

Visa Women's Ski Jumping Team 2010-2011

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Lindsey Van won the gold medal at the World Championships in February, 2009 making history as the first women's world champion. The victory was the latest and greatest for the accomplished 25-year-old. Lindsey is a 14-time U.S. national jumping champion and has more than 40 top-three finishes on the Continental Cup, including eight wins.

Did you know: Lindsey holds the North American women's record with a jump of 171 meters, which measures out to more than 560 feet. Before the Olympic Winter Games in 2010, she held the hill record for men *and* women in Vancouver.

Etc.: When she's not jumping, Lindsey takes classes at the University of Utah and keeps a yoga journal. If it's a powder day, Lindsey has been known to ditch the jumps in favor of the powder (Shhh!). She also loves to eat hot sauce straight from the bottle, and she'll never leave home without her pillow even though it's half her size!



Jessica Jerome's career has so far been one of extremes. The highs are nearly unmatched: seven-time U.S. national champion, including a sweep of the large and normal hill events in 2008; 17 Continental Cup podium finishes and a sixth-place result in February's inaugural World Championships event. The downside has been a string of injuries, most recently a blown ACL that forced the 24-year-old to miss half of the 2006-07 season. She's endured a ruptured spleen, dislocated elbow, a few concussions and a slew of ice facials.

Did you know: Jessica's propensity for injury has earned her the nickname "Baby Deer Legs." Her teammates admire her for her grit, determination and ability to overcome adversity. Jessica knows how to fly ... far. She has a career-best 138-meter leap on one of her favorite hills, the Lillehammer K120, on her résumé.

Etc.: When Jessica isn't traveling or flying through the air, she likes to cook, run, and hang out with her siblings and her friends. She is studying economics at Westminster College in Salt Lake City.



Alissa Johnson began jumping at age 5 with her brother, Anders, under the tutelage of their father, a longtime coach in the sport. Her first jumps came at Park City, after the family relocated there from Lake Placid. Just 23 years old, she's already entering her seventh year on the Continental Cup; she's finished in the top 11 of the standings in four of those seasons and has 36 top-10 finishes. She tallied her first COC victory in 2008 in Lillehammer.

Did you know: Alissa and Anders travel and train around the world. Teammates claim that Anders is Alissa's lucky charm because it seems every time he's at one of her competitions she makes the podium.

Etc.: Born in New York, it's no surprise Alissa's favorite hill is the Lake Placid K120. Alissa is taking classes at Westminster College in Salt Lake City, but when not studying she's singing to her favorites — Skynyrd and Zeppelin.



Avery Ardovino is just 18 years old but could already be considered a veteran of the U.S. team with four seasons on the Continental Cup under her belt. In February 2009, Avery notched a career-best fourth-place finish in the Continental Cup stop in Zakopane, Poland, en route to finishing the season 14th overall. She was injured for a year and had surgery in March 2009 and started jumping again in June 2010.

Did you know: Avery is a native of the ski jumping hotbed of Alabama. When she's not jumping, Avery can often be found at Westminster College in Salt Lake City.

Etc: Avery's teammates say she always has a huge smile on her face but knows when it's time to buckle down and get to business. She's a huge fan of yoga, loves running, mountain biking and being in the gym.



Abby Hughes is a Utah native who began jumping at age 7, following in the footsteps of older brother Blake. It didn't take her long to get comfortable on the jump hill, as she made her Continental Cup debut in 2004 at age 15 and went on to finish ninth in the COC overall standings two seasons later on the strength of 11 top-10 finishes. Her best finish is a second-place result on her home hill in Park City in 2005.

Did you know: Abby finished eighth in both the 2006 and 2009 FIS Junior World Championships. In 2008, she finished third in both the K90 and K120 events at the U.S. Championships. When she's not jumping, Abby enjoys artistic drawing, and one of her soon-to-be famous paintings is of a gelande jumper.

Etc.: Abby is currently taking classes at Westminster College in Salt Lake, but don't look for her car in the parking lot. She's environmentally conscious and often rides her bike to school. She loves being "green."



Sarah Hendrickson's nickname is Giggles, but this 16-year-old rising star has some serious accomplishments already on her résumé: youngest skier ever named to the U.S. Nordic team; bronze medal at the 2010 Junior World Championships, sixth-place finish overall on the 2010 COC; a Continental Cup victory in February 2009; a second-place finish in the K120 at the 2008 U.S. Championships.

Did you know: Sarah was on skis at age 2, and both her father and older brother are involved in jumping. Her career best is a 126-meter leap on the K120 hill at Utah Olympic Park. Sarah's also a talented soccer player, loves alpine and tele skiing and likes to ride her unicycle and mountain bike.

Etc.: Sarah has picked up motherly tasks such as suit sewing skills, and she is always making sure her teammates have what they need. They've started calling her the "Team Mom."



Nita Englund got her first heavy dose of the Continental Cup experience this past summer in Europe, and her teammates expect the 18-year-old to tackle the experience with gusto, like everything else in her life. She qualified for Junior Worlds for the first time in 2009, and won the 2010 Junior Olympics in Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

Did you know: Nita lives in Wisconsin near a small town in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. When she isn't ski jumping she enjoys playing a serious game of badminton with her twin sister Anna, drawing with sharpies, kickboxing, pole vaulting, and being home with her family. Since there isn't a training hill where she lives, she drives five-plus hours to the nearest training facilities.

Etc.: Nita is now attending Westminster College, where she is a full-time student and full-time ski jumper.



Nina Lussi traveled the Continental Cup circuit in summer 2009 gaining experience and she competed in the 2010 Junior Worlds. She is currently attending a school in Austria that specializes in training young ski jumpers. A native of Lake Placid, New York, Nina is a multi-talented athlete who also plays the trumpet, water skis, wake boards, is fluent in German, rides horses, competed in the Junior Olympics for cross-country running, runs track, plays varsity soccer, and skis on White Face regardless of whether it's powder or the usual Eastern blue ice. Phew!

Did you know: Nina finished first in both the Special Jumping and Nordic Combined events at the 2008 Junior Olympics.

Etc.: Nina will always lend a hand coaching the junior skiers. Off the hill, some of her more unique talents are rapid-fire Swedish Fish eating and slushy drinking, and she may well hold the record for most meals eaten in a row that consist solely of spaghetti.



Karin Friberg, a Minnesota native, has competed in the last three Junior World Championships and is continuing to gain experience jumping at the Continental Cup level. The 20-year-old grew up training on the 45-meter jump in St. Paul, and competing in the Central Division often meant enduring long road trips. Karin has trained relentlessly on hills in the Midwest and out West in Park City and Steamboat Springs, making the most of her training opportunities that sometimes were few and far between.

Did you know: Karin has always been a perfectionist on the jump hill, and her teammates knew that whenever Karin went through a rough patch that she'd come back a better jumper.

Etc.: Karin attends the University of Minnesota when she's not jumping.