

Shiffrin takes second career giant slalom title

Sarah Schleper takes fourth

Daily staff report
newsroom@vaildaily.com

SUN VALLEY, Idaho — In the final day of action at the Nature Valley U.S. Alpine Championships in front of a big crowd of ski racing fans, Mikaela Shiffrin wrapped up the season with her second national title in giant slalom Sunday.

“The first GS win in a long time,” said Shiffrin, who also took the GS title in 2013 at Squaw Valley. “A win is a win, but to be honest, it’s nice to make it to the finish in a GS race.” Shiffrin continued, “Both courses were demanding, second course was really turny, and I was struggling a little bit with the timing, which is the age-old story for me. I’m definitely really happy with the win — it’s a promising, great place to be. After watching the first run and watching some of those girls hammering and then making mistakes, they we’re really taking risks, like Sarah Schleper won the top split by almost seven tenths — I’ll watch her skiing too, and learn from that a little more. They want it, so it’s impressive.”

And though light snow was

falling through the air and the sun was not shining, Resi Stiegler, of Jackson, Wyoming, brought the sparkle and sunshine, winning the second run by two hundredths of a second, finishing second overall and flashing a big smile and cheering in the finish with season-ending glee.

MORE GIANT SLALOM?

After the race, slalom specialist Stiegler joked that she had three podiums this season and they were all in giant slalom, “The only podiums I had this year were in GS, so I’m starting to wonder if maybe I should be doing more of that.” Stiegler said with a giggle.

“I was a little nervous the last couple of days just because you put so much effort into the World Cup and you get a little tired and maybe a little lazy. Going into Nationals it’s really fun, but to stay focused until the last day is important for me, because I can have those little mishaps. The slalom didn’t go well, but I was stoked on my GS today. The hill was awesome and I just went into it focusing on having a lot of fun on my last day.”

SCHLEPER IN FOURTH

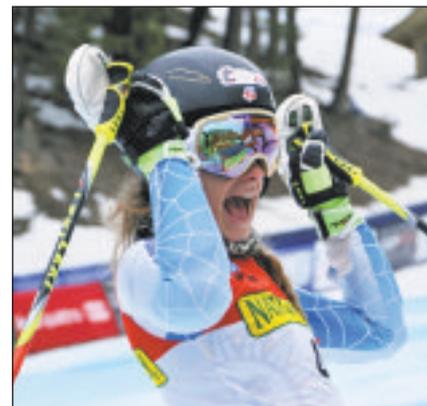
Overall NorAm champion



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Mikaela Shiffrin careens down the giant slalom course on Sunday at the Nature Valley U.S. Alpine Championships in Sun Valley, Idaho. Shiffrin won the race with a time of 2 minutes, 17:36 seconds.

Megan McJames continued her strong season-ending results with a third place finish on the day, while another highlight came from 37-year-old former U.S. Ski Team member Sarah Schleper, who now skis for Team Mexico. Schleper hammered both runs, and laid down some ultra-fast skiing, finishing fourth overall. She tied for second with Shiffrin on the second run, just two one-hundredths off of Stiegler’s time.



Resi Stiegler, of Jackson, Wyoming, celebrates winning the second run of the giant slalom race on Sunday at the Nature Valley U.S. Alpine Championships in Sun Valley, Idaho. She finished second overall.

UNITED STATES SKI AND SNOWBOARD ASSOCIATION
SPECIAL TO THE DAILY

Clippers beat Nuggets, 105-90, clinch playoff spot

Denver faces Dallas today

By Tim Liotta
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Each blocked shot by DeAndre Jordan got the Los Angeles Clippers a little bit closer to the postseason.

Jordan had 16 points and 16 rebounds, and his six blocked shots set the tone while the Clippers beat the Denver Nuggets 105-90 on Sunday to become the fourth Western Conference team to clinch a playoff spot.

“He’s one of the better rim protectors in the NBA,” Nuggets coach Michael Malone said. “And for every shot he doesn’t block, he has guys hesitating. I thought we got very passive tonight once he blocked a couple of shots.”

Jordan had four pivotal blocks for the Clippers during a decisive third quarter. Los Angeles outscored Denver 25-12 and led 77-60 heading into the fourth.

“This team dominated us in the paint the last time we played them,” Jordan said. “That was a big emphasis for us, to protect our paint, and limit those guys to one shot, try to keep their second-chance points low.”

Clippers coach Doc Rivers was particularly impressed that Jordan blocked two shots against the player he was already defending.

“That’s hard to do,” Rivers said. “When you are blocking the weak side, we need him to do that every night. When you start blocking your own guy’s shot, you are really locked in, and I thought he did that today.”

Chris Paul added 14 points, six rebounds and nine assists. Jamal Crawford also had 14 points, Jeff Green and Wesley Johnson each had 13 and J.J. Redick had 12.

‘ENERGY GUY’

The Clippers had a 25-8 edge in fast-break points, which was also a credit to Jordan’s presence inside.

“He’s our energy guy, the captain of our defense,” Paul Pierce said. “He gets the rebounds obviously, but we have been going to him a little bit more in the post on offense. He’s starting to fulfill a lot of his potential. He is still young and still has a lot of room to grow. He’s showing that he can keep getting better and better.”

Jusuf Nurkic had 19 points, and D.J. Augustin added 18 for Denver. Gary Harris had 11 points, Joffrey Lauvergne had 10

and Darrell Arthur grabbed 12 rebounds.

The Nuggets are 10th in the West with eight games remaining and fell 5 ½ games behind the Utah Jazz and Houston Rockets in the race for the conference’s eighth and final playoff berth.

“That third quarter killed us,” Malone said. “We had five turnovers, and if we didn’t turn the ball over, DeAndre blocked our shot it felt like. We just could not score.”

THRILL AT BOTH ENDS

Jordan brought out the loudest roar out of the Staples Center crowd in the third quarter, blocking a shot at the defensive end, then running the floor, taking a fast-break, over-the-shoulder, alley-oop pass from Paul and slamming it home with 9:14 left.

NEW WRINKLE

Jeff Green, playing with the first unit in the second quarter, scored seven consecutive points for the Clippers, and grabbed three rebounds, including two offensive, over a 2:36 span. Green was acquired from Memphis for Lance Stephenson on Feb. 18.

LATE ARRIVALS

The game’s 12:30 p.m. start



AP PHOTO

Los Angeles Clippers’ Luc Richard Mbah a Moute shoots as Denver Nuggets’ Darrell Arthur tries to block his shot during Sunday’s game in Los Angeles. The Clippers face the Boston Celtics tonight.

time apparently did not appeal to the Nuggets, who missed their first six shots, with a pair of turnovers thrown in, and needed 3:47 to get on the scoreboard.

TIPINS

Denver: Six of Denver’s 10 first-quarter baskets were 3-pointers. ... Kenneth Faried was a game-time decision and did not play. He also missed the Nuggets’ previous five games — four with lower-back stiffness and one on a coach’s decision. ... The Nuggets

beat the Clippers 87-81 in their previous trip to Staples Center, a game in which the Clippers shot a season-high 46 3-pointers.

Los Angeles: The Clippers activated Blake Griffin prior to the game, and he began serving a four-game, team-imposed suspension for punching an assistant equipment manager in January.

UP NEXT

Denver: Host Dallas on Monday night. Los Angeles: Host Boston on Monday night.