

Truckee's Carroll 5th in slopestyle

By Elizabeth Karam, U.S. Snowboard Team

LA MOLINA, Spain – Allyson Carroll of Truckee finished fifth in the FIS World Snowboard Championship slopestyle event in La Molina, Spain. Saturday's contest marked the World Snowboard Championship slopestyle debut. Slopestyle snowboarding is one of four events being considered for the possible inclusion in the 2014 Olympic Winter Games in Sochi.

After weather delays pushed the qualifier from Friday to Saturday, Belarus's Seppe Smits and Finland's Enni Rukajarvi came out on top to win. U.S. rider Faye Gulini (Salt Lake City) just missed qualifying for finals in 12th. Benji Farrow (Mt. Holly, VT) and Paul Brichta (Burnsville, MN) competed in the men's division but failed to qualify for finals.

In front of a huge crowd, Carroll took full advantage of every run, consisting of three roller features followed by three large feature jumps and ending with a rail feature, scoring a 14.2 to qualify for the finals in fourth.

"Going into qualifiers I just wanted to land my run, so I did kind of a safety run," explained Carroll of her strategy.

Feeding off the energy of the crowd, once in the finals Carroll continued to throw it down, finishing in fifth. Rukajarvi never let the lead slip, sweeping both the qualifier and final to take home the victory. Sarka Pancochova of the Czech Republic and Sheely Gotlieb of New Zealand placed second and third.

"It was an awesome experience. It was way cooler than I expected," said Carroll. "The vibe of the whole contest was really good. It was an all around great contest."

Smits landed the crown for the men, followed by Sweden's Niklas Mattson and Finland's Ville Paumola in second and third.

Official results, FIS World Snowboard Championships, La Molina, Spain, Slopestyle

Men

1. Seppe Smits, Belarus
2. Niklas Mattsson, Sweden
3. Ville Paumola, Finland
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26. Benji Farrow, Mt. Holly, VT
31. Paul Brichta, Burnsville, MN

Women

1. Enni Rukajarvi, Finland
2. Sarka Pancochova, Czech Republic
3. Shelly Gotlieb, New Zealand
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5. Allyson Carroll, Truckee, CA,
12. Faye Guilini, Salt Lake City, 15.1