let's go do what you're supposed to do.'"

Bryan skates his short program Thursday afternoon and his long program Friday afternoon.

The senior Canadian figure skating championships are set to begin Friday, featuring head-to-head competition for the men's championship between Elvis Stojko and Kurt Browning.

City finalists no great surprise

by ED MILLS
Citizen Staff

Surprise, surprise — the city's senior boys basketball championship will be contested by Prince George's top two teams.

The Prince George Secondary School Polars and College Heights Cougars surprised no one last night as they solidified their spots in the city championship with league wins.

The Polars and Cougars meet in the city championship game Wednesday at the College of New Caledonia.

The Polars got 16 points from Harv Sandhu in a 86-57 home-court win over the D.P. Todd Trojans, while the Cougars beat the Duchess Park Condors 88-70 at Duchess.

Trevor Romanow and Shevko Harjie each canned 12 for the Polars — who went undefeated in city league play — while Richard Bruce had 16 for the Trojans.

Grant Harder led College Heights with 31 points and John Bate chipped in with 20. Kevin Ouhet and Nelish Patel each had 19 for the Condors.

Coaches for both clubs say the city championship is important as they get set for the zone and provincial championships. But city-wide bragging rights are probably just as important as anything.

"Everybody's got something to prove out there," said Polars

HIGH SCHOOL

coach Dave Holmes. "It's something that the kids really get up for because it's one of those little bragging rights things they have with each other."

The Polars, who are ranked in the top 20 provincially in AAA, won both previous meetings with the Cougars this season — the latest a 14-point victory at a tournament two weeks ago.

But Cougars' coach Ken Campbell prefers to dwell on the four-point loss earlier in the season.

"It was a tough effort to stay that close to them, but that doesn't mean we can't beat them," said Campbell, whose Cougars are ranked top 10 provincially in AA.

In the other boys game last night, the O'Grady Totems got 32 points from Mark Paulsen in knocking off the Kelly Road Roadrunners 75-73. Chris Dahl had 19 to lead the 'Runners.

There were no surprises on the girls side either, where the city's best AA teams, Duchess Park Condorettes and Kelly Road Roadrunners, will meet in the senior girls city championship. The girls' game is set for 6 p.m. at CNC with the boys' championship game to follow.

Ursel rolling on

Citizen Staff

Zone championship skip Bob Ursel is heating up for his drive to the provincial title.

But before he takes on B.C., Ursel wants the local Super League title, which he took another step towards last night at the Prince George Golf and Curling Club.

Crushed underfoot in Ursel's charge was skip Cheryl Wood of Sunlife, who fell 9-1 to Ursel's rink in the A semifinal.

Wood stole one in the first end, but that was the end of her highlight reel as Ursel took over.

The other scheduled game last night, between Northland Chrysler and Clear Lake Sawmills, was postponed to 9 p.m. Wednesday.

Northland skip and third Kevin Smale and Ron Backman are currently involved in the provincial

Injured Mourning helps Hornets to win

by Canadian Press

It's tough to tell who is hurting more, Alonzo Mourning or the opposition.

The six-foot-10 Mourning had 29 points, 15 rebounds and seven blocked shots Wednesday night despite a sore thumb that's black and blue and looks terrible.

Mourning and Larry Johnson, who scored 25 points, led the Charlotte Hornets to a 129-118 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers. The Hornets also got 13 assists from 5-3 Tyrone Bogues in scoring their third straight victory.

"It really bothers me but I've got to keep playing," said Mourning, who broke a bone in his left thumb on Jan. 5. "Because I'm playing, it is slowing the healing process."

NBA

"But I'll sacrifice to win."

Elsewhere in the NBA, it was: Miami 116, Atlanta 96; Cleveland 108, Milwaukee 100; Houston 119, Dallas 102; Utah 100, Denver 96; Phoenix 122, Minnesota 102; and Chicago 107, Sacramento 88.

The Hornets broke a 108-108 four-period tie with nine straight points, and Philadelphia never recovered.

Mourning scored 26 points in the first half, while Johnson had 15 in the final two periods. Johnny Newman had 17 points and Dell Curry 15 for the Hornets.

Armon Gilliam scored 24 points

and Hersey Hawkins 20 for the Sixers.

"The tempo was terrific for us," Charlotte coach Alan Bristow said. "It is easy to get into that type of game."

"This is not a streak yet. We are what I call 'in the incubator.' Now we have a chance to go home and make a run."

Heat 116 Hawks 96

Glen Rice scored 18 of his season-high 45 points in the final period, leading Miami over Atlanta.

Cavaliers 108 Bucks 100

Brad Daugherty scored 31 points and Craig Ehlo had seven in the final 3:22 for Cleveland against Milwaukee.

Rockets 119 Mavericks 102

Hakeem Olajuwon scored 13 of his 30 points during a fourth-quar-

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