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One for the Thumb... USA Luge's Grimmette And Martin Win Bronze at Worlds

LAKE PLACID, N.Y. --- [World Financial Group](#) sponsored, USA Luge's Mark Grimmette (Muskegon, Mich.) and Brian Martin (Palo Alto, Calif.) had not claimed an international luge medal since the 2007 World Championships in Igls, Austria. That all changed, Friday, Feb. 6, in Lake Placid, N.Y., when the two-time Olympic medalists found themselves back on the podium... with their sixth-career Worlds bronze medal.

"I know that when I was coming up the out run on that second run and I saw a one, it confirmed that we got a medal," remarked Grimmette. "I just felt this adrenaline rush through my body, I was pretty psyched.

"All season we've been finishing between sixth and 10th place, and I knew that we had the speed but over the last couple of years with my back, there's been some bad habits that have crept into my sliding. I've been working that stuff out this season, but the results hadn't shown it until today, but we're going back in the right direction."

Before the race and despite three-career overall World Cup titles, Grimmette and Martin were thought of as "dark horses" for a medal. As the fifth team down the track during the first run, the pair clocked a single heat time of 43.784 seconds putting them in third place and well within reach of a medal. Grimmette and Martin secured their spot on the podium with a second run time of 43.827 and finished with a two-heat total of one minute, 27.611 seconds.

"Last season and this season have been pretty tough," stated Martin. "It feels great to do it, win a medal in your home country, on your home track, this is very exciting and very rewarding."

While Grimmette and Martin finished on the podium, two other U.S. sleds also found themselves in the top-10. Christian Niccum (Woodinville, Wash.) and Dan Joye (Carmel, N.Y.) raced to a sixth-place finish with a time of 1:28.012, while Matt Mortensen (Huntington Station, N.Y.) and Preston Griffall (Salt Lake City, Utah) finished ninth, in 1:28.401.

Friday's podium had the feel of an Olympic one. Italy's Gerhard Plankensteiner and Oswald Haselrieder, the 2006 Olympic bronze medalists, and Germany's Andre Florschuetz and Torstin Wustlich, the 2006 Olympic silver medalists, finished first and second, respectively. Plankensteiner and Haselrieder will carry the title of world champions into next February's Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver, Canada, after posting a combined time of 1:27.401, while Florschuetz and Wustlich, the defending world champions, completed their two runs in 1:27.458.

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