

White finishes third in slopestyle at Copper

By USSA

COPPER MOUNTAIN, Colo. -- Two-time Olympic gold medalist Shaun White, who rides for Northstar, made a big leap toward Sochi on Sunday with his third-place finish at the Paul Mitchell Slopestyle at the Sprint U.S. Grand Prix.

White's top-four result fulfilled the objective criteria for Olympic qualification as well as gave him the highest U.S. result so far in the five-event qualification series, putting him in a solid position going into the three remaining events.

The stacked field of international talent made for a progressive competition, especially the Norwegians, who went one-two with winner Staale Sandbech stomping an incredible cab 1440 and scoring a 97.00. The fight for the first-ever Olympic slopestyle team will only get more competitive when the Sprint Grand Prix Tour moves to Breckenridge Jan. 8-11.

Chas Guldemon (Reno) was hoping to improve his first run score of 88.5, but went down in his second run and landed fifth for the second time in two events. He still sits on top of the standings, but only has three more chances to secure a top-four result.

Overall the course was running a bit slow due to the new snow and cold, dry Colorado weather. Increasing winds in the second round also threw off many riders during the jumps.