

STATISTICS SHOW NIKE SWIFT SKIN WINNING THE SPEEDSKATING RACE

Initial Statistics Comparing Athletes "Personal Bests" prior to skating at Salt Lake Versus Their Results At The Utah Oval Show Skaters in Nike Swift Skins Go Faster

Kearns, Utah (February 23, 2002) – So far at Salt Lake, speedskaters wearing the Nike Swift Skin have won six long track gold medals and set seven world records. Great results, but is there any evidence that the speedskating suit made a difference? That's the question internationally lauded aerodynamicist Len Brownlie, Ph.D., asked. The answer, through eight races, seems to be yes. "On average, skaters in the Nike Swift Skin performed almost 1% better than their previous personal records," said Brownlie. "Some casual observers of the sport may not think 1% is big difference, but ask the skaters. After years of training the difference between gold and no medal at all can be a tiny fraction of a second." In looking at the results, Brownlie saw that the situation lent itself to an analysis of the effects of new technology. He noted that three different companies, had introduced new speedskating suits for Salt Lake. He recognized that speedskaters race under controlled conditions: indoors where weather is not a factor. Their times are carefully tracked and analyzed. He further realized that most personal records in international skating have been set at two high altitude speedskating ovals: Kearns, Utah, and Calgary, Alberta. Given all that information, he saw that comparing skaters' previous personal records with their official Salt Lake results could, on average, indicate if the new speedskating suit technologies had any effect on results.

Brownlie has analyzed the results through eight races, including all of the competitors in the men's 500, 1000, 1500 and 5000 plus the women's 500, 1000, 1500 and 3000 m. His results show the average change in times between the skaters' Salt Lake performances and their previous personal bests:

Personal Bests Pre-Salt Lake vs. Best Salt Lake Performances in New Skins:

Nike Swift Skin – US team athletes .91% **faster**

Nike Swift Skin – Netherlands team athletes .93% **faster**

Generic (non-branded) speedskating suits .05% **faster**

The three other suits from major manufacturers all were **slower, with negative percentages**

Note: if a skater was able to race in one of the new technology suits from any manufacturer prior to Salt Lake, Brownlie used their last personal record before changing suits as the comparison.

Brownlie noted that he would expect that under the stress of such important competition, some athletes would perform better and some would perform worse. By looking at the averages of a large number of skaters (261 in total) using specific new technologies, patterns begin to emerge. Brownlie will continue tracking and analyzing the results through the end of the competition.

Nike's Advanced Innovation Team, led by Innovation Director Rick MacDonald and Senior Designer Eddy Harber, had turned to Brownlie, an independent kinesiologist and aerodynamicist to test the aerodynamic qualities of fabrics and designs during the development of the suit.

After more than four years of research, testing and design their cooperative efforts led to the creation of the full-body speedskating Swift Skin. The head-to-skate aerodynamic speed suit now stands as the most innovative piece of competitive sports apparel to date.

"We are very pleased to be able to help great athletes achieve great results," noted MacDonald. "Our contribution is simply to maximize athletic performance by providing the skaters with what they need to do their best."