

Fil-Am Speed Skater Returns to Action Today (Wednesday) - MabuhayRadio

Written by Joseph G. Lariosa

Tuesday, 23 February 2010 21:40 - Last Updated Tuesday, 23 February 2010 21:45

By JOSEPH G. LARIOSA

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Filipino-American Olympic Speed Skater Returns to Action Today (Wednesday)

CHICAGO, Illinois (JGLi) – Filipino American John Roberts “J.R.” Celski will return to action today, Wednesday, Feb. 24, afternoon in his quest for his second individual medal for the Men’s 500-meter short track speed skating in Vancouver Olympics that winds down on Sunday (Feb. 28).

Celski came up short Sunday, Feb. 20, when he was disqualified in the Men’s 1000-meter semifinals when he tried to remove the hand of Canadian Francois Hamelin off his back en route to the finish line.

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Although Hamelin crashed the oval track made of protective mats of polyurethane foam, the Canadian advanced to the finals dominated by South Koreans Jung-Su Lee (gold) and Ho-Suk Lee (silver) and American Apolo Anton Ohno (bronze).

Celski, son of a Polish father and a Filipino mother, will join the field for the Men's 500-meter heats so he can take part in the Men's 500-meter Quarterfinals on Friday, Feb. 26. The Men's 500-meter Semifinals and Finals will be held later in the day.

Celski will later be taking part in the Men's 5000-meter Relay Finals to round out his debut in the Olympics that has so far earned him a bronze medal in the Men's 1,500-meter final last Feb. 14.

A native of Monterey, California, where his father, Robert, a Polish descent, was stationed by the United States Army, Celski was raised in Federal Way, Washington. His mom, Sue (nee: Padaca), is from Isabela province in the Philippines.

The 19-year-old J.R. Celski began inline skating at age of three and switched to short track in 2002 after watching American short-track star Apolo Anton Ohno at the 2002 Winter Games in Salt Lake City

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Utah

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Celski has two older brothers, Chris and David, who is an officer in the U. S. Army.

J.R. moved to California at age 14 for better training facilities. He fought off homesickness, but had his older brother Chris with him for support. He attended school at

Lakewood
High School

in
Lakewood

,
California

, graduating with high honors in the Merit Scholars Program.

Celski missed the minimum age requirement for competing at the 2006 Olympic Winter Games in Turin by 17 days.

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Although Celski graduated from high school in 2008, he deferred enrolment at a university to concentrate on preparing for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. After Vancouver, he plans to enroll in business or architecture at the

University

of

California Berkeley

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