

# The Shinano Mainichi Shimbun

657 Minami-agata-machi  
Nagano City, Japan  
TEL 026-236-3000  
FAX 026-236-3098

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## 1998 Nagano Olympic Winter Games Day 14

# Another day another world record falls at M-Wave

Germany's Claudia Pechstein won the gold medal in the women's 5,000 meters Friday in world record time, beating German teammate Gunda Niemann-Stirnemann by 0.04 second in Nagano Olympic speed skating.

The 25-year-old Pechstein defended her Olympic 5,000-meter crown with a time of 6 minutes, 59.61 seconds at the M-Wave indoor rink in the final speed skating event of the Nagano Winter Games.

Niemann-Stirnemann, who skated one group earlier than Pechstein, took the silver in 6:59.65

after breaking her own world record of 7:03.26.

The bronze went to Lyudmila Prokasheva of Kazakhstan, who clocked a personal best time of 7:11.14.

Pechstein, the 3,000-meter silver medal winner at the Nagano Games, was ahead of Niemann-Stirnemann's time at 3,400 meters and kept her momentum to deny the 31-year-old veteran her sweep of the women's long-distance events.

The 31-year-old Niemann-Stirnemann, regarded as the best female speedskater of the decade, won her eighth Olympic medal to match

Karin Enke-Kania of East Germany for the most medals in Olympic speed skating.

She led Germany's sweep of the medals at 3,000 meters with Pechstein and bronze winner Anna Friesinger.

The Nagano Olympic speed skating competition saw new world records in five events while the Olympic records were broken in all the 10 events.

## Compagnoni wins 2nd straight Olympic giant slalom title

Deborah Compagnoni of Italy claimed her second straight Olympic women's giant slalom title and third overall Olympic gold medal Friday with a convincing victory at the 18th Winter Games in central Japan.

The 27-year-old Compagnoni, who won the slalom silver medal Thursday, clocked 1 minute, 18.94 second and 1:31.65 for the fastest times in each of the two runs down the Mt. Higashidate course for a winning total of 2:50.59.

The margin of victory for Compagnoni, last season's World Cup giant slalom winner and Olympic super G champion at the 1992 Albertville Winter Games in France, was a whopping 1.80 seconds.

"I had already won one medal so I was relaxed," Compagnoni said. "I could see this morning that it was a difficult piste and I was very concentrated for the second run. I think it was my best race."

Austrian Alexandra Meissnitzer, the bronze medalist in the super G event last week, also won her second medal of the Nagano Games -- this time a silver behind Compagnoni with a combined time of 2:52.39.

Katja Seizinger of Germany, the winner of two gold medals in the downhill and Alpine combined events earlier this week, added a little more sparkle to her successful career as an all-



The medalists of women's giant slalom

around Alpine skier with the bronze medal in 2:52.61.

The 25-year-old, born in the mid-German municipality of Datteln remote from the mountains, also won the downhill gold and slalom bronze four years ago in Lillehammer in addition to the bronze medal for super G at the 1992 Albertville Olympics.

Fellow German Martina Ertl, the silver medal

finisher in 1994, this time missed the podium as she took fourth, ahead of Sophie Lefranc of France, who stood in second place after the first round of skiing at the Shiga Kogen highlands.

Kazuko Ikeda of host Japan finished in 25th place while countrywomen Kumiko Kashiwagi took 27th and Junko Yamakawa was 29th after 34 athletes completed both runs. (Kyodo News)

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