



At left: Sue Sarich. Above, from left to right: Coach Robert Karsten, Ingrid Peterson, Charr Bridge, Anne Sarich, Sue Sarich, Ulla Pearson and Marcy Huff.

SUHS girls make up time, win state title

by SCOTT NEWTON

Robert Karsten, coach of the Sandy ski team, suffered a split personality last week. After a wet, snowy and drawn-out Thursday, Karsten was pessimistic. He told The Post Friday morning there was a chance that the girls would win the state championship, but that it was a long shot. A miscalculation in figuring times gave Karsten the impression that the girls were over 16 seconds out of first place. He said that the girls are good enough to make up three seconds on anybody. Sixteen seconds, well, that's a different story. The clouds went away Thursday night, and the course-maker set a

long course on the west run at Ski Bowl. The course went from the near to the top of upper bowl to the bottom of lower bowl. It was a "very fast" course, much to the Sandy girls' advantage. Karsten told The Post Friday afternoon, after the giant slalom had been run, that an eight-second mistake had been made Thursday night. He didn't know if they'd won the title, but said, "It looks hopeful." By 7 p.m. he was buoyant. Ulla Pearson was honored as the individual state champion, and Karsten was the coach of the Oregon Interscholastic Ski Racing Association champions, for the second time in a row. The girls not only made up 8.4

seconds to catch Hood River, they surpassed them by over six seconds. Karsten said that they were right where they should have been after the first slalom course was run on Thursday. The second slalom course was set a lot tighter, with "some tricks in it." Both courses were at Multopar, on Mt. Hood Lane (formerly Nastar). A number of racers, boys as well as girls, were disqualified on the second run. Karsten said, "I'm a course setter that believes you never put a trick in a course." Others, he pointed out, feel differently. Pearson skied well both days,

she twisted her knee skiing the previous Sunday. "She can be very determined," Karsten said. About Sandy's number four skier, Charr Bridge, he said, "Steady and true. Good ol' Charr. She always finishes, and she finishes high, too." Karsten said that she is strong, and skies within her range. Junior Ingrid Peterson is the team's number five racer. This is her first year of competition. Karsten said that she picked up a lot of technique through the season, and is "really understanding it well." Freshman Marcy Huff "has tremendous potential." She needs some developmental work, Karsten said. She competed in the

giant slalom. Senior Kris Van Steenis competed in the slalom Thursday. With her two times put together, she was 19th in the state, and scored for Sandy as the third finisher. Karsten said that she's "an exuberant person—a lot of fun." A number of coaches, between the time the giant slalom was over Friday and the results announced that evening, expressed concern over the lack of support their schools give skiing. Sandy is seen as a school that supports its ski program. Asked if this is the case, Karsten said, "I'd say that we were the only school that had the principal, the superintendent and a board member at the race."

Sarich, Sarich, Pearson and Bridge: Depth key to success

by SCOTT NEWTON

Winning the state title was not enough for the Sandy girls. "Hopefully next year we'll get the combined state, with guys and girls," sophomore Ulla Pearson said last week. But even if the girls missed having the guys there to compete, it didn't hurt their performances any. Pearson is the individual state champion, having won the slalom Thursday and having finished sixth in the giant slalom Friday. Her combined time was over seven seconds faster than the nearest competitor. Junior Sue Sarich, the winner of the Mt. Hood Championship race, finished in a tie for third in the giant slalom, despite the fact she had been limping round on a twisted knee. Anne Sarich, Sue's twin, didn't

have a good day Thursday, but won the giant slalom Friday. It's her second state giant slalom championship. Charr Bridge, a sophomore, came through in the slalom Thursday, finishing fifth and keeping the Pioneers in the running. She also finished well in the giant slalom, and tied for fourth-place individual honors (combined). The slalom was comprised of two runs, with the second one being the hardest. It snowed most of the day Thursday. Bridge said that she felt pressured going into the second run. Anne Sarich had fallen, and also Sue had not done well. About her finish, she said, "I was really surprised. I didn't think I did that well." She added, "I was trying not to fall. I was basically just trying to make it down the course."

"We know we can always count on Charr coming down and supporting us if one of us falls," Anne Sarich said. "She's really steady." In considering the depth of the Sandy girls team, one need only consider that Bridge finished in the top 10 at every race this season. Anne Sarich at times did not compete for the high school. She competed on the Pacific Northwest Ski Association circuit, and also earned the honor of representing the Northwest on the Western Region Women's downhill team in the North American Trophy Series in Colorado. Asked her favorite place to ski, she said, "I like it right here, but it's kind of nice to travel around." The long giant slalom course was to her liking. "It was fun," she said. "I lost a lot of time on the top, but I made it up on the bottom." Asked what she did wrong at the

top of the course, she said, "I was overturning and not really pushing myself, so I didn't have much speed going into the flats." About her performance in the slalom, she said, "I fell the second run. I hooked a tip and had to hike." Anne said that she'll compete on the PNSA circuit through spring break, which is next week. Then she's going to call it quits for the season and play softball. Thursday also was not a good day for Sue Sarich. "On one of my runs my knee gave out," she said. "I didn't fall. I skied the course but I really didn't know what I was doing." It "broke my concentration totally." The second run she had to hike (go back uphill because she missed a gate). Her knee "just locked, sort of,"

she said. "So, I had problems with both runs." The sun was out Friday, and Sue skied appropriately, finishing in a tie for third, just a little over two seconds out of first. "It went real well," she said. "It hurt when I went through the finish and everything. It was hard to talk." "When I was going into the flats I almost missed a gate, so I kind of had to jerk to make the gate, so I lost time there." "So, I might have even been further up (in the standings), but I'm really happy, considering." "I was going for it, but I didn't know I could do that well." Sue admits that she and Anne are competitors, but added, "I want us both to do well." The same attitude seems to prevail on the team. Said Sue, "We try to help each other more than anything. We all

want to do well together. We'd all just as soon tie for first." For Pearson, there's another big race coming up. She recently found out that she's qualified for the PNSA Junior Olympic two team. She'll catch a plane to Denver Saturday, and then will train for three days in Aspen, and then race a downhill, a giant slalom and a slalom. All four girls seemed to overwhelmingly agree on a couple of things. They were talking about high school coaches. Said Anne Sarich about Robert Karsten, "He's the best." And about their chances for a third state championship? "Next year's going to be our best year," said Sue Sarich. "We're gonna cream the other teams next year."



Ulla Pearson



Anne Sarich



Charr Bridge



Ingrid Peterson



Kris Van Steenis



Marcy Huff