

Biathlete shoots for podium

By ARINE STAPLETON
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jay Hakkinen was satisfied just to make the Olympic team in 1998 in Nagano and downright thrilled to post the best finish ever by an American biathlete four years later in Salt Lake City.



"I have been to the Olympics before. I want the podium now."

Jay Hakkinen
U.S. biathlete headed to the 2006 Winter Olympics

Now, at 28, he's in his prime and has much bigger ambitions at Cesana San Scario in the Italian Alps. "I have been to the Olympics before," he declared. "I want the podium now." Hakkinen, of Kaslof, Alaska, is the best U.S. biathlete ever but won't be satisfied until he puts the Americans on the medals list for the first time in a sport long dominated by Norwegians, Germans, French and Russians.

Biathlon combines cross-country skiing with rifle marksmanship and is the most popular winter sport in Europe, with tens of millions of viewers each week tuning in for World Cup competitions. Biathletes ski as fast as they can, then try to calm down quickly to hit a target the size of a half dollar 50 meters away from a prone position and one the size of a coffee cup saucer from a standing position. For every miss, they have to ski a 150-meter penalty loop, costing them valuable time at the finish line.

Kwan must prove she's fit for Games before panel Friday

By BARRY WILNER
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Michelle Kwan must prove she is fit for the Turin Olympics on Friday, when a U.S. Figure Skating committee will monitor her practices in Los Angeles. Kwan will do run-throughs of her short program and free skate for the five-member committee. If the observers determine she is healthy, she will remain on the U.S. squad for next month's

Olympics. If not, she will be replaced by Emily Hughes, who finished third at this month's national championships. Kwan, a five-time world champion and nine-time U.S. champ, skipped nationals with a groin injury. She petitioned for a berth on the team, which was conditionally granted by U.S. Figure Skating. However, Kwan first must pass the monitoring test conducted by U.S. Figure Skating international

committee chairman Bob Horen, technical controller Charlie Cyr, world judge Paula Naughton, international judge Lorrie Parker and athlete representative Brittney Bottoms. The U.S. Olympic Committee will make the final nomination of the 2006 team no later than Jan. 30. But any member of the women's figure skating squad — currently Sasha Cohen, Kimmie Meissner or Kwan — could be replaced almost as late as three

The others on the U.S. men's team are: Tim Burke, 23, of Paul Smiths, N.Y.; Lowell Bailey, 24, of Lake Placid, N.Y.; and Brian Olsen, 22, of Bloomington, Minn. The women's best hope is Rachel Steer, 27, of Anchorage, who has had a steady but not spectacular season in World Cup competition. Steer's best career finish was 31st in the sprint at the 2002 Games.

She'll be joined in Italy by 23-year-old twins Tracy and Lanny Barnes of Durango, Colo.; Carolyn Treacy, 23, of Duluth, Minn., and Sarah Konrad of Bishop, Calif. At 38, Konrad is the oldest U.S. woman Olympian this year and the first American woman to qualify in two different sports in the same Winter Olympics. She'll spend her first week in Italy competing in the biathlon and the final week competing in cross-country skiing.



Bode Miller, of the United States, looks at the course after falling during the first run of an alpine ski men's World Cup slalom race, in Schladming, Austria, Tuesday. Miller announced he will not compete at an upcoming World Cup event.

Bode sitting one out

Skiier to miss World Cup race, breaking streak

By ERICA BULMAN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN, Germany Bode Miller will miss his first World Cup race in almost four years when he skips this weekend's downhill and super-G. U.S. ski team officials said Wednesday that Miller is taking a break, ending his streak of competing in 136 straight World Cup races.

His withdrawal from the races means Miller has all but given up on defending his overall World Cup title and is focusing on the Turin Olympics, which open Feb. 10. "It's not so important for him, the overall," U.S. team spokesman Marc Habermann said. "He won it last year. This is something that had been discussed since the start of the season, taking a break before the Olympics." The most recent race Miller missed was a downhill on March

6, 2002, in Altenmarkt, Austria. Miller plans to compete in all five events at the Olympics and is expected to race in Chamonix, France, on Feb. 3-4, the final World Cup men's race before the games. Miller has won only once this season and is fourth in the overall standings. He trails leader Benjamin Raich by 264 points. Raich has 952 points, followed by fellow Austrian Michael Walchhofer with 704 and American Daron Rahlvles with 689. Miller has failed to finish five of seven slaloms this season. "For him not to finish as many races as he has is frustrating," U.S. men's speed coach John McBride said. "I think this whole race, every-single-race deal, if everything is not lined up, is not productive. "You have to back up and ask what is my priority? To compete at my best, or just make another start?"

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La' Trattoria Authentic Italian Cuisine is accepting reservations for your Valentine's Day dinner. La' Trattoria Authentic Italian Cuisine has two convenient locations. One is in downtown Greenwood just north of Main Street on Madison Avenue, operated by Tom and Rene Trotter. The other restaurant is on State Road 135 in Bargersville and is operated by Mick and Dianne Trotter, Tom's parents. La' Trattoria's mainstay is its meat sauce, which is used in several tasty Italian recipes, including the homemade lasagna, manicotti and spaghetti. Try something different from our newly revised menu. Our appetizer menu includes escargot, shrimp cocktail and stuffed mushrooms. Follow with our house specialties that include the Shrimp Scampi, which is simmered in delicate garlic, wine and butter sauce, and the Chicken di Florencia, a chicken breast stuffed with three cheeses, spinach and spices. The hand-cut 8-ounce filet, Tournedos Al Pepe, is also available in 12 and 16 ounces, at the Greenwood location. The Chateaubriand for Two is a hand-cut 16-ounce filet flamed at your tableside to your liking. Or try the 16-ounce slow-

roasted Prime Rib, Black Angus beef served with baked potato and au jus, on Friday or Saturday. La Trattoria's filets received great accolades by being voted "best filet in Johnson County" by Indianapolis Monthly. The Chicken Parmesan, another house specialty, is breaded and baked to a golden brown, then covered with parmesan and mozzarella cheese and La Trattoria's special meat sauce. The Bargersville restaurant is now serving a special treat — elk steak. La' Trattoria's menu includes popular items such as appetizers, salads, pastas, house specialties and desserts. The Greenwood location is now offering an expanded wine and beer list. The Bargersville location offers a wine, beer and cocktail bar. Come and sample a wine from our newly expanded wine list featuring sparkling wines, Champagne, dessert wines and ports. Ask your server to recommend a wine to enjoy with your dinner. A children's menu is also available. All items are also available for carry-out. Hours are Tuesday through Thursday, 4-9 p.m.; Friday 4-10 p.m., and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. (La' Trattoria in Bargersville is also open on Sundays from 4 to 8 pm.)

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