

Wise one step closer to defending Olympic gold

By Peggy Shinn, Team USA

COPPER MOUNTAIN, Colo. – Reno's David Wise would like to win another Olympic gold medal at the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018. And the 27-year-old freeskiier is finally one step closer.

"It's a boost of confidence, it's a pressure ease, it's everything," Wise said with a big smile. "The weight's off my shoulders now."

He nailed his first run at the Toyota U.S. Grand Prix, sailing high above Copper's sunny superpipe and linking a series of double corks. He scored an un-toppable 92.80 and made a statement to the eight other men in the final, including Torin Yater-Wallace, who won the first Olympic qualifier last February as well as the PyeongChang test event, and reigning world champion and X Games gold medalist Aaron Blunck, who also competed in the 2014 Sochi Games.

The U.S. Grand Prix at Copper is serving as the second 2018 U.S. Olympic qualifier for freeski halfpipe. Up to three skiers who earn two top-three finishes in the five qualifiers will qualify for the PyeongChang Games.

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