

# GOLF

**Jobe handles both courses, leads at Buick Invitational**

Brandt Jobe now can say he is leading the Buick Invitational after handling the tough South Course with a 5-under 67 on Friday. How he got there remains a mystery to him.

Coming off a brilliant round of putting on the easier North Course, the long-hitting Jobe kept the ball in play and made the only eagle on the par-5 18th to build a two-shot lead over Tim Clark and Jesper Parnevik.

"My games (Thursday) and (Friday) were not even comparable," said Jobe, who was at 12-under 132. "I hit the ball good (Friday) and putted great (Thursday). I don't know what's going to happen (today)."



JOBE

The two courses at Torrey Pines are nothing alike, making it hard to sort out who's doing what until the weekend. The final two days will include defending champion Tiger Woods, who recovered from a rugged start to his year with a 4-under 68 on the South, including a 60-foot eagle putt on the 13th.

Woods was seven shots behind. Clark (66) and Parnevik (67) were on the North Course, which played five shots easier.

Even after opening with a 65 on the North, Jobe said he considered Parnevik the leader because the Swede had a 67 on the South.

# HOCKEY

**Ducks won't be so 'Mighty' next season**

The Mighty Ducks of Anaheim announced they will officially change their name to the Anaheim Ducks at the start of the 2006-07 season. The NHL team also said it is evaluating possible changes to its logo and uniforms.

"The process is still very much under way, and we do not expect to be ready to make any further announcements until the end of the season," owner Henry Samueli said in a statement issued by the team Friday.

Samueli and his wife, Susan, purchased the team from the Walt Disney Co. last year and said at that time they would consider making changes, including the team name. Input from season ticket-holders was involved in the decision.

"In selecting the name the Anaheim Ducks, we are respecting the heritage of a tremendous organization that has been a very important and visible part of the community, not to mention Western Conference champions and a Stanley Cup finalist," he said.

# OLYMPICS

**Arbitrators deny Klug spot on snowboarding team**

Arbitrators denied snowboarder Chris Klug's challenge over selection criteria for the U.S. Olympic team Friday, meaning the 2002 bronze medalist won't be on the U.S. team heading to Turin next month.

Klug challenged the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association's decision to bypass him for Tyler Jewell as the lone male parallel giant slalom racer on the 16-person snowboard team.

After a daylong hearing Thursday, arbitrators spent most of Friday going over the evidence. They ruled against Klug, whose success on the slopes only 19 months after a liver transplant was one of the most inspirational stories of the Salt Lake City Games.

The 33-year-old, two-time Olympian said he would respect the decision.

"I'm disappointed," Klug said. "I disagreed with their application of the selection criteria. I wanted a hearing on the matter, which is what the USOC recommended. I received a fair hearing, and I respect the arbitrators' decision."

# BASKETBALL

**Andersen dismissed from NBA for drug violation**

New Orleans Hornets forward Chris Andersen was dismissed from the NBA on Friday for violating the league's drug policy.

Andersen must wait two years before he can apply for reinstatement, the league said.

Andersen, 27, averaged 5.0 points and 4.8 rebounds in 32 games this season, his fifth in the NBA.

# Kwan jumps way to shot at gold

**Committee: Skater healthy enough to compete**

By NANCY ARMOUR  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES

With jumps, spins and those majestic spirals, Michelle Kwan showed she is healthy enough Friday to have one more run at that elusive Olympic gold medal.

Kwan sealed the spot on the U.S. Olympic team that she was handed two weeks ago, proving to a five-person monitoring committee that she's recovered from the groin injury that kept her out of the national championships. She performed both her long and short programs in less than 12 minutes

and did all of her jumps except the triple loop.

The 95-minute session, which included a 45-minute break, was conducted at the East West Ice Palace in Artesia, Calif., her home rink, and was monitored 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.

Kwan curtsied to the committee when the session was over, then went to await its decision.

That decision was exactly what

she wanted to hear: Kwan is going to Turin.

"It feels awesome," Kwan said. "When I first put in the petition I believed I would be 100 percent at the Olympics, and I still believe it."

The committee agreed. "It is truly the opinion of this monitoring committee that Michelle could win the Olympics," Horen said.

Kwan, 25 has stuck around the past four years in hopes of one more shot at Olympic gold. She went to Nagano and Salt Lake City as the gold-medal favorite but wound up with silver (1998) and bronze (2002).



Olympic U.S. figure skater Michelle Kwan waves as she leaves the East West Ice Palace in Artesia, Calif., on Friday.

## SNOWBOARDING



Gretchen Bleiler of Snowmass Village, Colo., soars at the U.S. Snowboard Grand Prix Halfpipe Finals in Vernon, N.J., on Sunday. Bleiler won a spot on the 2006 Olympic snowboard team but says the Winter X Games is definitely the biggest event in the sport.

# What's better than Olympic gold?

Some snowboarders say X Games bring more prestige

By JOHN MARSHALL  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ASPEN, Colo.

Many athletes consider the Olympics the pinnacle of sports, a once-every-four years, even once-in-a-lifetime experience. Win there and they'll put your name in the history books.

But in a world filled with video games and instant messages, once every four years isn't always good enough.

Just ask some of the athletes at the Winter X Games. When they hit Buttermilk Mountain this weekend at ESPN's annual high-flying party in the snow, it'll be for a chance at instant recognition and, perhaps just as important, immediate returns on their success (reputation and sponsorships).

Yes, for some athletes, Winter X gold shines brighter than Olympic gold.

"There are many athletes out there who would covet an X Games gold over an Olympic gold," X Games general manager Chris Stiepmann said. "I've heard it come from athletes' mouths. And I'm sure their agents are standing next to them smirking, but when you



The 2006 U.S. Olympic Snowboard Team was announced at the U.S. Snowboard Grand Prix Halfpipe Finals in Vernon, N.J., on Sunday. Members are, from left, Mason Aguirre, Andy Finch, Kelly Clark, Elena Hight, Hannah Teter, Danny Kass, Gretchen Bleiler and Shaun White.

win an X Games medal, you are instantly afforded a reputation that perhaps you aren't afforded in the Olympics."

Like skateboarding or rock 'n' roll, part of the appeal of snowboarding, at least in the early days, was the antiestablishment vibe that came with it. Sure, the sport was fun, but doing something that went against the mainstream made it that much more exciting.

That was evident at the 1998 Nagano Games, when snowboarding debuted as an Olympic sport.

Norway's Terje Haakonsen, the world's best snowboarder at the time, boycotted the games over the way it would be sanctioned, a move that polarized the snowboarding community. Then Canadian Ross Rebagliati was stripped of his gold medal after drug tests revealed trace amounts of marijuana before getting it back on appeal.

The flaps led some inside the snowboarding community to wonder if the Olympics would ruin the sport, while outsiders questioned whether it should be part of the world's

biggest sporting event.

That changed at the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics, when Americans swept the podium in the halfpipe. Snowboarding sailed toward the mainstream after that, and it's even bigger this time around, with NBC and Visa centering their ad campaigns for the Turin Games on snowboarders.

Still, there's a gap. The Olympics reach a worldwide audience and feature nearly every winter sport imaginable, leaving snowboarding and free skiing only part of the spotlight.

The Winter X Games revolve around the snowboarding culture, encompassing everything from the music and attitude to the clothing and style of the younger generation in one event. And the rest of the Winter X sports, from motorcycle jumping to snowmobile racing, fit the same in-your-face 'tude as snowboarding.

Winter X seeks a certain niche and hits its mark.

"The X Games is the biggest event in snowboarding for sure," said Gretchen Bleiler, the reigning Winter X halfpipe gold medalist and member of the U.S. Olympic team.

# Bomb squads sent to Turin

5,000 guards already in place at Olympic sites

By ARIEL DAVID  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ROME

Italian officials are sending bomb squads to venues and deploying thousands of police to patrol potential targets at the site of the Turin Olympics.

Explosives experts using sniffer dogs were securing competition sites and lodgings for athletes, foreign dignitaries and media for the Feb. 10-26 games, Interior Ministry officials said Friday.

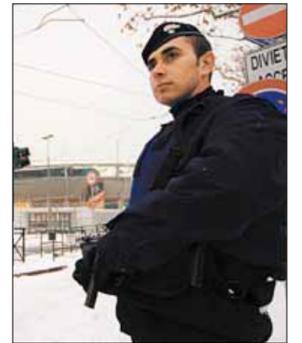
Once each area is cleared, it will be put under round-the-clock surveillance, the officials said during a briefing in Rome on security measures. Of the more than 9,000 officers to be on guard, some 5,500 are already in place.

The ministry was optimistic that arrangements were running smoothly, but journalists noted instances of lax security or inefficiency, indicating some problems still needed to be solved.

At the main media center in Turin, only one security check was open, forcing reporters to wait in a half-hour-long line. Inside, security staff were seen either strolling around or drinking coffee at the bar, and there were no guards at the entrance of at least one of the media villages in Turin.

The Interior Ministry officials, who spoke anonymously, as is standard ministry practice, said that such problems could arise while organizing such a complex event but would be worked out during the coming days.

Italian security forces bear most of the responsibility for ensuring a safe Olympics. A half-dozen countries, including the United States, Britain and Israel, are helping Italy prepare, but the only foreign agents allowed to carry firearms will be those protecting VIP visitors.



An Italian Carabinieri paramilitary police officer stands guard in front of Turin's Olympic stadium on Friday.

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