

penton col. w/o sept. 10/18

PRESSURE? WHAT PRESSURE, SAYS HENDERSON

Kim Boutin of Sherbrooke, Que., won three medals — a silver and two bronze — at the Winter Olympics last February in South Korea, but she should be in line for another silver when it comes time to vote for Canada's female athlete of the year for 2018. Brooke Henderson, step up to the gold medal podium.

Faced with every good reason in the world to choke in the final round of the CP Canadian Open at the Wascana Golf Club in Regina, Henderson, the pride of Smiths Falls, Ont., showed her mettle by firing a sensational final-round seven-under-par 65 to win the title in a romp. She became the first Canadian woman to win the national open in 45 years (Jocelyn Bourassa did it in 1973).

The eyes of a nation have been on Henderson since she broke onto the pro golf scene in 2015 as a brash 17-year-old. She won once in her first year on the LPGA tour, won her first major the following year and now has seven tour titles, one shy of the Canadian record held by Sandra Post. Her victory in Regina moved her to No. 8 in the world.

Henderson took a one-stroke lead into Sunday's final round in Regina and won by four. It's tough enough to sleep on a third-round lead, but when you're attracting Tiger-like galleries to watch your every shot, when TSN is rearranging its Sunday morning broadcast schedule to offer coast-to-coast coverage, when the national newspaper has a poster-sized photo of you on the front page of its sports section, when the Golf Channel commentators are proclaiming every five minutes that you're the pride of Canada, and when you're a 20-year-old who has faced pressure before, but not this kind of intense, national pressure, well, there's every reason in the world to shoot something like 78 or 80 on the final day and finish 14th.

But Henderson did nothing of the sort, going out in two under par and, playing through a steady rain, made four more birdies on the back, including a three-footer for a championship statement on the 18th hole.

"Truly amazing, a dream come true," said Henderson. "The crowds were incredible all week."

So was Henderson. And that's why when it comes time to vote for Canada's female athlete of the year this December, Canada's best female golfer should come out ahead of a three-medal-winning speedskater.

- **RJ Currie** of sportsdeke.com, on the difference between Steelers QB **Ben Roethlisberger** and the Westminster Palace clock, closed for repairs: "The latter Big Ben can't have its bell rung."
- **Randy Turner** of the Winnipeg Free Press, on Twitter: "Alert: Smoke will continue to waft into Manitoba from the west on Sunday, largely from the Bombers defence getting burnt for over 500 yards in Calgary."
- **Headline in the Onion**: "Carmelo Thinking He Would Be Good Fit On Team With GM Who Hasn't Been Paying Attention Last Few Years."
- **Patti Dawn Swansson** in the River City Renegade, on Toronto Maple Leafs hiring three women, including **Hayley Wickenheiser**, assistant director of player development: "I don't know if that gets them any closer to a Stanley Cup parade, but you have to know that Humpty Harold Ballard is spinning like a lathe in his grave."
- **Comedy writer Alex Kaseberg**: "**Aaron Rodgers** signs a six-year, \$174 million deal with the Packers. In a related story, the rest of the Packers will be paid in bitcoins and groupons. And cheese and cheese by-product."
- **Kaseberg** again: "In Massachusetts, a golfer had his finger bit off in a fight. Ironically, the victim was attacked when he tried to give his attacker a tip." Added **Dwight Perry** of the Seattle Times: "Well, there's one golf slice that even **Hank Haney** can't fix."
- **Comedy writer Jim Barach**: "Cleveland Browns linebacker **Mychal Kendricks** has admitted to federal charges of insider trading. It was the worst advice he ever took other than being told to sign with the Browns."
- **Barach** again: "**Dustin Johnson** tried **Jack Nicklaus**'s old persimmon head driver and hit the ball 290 yards. He liked it so much he put it in his bag to take the place of his 7-iron."
- **Steve Simmons** of the Toronto Sun, listing his top five Panthers: "**Cam Newton, Luke Kuechly, Sasha Barkov, Roberto Luongo** and **Peter Sellers**."
- **Comedian Eric Stangel**, on aptly-named Yankees first baseman **Greg Bird**: "There's no one better in baseball today at flying out to straightaway centre field."
- **Dwight Perry** again: "**Corey Bellemore**, winner of this year's Beer Mile World Classic in Vancouver, was disqualified when race officials ruled he didn't consume enough beer during the race's four mandatory brew stops. It's believed to be the first time in sports history in which a runner was stripped of his title for failing to fail a drug test."

Care to comment? Email brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca