

DQ for Mancuso in Italy

By USSA

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy – Lindsey Vonn (Vail, CO) continued to lead the Audi FIS Alpine World Cup after finishing 19th in giant slalom Sunday, the final chance for U.S. women to earn a ticket to the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver. Teammate Megan McJames (Park City, UT) was also in the points in 21st, while Finland's Tanja Poutiainen claimed victory as first run leader Kathrin Zettel failed to finish.

Only Vonn and McJames made it to finals for the U.S. Ski Team, with McJames fighting her way in from bib 46. It was her second time in the points in a GS this season

"She laid down a pretty decent run, and then backed it up with very smart skiing on the second run," U.S. Women's Head Coach Jim Tracy said of McJames.

Vonn, one day after getting her 30th career victory and sixth straight downhill win dating back to last season's World Cup Finals now carries a 56 point overall lead into three connective speed races set for next weekend in St. Moritz, Switzerland.

"Her first run was a little bit on the conservative side, but she really attacked the second run and skied quite well," said U.S. Women's Head Coach Jim Tracy.

Tracy said course conditions were hampered by hardier, icier conditions at the bottom of the course, leaving skiers in a conundrum: Use the correct skis needed for man-made snow and risk sliding out later on the ice, or go with razor-sharp skis and struggle with the early portion of the race.

"We thought, after seeing five or six racers, it's very hard to recover with a tactical mistake on that ice," Tracy said.

“We were prepared for it.”

The U.S. Olympic Alpine Ski Team will be named Monday, with coaches likely making the tough decisions into the wee hours of the morning.

“It’s going to be a long night for me,” Tracy said.

Cortina d’Ampezzo, Italy, Jan. 24, Women’s Giant Slalom

1. Tanja Poutiainen, Finland, 2:26.51

2. Viktoria Rebensburg, Germany, 2:27.56

3. Kathrin Hoelzl, Germany, 2:27.96

4. Tina Maze, Slovenia, 2:28.27

5. Manuela Moelgg, Italy, 2:28.36

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19. Lindsey Vonn, Vail, CO, 2:29.73

21. Megan McJames, Park City, UT, 2:30.84

DNQ – Leanne Smith, Conway, NH; Julia Mancuso, Olympic Valley, CA

DNF 1 – Stacey Cook, Mammoth Mountain, CA; Sarah Schleper, Vail, CO