

SPORTS & OUTDOORS

in the Western Mountains of Maine

Seth Wescott takes Silver at X-Games

By Dan Fayen
Special to the Irregular

ASPEN — So close. Snowboardcross Olympic Gold Medalist Seth Wescott, of Carrabassett Valley, nearly had his first Winter X Games gold medal (in 13 attempts) last Saturday, Jan. 30.

Wescott twice traded the lead with five-time X-Games Snowboardcross gold medalist and fellow 2010 U.S. Olympic Ski Team member Nate Holland, from Sandpoint, Idaho before Holland eked out the win on the Aspen snowboard race course.

Wescott came into the championship run with the highest qualifying score from either of the two semifinal brackets and as the top pick on the U.S. Olympic Snowboardcross team.

The Silver Medal finish, his fifth in 14 X-Games, did not disappoint Wescott as he expressed satisfaction that he is healthy and is focused on the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver beginning Feb. 12.

CVA's Vielleux wins Downtown Showdown

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PORTLAND — He came, he jibbed, he conquered. Jeremie Vielleux, a senior at Carrabassett Academy, took top honors (in the ski division) at the second annual Downtown Showdown Ski and Snowboard Rail Jam in Portland last Saturday, Jan. 30.

The event, sponsored by Sugarloaf, Sunday River and the City of Portland, featured approximately 30 snowboarders and skiers competing in a "terrain park" built on Monument Square in Downtown Portland.

The Downtown Showdown's course included a two-story tall mountain and 30-foot-long staircase built by crews from Sugarloaf and Sunday River.

The "Showdown" has quickly become the most famous and well-attended snowboard/ski freestyle rail jam in New England and attracts the best amateur jibbers in the Northeast.

Vielleux qualified for the Downtown Showdown by recently winning the ski freestyle competition at Sugarloaf's Build Your Own Rail Jam.

Hundreds of spectators braved the cold and wind, Saturday night and gathered around the Monument Square jibbing venue for the high-quality acrobatic performances.

Showdown competitors vied for top honors in either the ski or snowboard divisions. The Downtown Showdown winners, Vielleux and snowboarder Jake Hall (a Gould Academy student), each were awarded the event's grand prize of \$500 and winter gear.



Mt. Abram senior Jim Barker winds his way through traffic with this lay-up in a game against Carrabec last Tuesday, Jan. 26. (David Hart photo)

Roadrunners mark season with intensity

By David Hart
Irregular Staff

Mt. Abram, 83 – Carrabec, 64

SALEM — Senior Jim Barker added 34 points to a team high 83 in a big game with the Cobras of Carrabec last Tuesday.

The Cobras battled with a 24-point second quarter to keep Mt. Abram from blowing it out early.

MTA had a 40-34 half time lead and whatever was determined in the lockers at the mid-point worked. The Roadrunners came out and put 28 third-quarter points on the board compared to the Cobras' 10.

"We just tried to step up our intensity and keep their big man off the boards," said Jarrod Blood a senior captain for Mt. Abram basketball team. Blood contributed

that evening with 15 points.

Carrabec's Aaron Lane was still a factor scoring a team high 27 points that evening.

"For us this was one of the biggest games of the year. This was a great pump-up game for the next three games, but obviously if we wanted a big win this season, this game would have been the one we want," said senior captain Joey Lampron.

Lampron said it was a just a mix of everything that worked so well for the Roadrunners that night. "We were really pumped in the locker room and came out ready to play. We just knew what we wanted to do and wanted to let them know that they were at Mt. Abram."

The last time the two teams played Carrabec got a late game bucket to seal a win over MTA in N. Anson. Lampron said when they played them last, they lost due to a lack of team intensity. "We just didn't have it like we did tonight," Lampron said.

MTA coach Mike DeRaps called the last game "a lack of concentration."

"This game was so important especially being a rivalry game. It doesn't matter who has a better record it's always going to be intense," team captain Barker explained.

Barker said that once Lampron and Blood starting getting hot, it led to him getting some good looks from outside the arc. Barker drained a total of five 3-pointers that evening.

A fan favorite that evening may have been Barker's behind-the-back pass to sophomore center Tyler Hupper who quickly banked it off the glass for two points late in the game.

"I was driving the ball when a defender was cutting in. He (Hupper) was watching me the whole way. We made eye contact for a split -

Middle school hoops program returns to MTA

SALEM — Organizers of the Mt. Abram Jr. Basketball Program have announced that the program is back. Nearly 25 boys grades six through eight from throughout MSAD #58 community participated last year gaining instruction in basketball skills, mental aspects of the game, strategic game instruction and other facets.

There is a \$20 fee for this program, which is expected to start Feb. 10 at 6 p.m. It will run Wednesdays and Fridays for the first two weeks, after which it will move to Wednesdays only.

Last year, the athletes were taught by both adult instructors and some of the top varsity stars from the Mt. Abram High School boys' basketball team. Students were eventually split into teams where they competed in competitive games, all played at Mt. Abram High School.

Western Maine Sports director David Hart leads this program along with independent coach Scott Dixon of Avon who is in charge of the coaching and skill development staff.

Organizers say that they're also looking for competitive teams from other communities to participate in either 14U, sixth through eighth grade, or high school aged games in February or March.

"The Mt. Abram faculty, staff, administration and student athletes from MTA, along with the support from the Kingfield Recreation Department and others have all been very instrumental with making this program possible," Hart said. "Without them, this could never exist."

For answers to any questions, email davehart@live.com or visit westernmainesports.com.