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Rudman sixth as Britain's Williams claims women's Olympic skeleton gold

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By Owen Houlihan »

SHELLEY Rudman claimed sixth place as Great Britain teammate Amy Williams won a brilliant gold medal in the Olympic skeleton competition in Whistler.

2006 silver medallist Rudman, tied seventh overnight, produced her best two runs of the event on day two to move up a place.

Starting 0.96 off the pace after the first two runs, the 28-year-old from Pewsey also broke 54 seconds for the first time in her third run as she recorded a time of 53.95, enough to keep her in seventh position.

And she went even faster in her final outing, clocking 53.82 to nudge a place up the rankings, but will be disappointed by her first run on Thursday night, which left her languishing in 11th position and ultimately cost her a medal chance.

Bath's Williams, who was a reserve and doing radio commentary when Rudman won silver four years ago, became Britain's first individual Winter Olympics gold medallist since Robin Cousins in 1980 by continuing her opening-day domination.

She shattered the Whistler track record for the second time to extend her lead to more than half a second after the third run.

And she shaved a further 15 hundredths of a second off her time from the first run yesterday, blazing down in 53.68 to hold a 0.52 advantage over Canadian favourite Mellisa Hollingsworth, who moved up to second.

The 27-year-old turned her final run into a victory procession, clocking 54 seconds flat to obliterate her rivals to triumph by a huge 0.56-second advantage and start the celebrations among the British fans.

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