



WHAT IS SKI JUMPING?

Ski Jumping is a sport in which skiers go down a takeoff ramp, jump, and attempt to land as far as possible down the hill below. In addition to the length of the jump, judges give points for style. The skis used for ski jumping are wide (4 inches) and almost one and a half times and athlete's height, which is well above their head when they reach up.

HISTORY OF SKI JUMPING

True Ski Jumping originated in Morgedal, Norway. Olaf Rye, a Norwegian lieutenant, was the first known ski jumper. In 1809, he launched himself 9.5 meters (10 yards) in the air in front of an audience of other soldiers. By 1866, ski jumpers were tackling much larger jumps and flying farther, and Norway's Sondre Norheim jumped 30 meters over a rock without the benefit of poles. His record stood for three decades. The first official competition was held in Trysil, and the first widely known ski jumping competition was held in Oslo in 1875. The annual event was moved to Holmenkollen in 1892, and has remained the pinnacle of ski jumping venues to this day. Ski jumping has been part of the Olympic Winter Games since the first Games in Chamonix Mont-Blanc in 1924.

WOMEN'S SKI JUMPING

On May 26, 2006, the International Ski Federation (FIS) included women's Ski Jumping for the first time at the 2009 Nordic World Ski Championships in Liberec, Czech Republic and then added a team event for women at the 2011 World Championships. FIS also decided to submit a proposal to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to allow women to compete at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. On November 28, 2006, the Executive Board of the IOC rejected the proposal.

WOMEN'S SKI JUMPING (CONTINUED)

The reason for the rejection cited the low number of athletes as well as few participating countries in the sport. The Executive Board noted that Women's Ski Jumping has yet to be fully established internationally. A group of 15 competitive female ski jumpers filed a suit against the Vancouver Organizing Committee (VANOC) claiming that conducting a Men's Ski Jumping event without a women's event in the Vancouver Winter Olympics in 2010 would be in direct violation of Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The arguments associated with this suit were argued in April of 2009 and a judgment came down on June 10, 2009 against the ski jumpers. On April 6, 2011, the International Olympic Committee officially accepted Women's Ski Jumping into the official Olympic program for the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia.

SKI FLYING

Ski Flying is an extreme version of Ski Jumping. The events take place on very large hills with a K Point, the point where the hill begins to flatten out, of at least 185 meters (607 ft). The difference between Ski Flying and "regular" Ski Jumping is subtle, but Ski Flying puts more focus on the ability to fly through the air. The "father" of Ski Flying is Janez Gorisek, an engineer, sportsman and enthusiastic sport-promoter who designed the Planica ski jump in Slovenia. There are five Ski Flying hills in the world today: in Vikersund, Norway; Oberstdorf, Germany; Kulm, Austria; Planica, Slovenia; and Harrachov, Czech Republic. A sixth hill, Copper Peak in Michigan is currently disused, although there are plans to rebuild it to FIS standards. There are plans for more Ski Flying hills, even for an indoor Ski Flying hill in Finland. The biggest hill is in Vikersund. It is possible to fly more than 250 meters, with the current World Record at 253.5 meters (831 feet), set by Austrian, Stefan Kraft.

