



ALBERTA SKI JUMPING
+ NORDIC COMBINED



Update – April 20, 2009

Women's Ski Jumping News

Day One Report from Sarah Lynch:

"It was an incredibly long day yesterday starting at 6 am for Zoya at CBC for a live television interview. We arrived there only to be told that it was cancelled. The hijacking took precedent and the same thing happened to Katie and Deedee's interview over at CTV at 5 and 6 am. We all joked that maybe it was a Jamaican IOC member who was trying to deflect the publicity away from the lawsuit.

"We all met at Ross Clark's office (sorry I called him Ross Davis yesterday) and headed to the court house for 9 am. There was a huge media scrum on the courthouse steps both at the beginning and the end of the day - a lot of familiar faces. The same media have been there all along: Sarah Galashan, Daphne Branham and many others.

"Court started at 10 am. The courtroom was standing room only. There were probably about 50 people to start with. People would come and go and by the end of the day there were about 30-40 people there. Ross Clarke spoke the whole day speaking about each plaintiff and then going through the case law. They showed some footage from the world championships to help show that this is not a sport in its infancy. Ross spoke a lot about adverse affects discrimination - about how the sport for women has continually hit roadblocks and as a result has not been allowed to grow and as a result has had a negative impact on all these girls and women's lives in one way or another not allowing them to fulfill their dreams. He also brought up the idea of criteria - how the women are continually subjected to criteria that men have never been subjected to. He talked about Karla Keck who jumped during the same era as our Canadian jumper Alison Carrol from Thunder Bay and what those girls faced. I know that the male jumpers of the 90's turn their noses up and have laughed at the abilities of those girls but they were so gutsy to continue doing what they loved despite the roadblocks they were faced with. Just like our girls do now. Ross also talked about the Slovenian jumper and how she was threatened to be kicked off the team if she joins the lawsuit. How the male Slovenian jumpers are paid salaries, and given cars to be on the national team, how there is no support for the women and no national championships for women because it is not an Olympic sport. Ross talked about how the IOC insists that in order to be an Olympic sport more countries need to have national championships.

"The judge, Laurie Ann Fenlon, has a lot of information to go through. Ross had prepared over 14 binders of information. Ross will finish up today and George Macintosh the VANOC lawyer will speak the next two days.

"For all of us it seems like a no-brainer. We know our girls have trained alongside the boys their whole lives. We know there is a competitive circuit. We know that this thing makes no sense. It really saddens me to think and hear that there are still so many people out there who do not share our point of view.

"Looking forward to seeing Nina and Meaghan Reid today and Jan and Katie Willis are arriving tomorrow and Thursday. If anyone else has family or friends in Vancouver it is incredibly interesting and it's great to have the support. There was a guy there- Dan LeMay - who used to work as the CSA Nordic Combined coordinator back in the 80's - back when there was money for our sports! If anyone wants to attend, the courts are the BC Supreme Courts right downtown.

"There are some good audio reports that go with this article by Daphne Branham
<http://www.vancouversun.com/sports/Female+jumpers+fight+equality/1509214/story.html>

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20090421.BCOLYMPIC21ART2302/TPStory/National>"

Cheers,
Sarah

Media Reports

If you are interested in following the media reports on the lawsuit, here are some of the better links. It is interesting to see the story covered in London, Taiwan, Australia and even the Congo! Most of the hits on Google are repeats of the same Canada press stories – as of 10:00 these are the major reports:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/8009464.stm>

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20090421.BCOLYMPIC21ART2302//TPStory/Front>

<http://www.nationalpost.com/news/story.html?id=1518242>

<http://www.vancouversun.com/life/Women+jumpers+fight+inclusion/1185980/story.html>

<http://www.vancouversun.com/Vanoc+must+women+compete+jump+drop+events+court+told/1515408/story.html>

<http://www.ctvolympics.ca/ski-jumping/news/newsid=9589.html?cid=rsstsn>

<http://www.canadaeast.com/front/article/641028>

http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news_content.php?id=925684&lang=eng_news&cate_img=145.jpg&cate_rss=news_Sports

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/bettina-prentice/breasts-barred-from-the-o_b_188383.html

http://blog.seattletimes.nwsourc.com/olympics/2009/04/20/womens_ski-jump_lawsuit_opens.html

<http://neatesager.blogspot.com/2009/04/womens-ski-jumping-whos-afraid-of-katie.html>

<http://twitter.com/letwomenjump>

Briefing Notes

- As athletes, parents, volunteers, officials and fans of Ski Jumping and Nordic Combined, we are often asked questions about our sports by friends and/or media.
- We would like to add some 'briefing notes' or facts to each Update so we will all become well armed and consistent with our answers.
- If you have questions that you would like answers for or facts that you would like to share, send them to my email address and I will publish the answers for all to read.
- Over the next week we may be fielding questions about women's ski jumping – and if you go into the Comments/Blog sections after media reports, you will certainly find tons of misinformation there! So, here is the first Briefing Notes article:

Briefing Notes for Women's Ski Jumping

- Isabel Coursier of Revelstoke claimed the title of *Women's Amateur Champion Ski Jumper of the World* in 1922, more than eighty years ago.
- The FIS website lists 87 women who have scored at least one point (a top-30 placing) in international competitions in the last season.
- The top-10 ranked women are from 6 different countries – Norway, Austria, Germany, USA, Canada and Slovenia.
- The top 87 ranked women are from 13 different nations – as well as the above they include Switzerland, Japan, Italy, Netherlands, France, Czech Republic and Finland.

- The first year that a regular calendar of women's international competitions was held was 2005 when 14 events were held. These international events were/are called Continental Cups.
- The first World Championships was held this year in Liberec, Czech Republic and was won by Lindsey Van of the US.

Who Watches Ski Jumping on TV?

- The channel with the most viewers for live and delayed coverage in the course of last season was Poland's TVP 1, which recorded impressive 260 million viewers.
- The channel with the highest Ski Jumping market share was Norway's NRK 1, with an average of 52.8%.
- The most viewers for a single competition on a single channel was achieved by ARD of Germany which had 5.8 million viewers for the traditional New Year's competition in Garmisch-Partenkirchen as part of the Four-Hills-Tournament on 1st January 2009.

Season Review: Ski Jumping & Nordic Combined

- Walter Hofer, FIS Head of Ski Jumping and Nordic Combined, reflected on the 2008/2009 season in the FIS Ski Jumping:
- "The first World Cup period, with the exception of Kuusamo (FIN), was facilitated by generally quite stable weather conditions. This helped to steer the focus on the athletic performances as we had a really nice atmosphere and exciting competitions on the whole. During the second half of the season we faced big challenges through the external conditions. The main stakeholders, athletes and coaches and the organizers and officials, were all forced to work really hard. Thanks to everyone's great efforts, only one competition had to be cancelled despite the long season and a very tight calendar.
- "However, during the season analysis, we have realized that in certain situations the competition jury would have required some more flexibility. Regardless, we know the final outcome will be dependent on not just the jury's experience but also on some luck. But with some new ideas we hope to open up some additional options in this area.
- "With Gregor Schlierenzauer, we saw a more than deserving FIS Ski Jumping World Cup overall winner. Through his very extraordinary performances - including many records - the sport of Ski Jumping grew its popularity beyond the normal level of public interest. With his results he has already now established a solid basis for becoming one of the very best in the history of this sport and is well on his way to becoming a true ambassador for his own discipline.
- "In Nordic Combined, the athletes adjusted to the completely new competition format very successfully. Otherwise, too, we can say that the new format has proven itself in reality. This applies even though some events, especially in early season, were impacted by difficult weather. At the same time, we are still in the middle of a consolidation phase, which will surely require another season.
- "This is what the organizers and TV producers will need to attain a certain level of standardization both for calendar planning and preparation for staging the competitions.
- "From a sports perspective, we anticipate seeing the emergence of a true combined athlete. The expectations for the best athletes will focus on achieving an optimal jump during the one competition round and delivering their very best performance in the 10 km cross-country race. This will end up requiring methodical adjustments in training as well. And here, just as in Ski Jumping, the competition management will require some more flexibility to be able to better steer the competitions in the current circumstances."