

Snowboarding competition determines Olympic team

By U.S. Ski & Snowboard

BRECKENRIDGE, Colo. – The U.S. riders continued to demonstrate their dominance in the second Olympic qualifying event of the season at Dew Tour. Chloe Kim (Mammoth) led another U.S. sweep of the podium with teammates Kelly Clark (Mammoth) and Arielle Gold (Steamboat Springs, Colo.) in second and third.

Jake Pates (Eagle, Colo.) put his name on the board with a big victory, and Ben Ferguson (Bend, Ore.) landed his second podium in the same number of Olympic qualifying events, finishing third.

After a win at the Toyota U.S. Grand Prix in Copper last weekend, Kim confirmed her nomination to the U.S. Olympic snowboard team, posting a 93.0 on her first run of the day that would carry her through to victory. After a gnarly crash on her second run, veteran Clark pulled out a solid, clean final run to finish second. Gold landed her first podium finish of the Olympic qualifying season, finishing third.

“I am speechless right now, it hasn’t really set in,” said Kim. “I just looked at my parents and was like, ‘I just made the Olympic team!’ I’m still processing it, but I am so excited.”

The U.S. women stacked riders into the top spots in the final with Maddie Mastro (Wrightwood) finishing fourth, Hannah Teter (Meyers) fifth and Elena Hight (South Lake Tahoe) eighth.

Pates pulled out the biggest surprise of the day, landing a killer last run that included a back double 12 tail grab to score a 97.33, besting Australia’s Scotty James and fellow

U.S. Snowboard Team rider Ferguson who both also posted scores above 90. It was Pates' first major event win, propelling the 19-year-old into the mix for the coveted Olympic team spots.

Danny Davis (Truckee), Chase Josey (Sun Valley, Idaho), Gabe Ferguson (Bend, Ore.) and Greg Bretz (Mammoth Lakes) rounded out top finishes for the U.S., finishing sixth through ninth respectively.

Olympic qualification competitions continue after the New Year with the Toyota U.S. Grand Prix at Snowmass, Colo., Jan. 7-14.