

Source: <http://www.cbc.ca/sports/olympics/sliding/story/2011/02/12/sp-luge-worldcup-gough.html>

Gough slides to stunning Canadian 1st

Calgarian wins first-ever World Cup luge gold for Canada

Last Updated: Saturday, February 12, 2011 | 11:06 AM ET

The Associated Press



Canada's Alex Gough celebrates her first-place finish in the women's luge race at the world championships Saturday in Paramonovo, Russia. (Alexander Zemlianichenko/Associated Press)

Alex Gough is the first Canadian to ever win gold at a luge World Cup, ending Germany's 105-race winning streak in women's races in the process.

The Calgarian had a two-run time of one minute 33.536 seconds on Saturday to win the event at a new track just outside of Moscow on Saturday.

She edged Germany's Carina Schwab by 0.378 seconds.

"This is absolutely fantastic. I still can't believe it," said Gough. "I always knew that this winning streak would come to an end one day, but I never thought that I would be the one to do it.

"This track is new for all of us. There is no one who can claim a home advantage. I'm extremely happy."

The last non-German to win a women's World Cup race was Austria's Andrea Tagwerker on Nov. 29, 1997.

"You cannot even imagine what it was like around the finish line when a Canadian finally ended this streak," said Wolfgang Staudinger, head coach of the Canadian luge team. "This is not just history in Canada, but this is luge history in the world.

"We are very happy and will have to party as a team tonight."

Natalie Geisenberger was third and Tatjana Huefner was fourth for Germany on Saturday. Arianne Jones of Calgary was ninth.

Huefner led after the first run, but made a mistake in her second trip down. Huefner still clinched her fourth straight overall World Cup title.

The victory gives Gough five medals in a breakthrough season — complementing three World Cup bronzes and another bronze at the world championships. Only three other Canadians have earned World Cup medals in the sport and Gough is the only one with multiple international medals.

"It has been an incredible year and I just feel like so much of the hard work over the last six years is really paying off," said Gough.

"This is huge and incredible for not only me but our program in Canada. We have to keep building and growing from this."

A moment of silence was held during the medals ceremony to mark the one-year anniversary of the death of Georgian luger Nodar Kumaritashvili. He died in a training run just hours before the start of the Vancouver Olympics.

In the doubles race on Saturday, Austria's Andreas Linger and Wolfgang Linger won again, finishing in 1:33.189, well ahead of Germany's Tobias Wendl and Tobias Arlt (1:33.393) and Latvia's Andris Sics and Juris Sics (1:33.450).

Tristan Walker of Cochrane, Alta., and Calgary's Justin Snith finished 11th (1:34.854).

Wendl and Arlt clinched the overall World Cup season doubles title.

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