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Buraas wins men's slalom



Japan's Kiminobu Kimura placed 13th

Up-and-coming Hans-Petter Buraas came from behind to lead a Norwegian 1-2 finish in the Nagano Olympic men's slalom event Saturday.

The 22-year-old Buraas, who dyed his hair red before going into the race, clocked a two-run combined time of 1:49.31 at the Mt. Yakebitai course in Shiga Kogen highlands for his first victory in a major international competition.

Buraas placed second after the first run and then turned a 0.22-second deficit against first-round leader Austrian Thomas Sykora into a

convincing victory, with a 1.33 second winning margin.

Ole Furueth moved up from third to win the silver in 1:50.64. Sykora failed to convert his first-run lead and settled for the bronze, another 0.04 second behind.

Japan's medal hope Kiminobu Kimura placed 10th after the first run and slipped further back to a disappointing 13th place finish, 2.84 seconds behind Buraas.

Kimura, who started sixth in the second round, attacked the gates aggressively in the upper section of the 65-gate course but lost his

momentum in a slower part later in the race.

Kimura, No. 4 in the current World Cup standings, could not live up to the high expectations of local fans who packed the stands in the finish area along with Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko.

Italian star Alberto Tomba, bidding to become the first Alpine skier to win medals in four straight Olympic Winter Games, withdrew from the competition after placing 17th in the first run. (Kyodo News)



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