

The Sandy Post

Sports and Recreation

Sandy skiers take MHC league title



Jennifer Day, Steve Sarich and Marcy Huff

by MARTY MORRISON

Both the Sandy girls and boys ski teams got back on track last weekend capturing first place in the slalom at Mt. Hood Meadows and clinching the Mt. Hood Conference league championship.

In addition to capturing the league championship, three Pioneer skiers were awarded medals as being the best skiers in the league.

Senior Steve Sarich rounded up three medals for being the top overall (combined) skier in the boys competition, as well as the being the best skier in the slalom and giant slalom events.

In the girls competition, senior Marcy Huff received two medals for being the top overall skier and the best skier in the giant slalom event. While freshman Jennifer Day collected a medal as the top slalom skier in the league.

Although Sarich collected all the medals in the boys competition, teammate Jeff Day was just a boot length away, as the consistent skier took second in the combined and giant slalom events and a third in the slalom.

Senior Erik Marter also had an outstanding season, as he was ranked fifth in the giant slalom, and seventh in the combined and slalom events.

Sophomore Holly Sarich completed the league season ranked second behind Huff in the giant slalom, and fifth in the combined despite missing two slalom races because of her racing in the Pacific Northwest Ski Assoc.

Holly made her presence known Saturday at the slalom, skiing to the fastest time of the day on the girls

course as she collected her first conference win of the season.

Huff and Day checked in with third and fourth place finishes to give the girls team a ten second winning margin.

While Sandy coach Robert Karsten was surprised by Sarich's victory, he said she has the ability to win.

"It's not that Huff or Day had slow runs, it's just that Sarich had a great run," said Karsten.

Tahnee Swanton came across the finish line to give Karsten four girls in the top seven places, with alternate Nichole Schouten in the number 13 spot.

Karsten felt his heart stop when his fifth skier, Amy Lynch, took a hard fall three-quarters of the way down the course, as she was knocked unconscious after breaking a pole with the back of her head.

"It's really scary being up at the top (of a course) as a coach and know you can't get down to her quick enough," said Karsten.

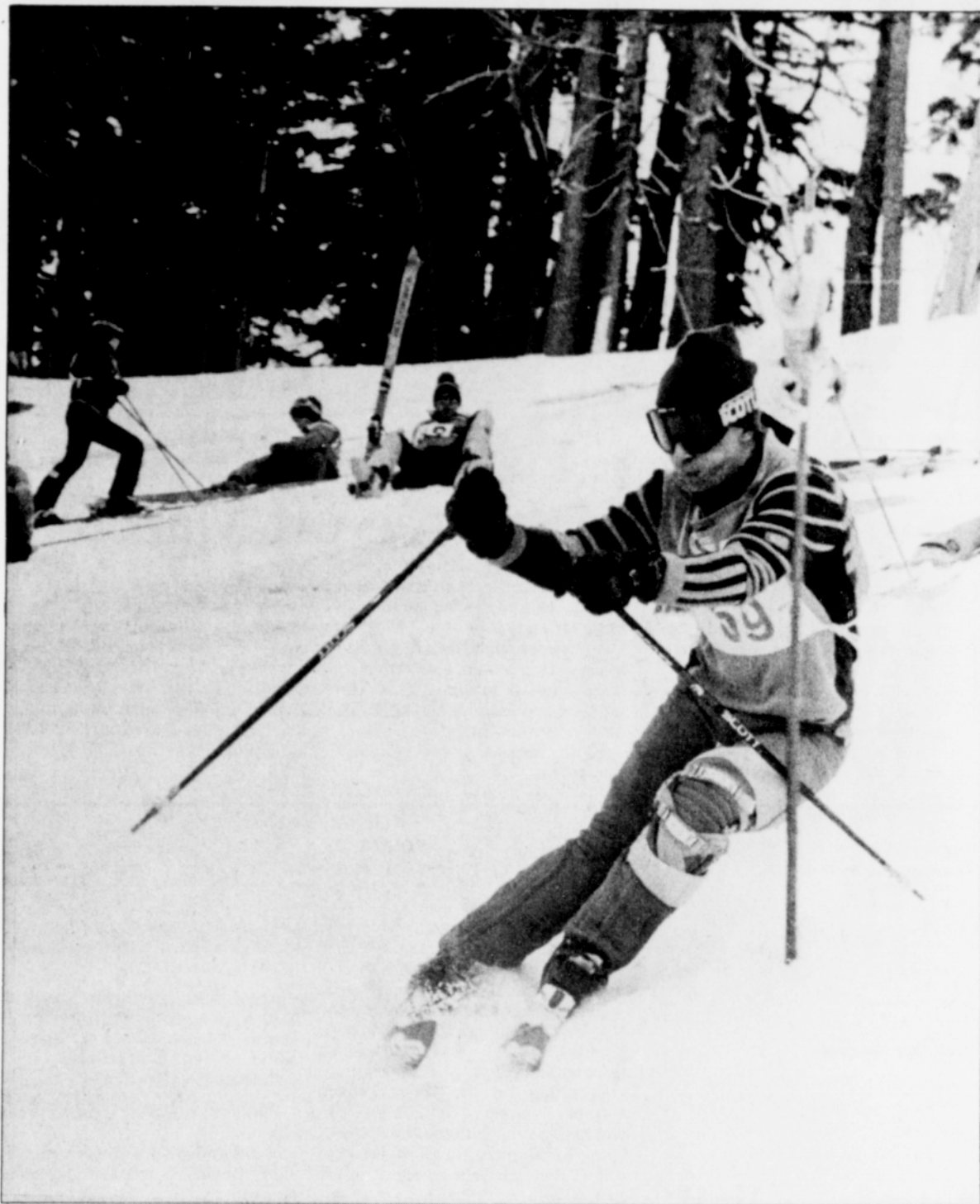
According to the coach, Lynch is feeling good as she is back practicing with the team.

There was no doubt that the Pioneer boys were feeling good as they took charge of boys slalom taking first, second and sixth places.

According to the Sandy coach, his number one skier (Sarich) might have felt a little tense watching all his competition fall but you sure couldn't tell from his run.

"Sarich skied a smart race, rounding out his turns on the top section and straightening out the flats," said Karsten.

The flat section is where Sarich held off teammate Day, as Day skied the top section faster but also turned



Steve Sarich in the slalom at Mt. Hood Meadows.

Photo by Marty Morrison

more on the flats.

Karsten's fourth man, Eric Marter, skiing a relaxed race, "knocked the lights out of the bamboo," on his way to a sixth place finish, said Karsten.

Rounding out the finishes for the varsity boys were Peter Valian in ninth place and Brian Silvey two places back.

"Junior Tonn Cummins made a remarkable comeback this year," said Karsten as Cummins skied to a fourth place finish in the junior varsity competition. Karsten explained that Cummins sustained a fracture skull hitting a tree during a training

session before league competition.

Karsten said he is much more confident about his teams chances at state as compared to earlier in the season as his skiers continue to minimize their mistakes.

"The state race is one that is more often lost than won by mistakes," said Karsten, adding that with the victory last weekend showed him that they can ski smart races.

This weekend, the Sandy skiers will attempt to reclaim the Mt. Hood Championship trophy as teams from the Metro League and Mt. Hood League square off in a giant slalom race at Timberline.

While Karsten said he doesn't plan to sweat over the Mt. Hood Championships, the coach said that the race gives his skiers an opportunity to see how tough some of the outside competition will be for the state championships.

The state championships are slated for March 7-8 at Mirror Mountain.

Following the Pioneer boy's team into the state race from the Mt. Hood League will be Gresham, Barlow and Hood River. While the girls will be followed by Hood River and Gresham with the final qualifying spot to be decided Saturday between Barlow and Parkrose.

Mat men get wins at state tourney

Portland — Senior grapplers Richie Mekelberg and Wayne Reick capped off the Pioneer wrestling season last weekend with a few more wins before bowing out of the state wrestling tournament at the Earl Chiles Center on the University of Portland campus.

While neither wrestler qualified for a placing, coach Ron Calhoun was pleased with Mekelberg's and Reick's matches.

"As long as the kids compete well you don't feel bad about the loss," said Calhoun, pointing out that Mekelberg had a loss in overtime that exemplified the wrestler's desire to win.

Mekelberg, wrestling in the 130 pound class, won his first match 8-10 over Jason Beisell of Forest Grove to draw John Bartley in the next round.

Earlier in the season, Mekelberg was eliminated from a tournament by Bartley. Once again the Forest Grove wrestler prevailed, but not until Mekelberg took the match into overtime.

Mekelberg was subsequently put out of the state tourney as Bartley lost his next round.

Reick, at 136 pounds, won two matches before being eliminated from the tournament.

Reick won his first match 10-8 over Scott Benson from Crescent Valley High School in Corvallis.

Not surprisingly, Reick followed with a loss to number one seed Carlton Hester of Milwaukie.

Reick then won his third match over Jim Johnson of Marshal, scoring a 10-3 victory.

In a close match, Reick lost his four match 5-6 to Paul Moore of Canby.

Race signup set for soap box derby

Registration for the Sandy Soap Box Derby is slated for March 2, 16 and 30 in the Heritage Square Mall, with the race date set for July 7.

Organizers of the derby also hope to have a registration booth set up at the Portland Roadster Show scheduled for March 8, 9 and 11.

This year's Derby racers will coast down a new track donated by Doug Sandy located at the corner of Kelso and Orient Drive.

To qualify for the derby, racers must be between 9-15 years of age.

An entry fee of \$35 will be charged.

Lancers tough defense beats Pioneers 52-34

by MARTY MORRISON

In front of a packed Lancer gym and a cable television audience, the Reynolds girls basketball team played intense basketball to end the Pioneers undefeated season, 52-34.

"Reynolds played intense defense, it was just super. They completely rattled us," said Sandy coach John

Smith.

The loss drops the Pioneers into a tie for first place with the Lancers as both teams boast 17-1 league records.

When the Pioneers and the Lancers last met, the Pioneers won the league showdown 40-33 in the Sandy gym. In that game Wendy Heckard and Shawna Daniels led the charge racking up 11 points while shutting

Reynolds out of their game plan.

Lancer coach Jerry Warren learned a valuable lesson from their loss in that first game and did some revising for Tuesday's game.

"We knew we had to do something for Heckard and Daniels. We began by using a 1-3 defense so that we could help out on Daniels underneath. And then we tried to put

somebody on Heckard to run with her and move her out of the game," said Warren.

Reynolds also came out with a full court press which caused bad passes and kept the Pioneers from getting the offense rolling.

"The first time we played Sandy, Heckard just dribbled up the court. Tonight we just put more pressure on

her and made it a little more difficult for them to get the ball inbounds," said the Reynolds coach.

The Lancer's game plan worked effectively, as Heckard was blanked from scoring in the first half and chipped in only two field goals in the second half. Daniels found it equally difficult to find the bucket in the first half, getting only two field goals. In

the second half, Daniels got eight hard-earned points from the field and two free throws to lead the team with 14 points.

Scoring for Reynolds was led by gaurd Karin Alderton with 22 points.

Center Wendy Coleman was one Pioneer the Lancers couldn't control.

"Wendy kept us in the game, if you could say we were in the game, in the first half," said the Sandy coach.

Coleman did most of her damage to the Lancers from the free throw line, getting seven points, and on the defensive board, grabbing 8 rebounds.

After the game, a dejected Smith wasn't searching for answers as to the game's outcome.

"The bottom line is they took us out of our offense, it wasn't a lack of effort, I just think we got a little bit frustrated.

"It looked like a fire drill out there for awhile, people running every which way," said Smith.

Coleman believed the downfall was caused by a general lack of team effort. "We just weren't playing together," said the Pioneer center.

Smith said that his biggest concern now is getting his team regrouped for Friday nights game home against Parkrose.

"A win Friday, assures us at worst a chance to play Reynolds again for the league championship," said Smith.

While the Pioneers were on the losing end of Tuesday night's 18 point game, they were on the winning end of a 19 point game against The Dalles last Thursday in Sandy.

Earlier in the evening the Sandy junior varsity won a "real barn burner" in overtime to beat The Dalles junior varsity 35-34.

Dee Wilson hit two key free throws in the final seconds of regulation play to send the game into overtime, and then destroyed The Dalles hopes for a win, sinking another free throw to give the Pioneers the win.



Wendy Heckard brings the ball up court against The Dalles.