

Hendrickson podiums; Johnson, Jerome post top-10s in Villach COC

NEWS RELEASE

Feb. 14, 2010

Villach, Austria – Sarah Hendrickson of the VISA U.S. Women’s Ski Jumping Team finished on the podium in third place Sunday in a Continental Cup event in Villach, Austria. On Saturday, Hendrickson managed a fifth place on the same hill, and the team as a whole registered five top-10 finishes over the two days of competition.

"All in all, I would say it was an awesome day for the U.S. team. Three girls in the top 10 (on Saturday) is huge for us," said Alissa Johnson, who finished sixth Saturday and 12th on Sunday. "It was a fun day for all the girls even though you could tell the Olympics were still lingering in the back of people’s heads."

Johnson, in fact, will be in Vancouver later this week supporting younger brother Anders as he competes in qualifications for the men’s Large Hill ski jumping event at the Olympics. This is the second Games in which Alissa Johnson will cheer for her brother while she isn’t allowed to compete.

In Villach, Hendrickson continued her spectacular Continental Cup season with Sunday’s podium. The 15-year-old from Park City, Utah, recorded jumps of 91.5 and 90.5 meters on the HS-98 hill, finishing with a score of 232 to place behind Germany’s Ulrike Graessler and Austria’s Daniela Iraschko in second-place. Hendrickson currently sits in sixth place in the Continental Cup standings, but is just 1 point out of fifth, heading into the next stop March 1-2 in Zao, Japan. Hendrickson, Johnson and Jessica Jerome will all make the trip.

Jerome, meanwhile, bounced back from a subpar performance last weekend in Slovenia with a pair of top 10s in Villach. Her second jump Sunday of 87.5 meters was a big improvement over an opening effort of 79.0 and resulted in an eighth-place finish. Saturday, she’d finished in ninth place.

"I had a pretty hard weekend in Slovenia. This was definitely a relief," Jerome said. "This hill was a lot better, and we had a few days of practice after last week that allowed me to take a step back and work on a couple of things."

Johnson jumped consistently in Slovenia with a pair of top 10s, but her sixth-place showing Saturday in Villach was her best Continental Cup result in more than a month.

"I had a great day (Saturday). I felt really comfortable on the hill and I felt like I was able to concentrate really well," Johnson said. "I was really satisfied with the way my first jump went (89.5 meters). I could feel right off the take-off that it was worlds better than my trial jump. My second jump was all right but didn't have the same feelings as my first. However, I was able to hold my ground and stay in 6th. It was satisfying knowing that I could put two good jumps together."

Jerome said she's looking forward to returning home to Park City after spending the better part of the past two months in Europe.

"Being in Europe always feels longer than it actually is, but I'm mostly going to try and remember the good feelings I had, technically speaking, in my jumping and hope I can take that home before heading to Japan," she said.

###