

Vonn wants to compete with the guys in downhill

By Doug Harrison, CBC Sports

Billie Jean King downed Bobby Riggs in tennis' Battle of the Sexes in 1973, golf's Michelle Wie played Luke Donald at the 2008 Reno-Tahoe Open and the following year Danica Patrick stepped behind the wheel against men at the Indy 500.

So, how about American downhill specialist Lindsey Vonn, last season's overall World Champion, taking on 2012 men's World Cup champion Klaus Kroll or fellow American Bode Miller in Canada?

Last week, men's World Cup race director Gunter Hujara and the International Ski Federation (FIS) Alpine Executive Board were discussing the skier's proposal to compete in the men's downhill at Lake Louise, site of the first speed events of the season.

"We have been talking about it but no decision has been taken yet, it's a matter that the FIS Council has to examine during its next meeting in November," women's race director Atle Skaardal told reporters in Zurich.

"It's complicated because no racer is supposed to ski on a race course a week prior to his or her own competition. If Lindsey Vonn could train and compete with the men in November, she would have a huge advantage on her rivals the following week during the women's races on the same course."

With 1,980 points, Vonn compiled the most points ever by a female skier, despite being bothered much of the season by aching knees. In April, it was determined she wouldn't require surgery and just rest, even though tests revealed some fraying of the meniscus in Vonn's left knee.

The 2010 Olympic champion also became only the fourth woman to prevail in all five disciplines of modern alpine ski racing: downhill, slalom, giant slalom, super-G and combined.

Austria's Hermann Maier holds the record for most points with 2,000, set in the 2000 World Cup.

Vonn has 53 World Cup victories including 26 downhills in her career, trailing only the 62 by Annemarie Moser-Proell of Austria, who won 36 downhills between 1970 and 1980.