Upperton golden in bobsleigh race
Last Updated: Friday, November 30, 2007 | 8:19 PM ET
CBC Sports

Helen Upperton of Calgary and brakeman Jenny Ciochetti of Edmonton captured the first World Cup women's bobsleigh event of the season Friday on their home track.

Upperton and Ciochetti posted a two-run time of one minute 53.86 seconds at Calgary Olympic Park to edge the Germany 2 sled of Cathleen Martini and Janine Tischer, who clocked in at 1:53.94.

Upperton and Ciochetti and the German pair were tied for first after the opening run with a time of 56.75, but Upperton's driving on the final turn proved to be the difference in the second run.

Sandra Kiriasis and Berit Wiacker, in Germany 1, finished third in 1:53.98.

"The goal is to always push as good as you can and drive as good as you can, but you've got to try and keep building competitive equipment to keep up with the Germans and Americans," said Upperton, who's adjusting to a new sled.

"The Canadian program is working really hard on that. It was time for a change, to push the envelope a bit and get up there on the podium."

Canadian Helen Upperton, left, and teammate Jenny Ciochetti celebrate after winning the women's World Cup bobsleigh competition Friday in Calgary.
(Larry MacDougal/Canadian Press)

Canada's second team of Kaillie Humphries of Calgary and Shelley-Ann Brown of Pickering, Ont., nearly cracked the World Cup podium, finishing 0.04 seconds out of third.

Upperton, who finished fourth in the 2006 Torino Olympics with brakeman Heather Moyse, drove to three World Cup podium finishes last season with both Ciochetti and Jaime Cruickshank splitting the braking duties.

Upperton, 28, finished fourth in the World Cup standings last season.

Cruickshank and pilot Lisa Szabon placed 12th in Friday's race in a time of 1:55.77.

CBCSports.ca is streaming the men's two-man bobsleigh World Cup live from Calgary on Friday at 7:30 p.m. ET.

The Canadian skeleton and bobsleigh team have started the 2007-08 season with a bang.

Paul Boehm of Calgary and Michelle Kelly of Fort St. John, B.C., won gold in men's and women's skeleton on Thursday, while Melissa Hollingsworth of Eckville, Alta., slid to a silver and Jon Montgomery of Russell, Man., took bronze.

With files from the Canadian Press