

14 March 2010

IN FOCUS

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CANADA IMPRESSES IN ICE SLEDGE HOCKEY

Canada improved their record to 2:0 at the Ice Sledge Hockey against Sweden at UBC's Thunderbird Arena. This sets up an exciting Tuesday night battle for first place in Group B as Norway takes on Canada possibly putting Canada one step closer to Paralympic Games champions.



Today against Sweden, Canada fed off the excitement from the crowd at 1:25min into the game, when Bradley Bowden opened the scoring with a nice pass from forward Todd Nicholson. However, thirty-seconds after the goal Sweden's Niklas Ingvarsson evened the score.

But team Sweden was not able to handle the speed, power and physical nature of the Canadians and were forced into playing a defensive style of play with the puck in their end for the majority of the game. Canada took the game with high scoring, winning 10:1.

Swedish captain Marcus Holt said: "We played a different game against Norway, we can stop them as we have played them lots of times over the years, however we are not really accustomed to the North American style of play". In other games, Norway beat Italy 2:1, and USA beat Czech Republic 3:0.

ZARIPOV WINS GOLD IN CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

Cross-Country Skiing kicked off in the morning with the Men's 15km Sitting category, which featured 30 skiers. The weather was on the skiers' side as it was beautifully clear.

At the 3.75km mark, Russian Roman Petushkov (LW12) took the lead with a time of 9:56.6, which was 20 seconds ahead of Italian Enzo Masiello (LW11) who was in second place with a time of 10:19.2 at the 3.75km mark. Irek Zaripov (LW12) of Russia was in third place at this point with a time of 10:20.5.

At the 7.5km mark, Petushkov was still in the lead with a time of 20:13.2, with fellow Russian Irek Zaripov (LW12) following, and Enzo Masiello in third place. Petushkov continued to ski strong throughout the first 11.25km of the competition. Even at the third time point of 11.25km, he was in the lead with a time of 30:41.3, with Zaripov in second and Masiello in third.

Despite Petushkov's huge lead at the beginning, he expended too much energy in the first part of the competition. This allowed Zaripov to pass him and in the end, Zaripov, who won a gold medal in yesterday's Biathlon Sitting category, won a second gold medal for his home country Russia. Zaripov was followed by Petushkov and Masiello of Italy came in third.



On his bronze medal, Masiello, visibly relieved and happy, said: "I have taken a place on the podium which I missed in Torino by a few seconds. Finally, I can throw away this memory and I am never ever going to think of it again."

WHEELCHAIR CURLING ROUND THREE

Norway and Canada put on an amazing show this morning as the Norwegians stole twice from the Canadians in the first half. However, Canada's skip Jim Armstrong placed a perfect guard and curled his second stone around it. Norway's skip Rune Lorensten was unable to get around the guard and Canada came back from behind for a 6:5 victory.

However, it will be the Italians who really stole the show, as they completely dominated the first half, stealing a total of ten points before Switzerland finally were on the board with four in the fifth end. The Swiss were unable to prevent the Italians from scoring with the hammer and resigned after the sixth end at 13:4.

In the USA-GER game, Germany took the early lead but the Americans fought back. German skip Jens Jaeger managed to negotiate the loosely placed American guard with the very last stone of the game but failed to take out America's shot rock. This allowed USA to steal a single for the second consecutive end and win 6:5.

The two Asian countries in the tournament faced off this morning on sheet D. Korean skip Kim Haksung was brilliant all day, making several important shots including a double take-out in the fourth end to score a deuce and the winning take-out on Japan's shot rock in the last end of a 7:5 game.

ALPINE SKIING – DAY 1

The day began with weather better suited for the faster Downhill events but ended in more appropriate Slalom conditions. The first runs of the day were skied on icy slopes but as the second runs began snow was falling. "The snow falling just softens up the course as well," Alana Nichols (USA, LW11) noted.



It was a good day for the Austrians who finished with two gold medals and one bronze. Sabine Gasteiger (AUT, B3) and Claudia Loesch (AUT, LW 11) won gold in the Women's Slalom Visually Impaired and Sitting categories, respectively.

Philip Bonadimann (AUT, LW 11) won bronze in the Men's Slalom Sitting category but had to watch Austrian teammate and top Slalom contender, Jurgen Egle (AUT, LW 11) crash. Egle's crash allowed Martin Braxenthaler (GER, LW10-2) to win gold with a combined time of 1:41.63 and Josh Dueck (CAN, LW 11) to win silver in 1:46.29 in the Men's Slalom Sitting category.

After winning gold, Braxenthaler stated: "It's unbelievable to win in these difficult conditions but Jurgen is one of the greatest skiers in the world. I am sorry he got out."



PARALYMPIC ATHLETES

Colette Bourgonje (LW10) of Saskatoon, Canada, competed today in her sixth Paralympic Winter Games. Bourgonje, who is 48, won a silver medal in today's 10km Cross-Country Sitting category. She fell on one of the downhill slopes, but managed to catch up to make it to second place. She is a legend in the Paralympic Games with not only six Winter Games to her name, she has also competed in three Paralympic Summer Games, bringing her Paralympic medal count to nine medals. Bourgonje's silver medal win is Canada's first medal in Vancouver.



"I think that age is nothing. Attitude is everything. A friend of mine gave me that card and I believe in that. We have Olympians at 44 so 48 for a Paralympian is nothing. It is the training and the time you put into the sport," she said.

Jostein Stordahl is no stranger to Paralympic competition, throwing third for Norway's Wheelchair Curling team. In the Summer Games, Stordahl also participates in Paralympic Sailing, where his best result was fourth. Stordahl enjoys both Wheelchair Curling and Paralympic Sailing for the same reasons, finding the combination of tactics, technique, and decision-making appealing.

Stordahl works as a coin dealer in Norway, specializing in 1850-1950 Norwegian coins. The most valuable coin in his collection is a 20 kroner coin from 1875, worth over 50 000 Swiss francs. He thinks that the Winter Olympic coins from the Canadian Royal Mint are beautiful and would not mind taking a big maple leaf coin back home, along with a medal.

CALENDAR

15 March	Alpine Skiing – Slalom (Men's and Women's Standing)	Whistler Creekside
15 March	Cross-Country Skiing (Men's 20km and Women's 15km)	Whistler Paralympic Park
15 March	Wheelchair Curling (GBR-KOR, NOR-SWE, JAP-CAN, USA-ITA, GER-SUI, GBR-USA, KOR-NOR, SWE-CAN)	Vancouver Paralympic Centre
15 March	Sochi 2014 Reception	Paralympic Hospitality Centre, Whistler
15 March	IPC Exhibition	Snow Dome, Whistler

PROGRAMME SCHEDULE OF ONLINE COVERAGE AT www.ParalympicSport.TV

Monday 15 March		
10:00	Cross-Country Skiing (Men's 20km and Women's 15km)	LIVE
Proudly presented by Visa and Samsung		
 		

Please note: All times are PST. This schedule is subject to change



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PHOTOGRAPHY: Lieven Coudenys and Rob Prezioso return as the IPC’s official photographers during the Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games. Photos of daily events and competitions can be viewed and purchased from Lieven Coudenys and Rob Prezioso through their respective websites. For more information about Lieven Coudenys, please visit his official website at www.coudenys.be/paralympics. For more information about Prezioso Photography, please visit the official website at www.prezioso.com.au.

TICKETS

For information about tickets, please visit www.vancouver2010.com/paralympic-games/tickets.

VANCOUVER 2010 INFORMATION

For more information on the Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games, please visit www.vancouver2010.com.

PARALYMPIC INFORMATION

For more information about the Paralympic Movement, please visit www.paralympic.org. For more detailed information on this Newsletter, please send an email to jeff.wolfshohl@paralympic.org.