



WinSport Mission: To provide excellence in winter sports facilities and training for Canadian athletes to **discover, develop** and **excel**, through a sustainable business model."

winSPORT WEEKLY

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Our athletes up close

Jeffrey Frisch
Alpine skiing

The 30-year-old native of Mont Tremblant, Que., is hoping to land on the podium this weekend at the Lake Louise Winterstart World Cup event. His career best finish on the World Cup circuit was a 17th-place in a downhill race back in March in Kvitfjell, Norway.

SS team gets jump on season

Thanks to a great partnership, when the Canadian Freestyle Ski Association says 'jump' to WinSport, the answer is always 'how high'.

In this case, the jump is 65 feet and the biggest jump in the country, helping the Canadian slopestyle ski team get an early training start to the season.

Thanks to WinSport's hill crew, which had been perfecting the jump since snowmaking began a couple of weeks ago, National slopestyle head coach To-

ben Sutherland says his team has a huge training advantage.

"I don't think there has ever been a jump this size – definitely not at COP – if anywhere, in the country," says Sutherland.

"Yeah, Whistler builds some pretty big jumps for their event in April, but that's it, it's open for that week or 10 days, then it's kind of done. Having this, we can jump on it day in or day out."

The team typically heads to Colorado this time of year to train, but

its offerings are usually some rails, small jumps and long lift lines.

Sutherland also has a soft spot for this part of the country since he used to train as an aerialist with the Canadian team at Fortress Mountain in the 1990s.

"It's just trying to recreate that more efficient way of doing things," he said. "The lap times here are way quicker, way less traffic as far as other competitors, and just being able to have WinSport at our finger tips."

WinSport's commitment to training in a safe environment is also important.

"Every time you go off the jump, you are at risk. You are always one jump away from ... going back to school," he says.

"I don't want to be sending kids off jumps that don't make sense and in an environment that is too hectic. Time on task in a safe environment is the key."

WinSport training helped Howell en route to gold
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- Photo: Paul Planiden, WinSport



For more on this story, check out WinSport's YouTube channel by clicking [HERE](#)

Wickfest helps grow girls hockey

The fifth annual Wickenheiser World Female Hockey Festival got underway Thursday with the opening ceremony at WinSport's Markin MacPhail Centre.

Nearly 1,500 female players in recreation to elite divisions are participating in this weekend-long tournament, with the final games on Sunday.

Almost 70% of the teams participating are from outside Calgary, including international teams from Mexico and the United States.

The tournament's founder, long-time women's national team hock-

ey player Hayley Wickenheiser, hopes to continue to grow this event to even more teams, with international players in each division, providing more girls with a great hockey experience.

In addition to the on-ice opportunities for the girls, who are aged 10 to 17, are educational sessions throughout the weekend, plus team building, sports psychology discussions and presentations from Olympic figure skater David

Pelletier and Canadian national team members Natalie Spooner and Meaghan Mikkelson.

WinSport's High Performance Training Centre will host 70 players from the tournament in specialized circuit training sessions with Canadian Sport Institute trainers.

An estimated 2,500 spectators are expected in the facility throughout the weekend and Wickenheiser will be around both on and off the ice as well as signing autographs.



Events at the Park

Ski and snowboard hill
Weekdays: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Weekends: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Markin MacPhail Centre
Friday-Sunday: Annual Wickenheiser Female World Hockey Festival, games scheduled from 7 a.m. to 11:15 p.m. Friday and Saturday; 7 a.m. to 10:15 p.m. on Sunday. All arenas.

CANADA'S SPORTS HALL OF FAME
Tuesday to Sunday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Students head to class on the hill!

The first week of WinSport's schools program is in the books, with nearly 1,500 students skiing or boarding on the hill.

The annual program once again booked to capacity within hours of registration opening, with an estimated 20,000 students from schools all over the city and surrounding area participating.

For just \$20 per student, schools can bring their classes for a day on the hill, including lessons, rentals and a lift ticket.

The program has continued to grow, with WinSport continuing to build the program into one of the best in the country.

"Probably our biggest change came three years ago, when we changed from having stations to now the kids staying in one group all day with one instructor," said Dave Swinden, WinSport's Interim Schools Program Manager.

"We found that there was more progress made, as opposed to moving to new stations with new groups and new instructors every

hour or so. We have had a lot of good feedback from the schools with regards to this format. The students get more time on task, so there is less wasted time transitioning to stations."

A large majority of the students that participate in the schools program are in Grades 4 to 8, but it is open to all grades.

WinSport has also expanded the program into fall and spring, when schools can participate in mountain biking and the challenge course.

Howell had help on road to podium

When national team slope-style athlete

Dara Howell returned to WinSport this week for training, it brought back some memories.

The last time she was at WinSport's Canada Olympic Park was in January, just five weeks before the Sochi Olympic Games. Her coach, Toben Sutherland, brought her to the park to work on her Switch Misty 9.

Two weeks after that session, she used the trick to win a silver medal at a World Cup event in Park City, Utah. Then just a couple of weeks later, she stood on the top of the podium in Sochi as an Olympic gold medallist.

"Toben and WinSport came up with a plan and it paid off in the end, I got a gold medal," said Howell.

The 20-year-old from Huntsville, Ont., is among several national team mem-

bers training on a 65-foot jump and air bag area that WinSport has created for training.

Bronze medallist



Dara Howell

Kim Lamarre and Yuki Tsubota, who was sixth in Russia, are also here. Among the men's team training at the facility is Noah Morrison and Evan MacEachern.

"There's nothing else like this in North America right now," said Howell. "To come here and to hit the air bag again, for me it's just so important for early season, to get my tricks back and just get going again with another ski season. It's pretty cool that they do this for us."

In addition to Olympic gold, Howell has hit the podium four times at World Cups. Yet, she said there is still plenty of motivation.

"Yes, I have a medal, but I've only been doing the sport for four or five years, so there is still a lot to be done. I'm just looking forward to enjoying every second of it," she said.

Hudec still motivated entering new season

For everything that Jan Hudec has gone through during his career, it would be understandable if he decided to retire.

The Calgary alpine skier battled back from seven knee surgeries and a serious back injury to capture a bronze medal in the super-G event at the 2014 Winter Olympics last February in Sochi, Russia. It would seem like it could be a storybook ending to what has been a roller-coaster of a career.

But he said on Tuesday that he is just as motivated as ever and has no plans to pack it in.

"For me, to come back from the Olympics and hear what other people were saying was really something that motivated me and inspired me to keep going," said Hudec, who was at WinSport's Canada Olympic Park on Tuesday to announce a sponsorship deal with r-evolution, a collaborative workplace mobile platform app.

"I realized that really, this could be not the end of my career, but really the beginning of the next chapter, where I am fully focused, supported, strong and ready to take on the world."

Hudec's Olympic medal was the first by a Canadian in alpine skiing in 20 years. It helped to validate his determination.

"Last year I had a season that started the same as most others, coming back from injury and just getting back on the boards," he said. "I was trying to prove to the world what I already knew and a few people around me knew – that I had what it took to make our team proud and to make Canada proud on the world stage."

The 33-year-old Hudec, who



Jan Hudec chats with the media on Tuesday on the back deck of the Frank King Day Lodge at WinSport's Canada Olympic Park.

was born in Sumperk, Czech Republic (former Czechoslovakia), has 23 top-10 World Cup finishes during his career and five podium finishes. He's back in action this weekend in Lake Louise for the annual Winterstart World Cup.

He says it's his passion for the sport and his passion for people that keeps him motivated.

"It's tough being away from family most of the season, most of the year, but at the end of the day, it's the incredible people and

incredible connections I've that made in the sport, the people that I've seen influenced around the world through not only my performances, but athletes' performances and really the story of overcoming adversity," said Hudec. "Sometimes you don't realize what you are living until you step outside your life and look back in or you hear other people talk about it."

His story will be one that will be talked about for years to come.