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Vik leads after ski jumping in Nordic combined



Junichi Kogawa soars to 4th place

Norway's Bjarte Engen Vik took the lead after the ski jumping portion of the Nagano Olympics Nordic combined individual event Friday and will take a 36-second advantage into the cross country race to decide the gold medal.

World Cup leader Vik leaped 89.5 and 94.5 meters under sunny skies at the 90-meter normal hill in Hakuba for a total of 241.0 points and will start Saturday's 15-kilometer race 36 seconds ahead of second-place Valerij Stoljarov of Russia.

Stoljarov had jumps of 92.5 and 89.5 meters for 235.0 points.

Tsugiharu Ogiwara of Japan placed third with 232.5 points after traveling 87.5 and 91.5 meters on his jumps, putting him 51 seconds behind the leader for the start of the cross country race.

Japan's Junichi Kogawa followed in fourth place with jumps of 87 and 91 meters and will begin Saturday three seconds further behind.

Two-time world champion Kenji Ogiwara, a two-time Olympic gold medalist in the team

event, was ninth and lags 1 minute, 30 seconds behind Vik.

Kenji Ogiwara, who gave the athletes' oath at the opening ceremony of the 18th Olympic Winter Games last Saturday, will face an uphill struggle over the demanding Snow Harp course as he makes a bid for his first Olympic medal in the individual event.

(Kyodo News)

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