

NEWS RELEASE

July 10, 2009

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Judge Denies Women Ski Jumpers Relief, But Finds Discrimination

Vancouver – BC Supreme Court Justice Lauri Ann Fenlon has denied the 15 elite women ski jumpers suing VANOC the declaration they sought, but found discrimination by the International Olympic Committee, but she will not declare that if the men's ski jumping events are held at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games, then women's ski jumping events must be held as well.

According to the plaintiff's lawyer Ross Clark, Q.C., though Madame Justice Fenlon found VANOC is subject to the Charter when it carries out the activities of planning, organizing and staging the Games, the decision of whether women's ski jumping is an Olympic event is beyond VANOC's control.

"We are disappointed that the women's right to participate in 2010 has not been recognized by the Court," Clark said. "But we respect the Court's opinion and we believe we had a fair hearing. We accept the judge's ruling, but we also need time to consider whether we will appeal."

Deedee Corradini, president of Women Ski Jumping-USA, said it's terribly disappointing, but the experience and effort was important.

"No one wanted to go to court over this, but we had no choice," she explained. "We did everything possible, followed the rules, grew the sport, held World Championships and the IOC remained opposed to including women in ski jumping. We won't give up until women's ski jumping is in the Olympics, but it's unfortunate this legal effort failed and they won't be in 2010."

Katie Willis, a highly ranked Canadian ski jumper and one of the plaintiffs said she was very distressed by the news.

"It's awful that we lost, but I'm glad we tried," Willis said. "We needed to try every possible avenue to get into the Olympics and when my Canadian teammates and I were frustrated with the Canadian government's lack of effort with the IOC, we had no choice but to join the lawsuit."

Jessica Jerome, another plaintiff and a member of the American women's ski jumping team, said the news has left her "extremely disheartened."

"We did the best we could, and all we can do is hope for a better outcome in the future. Of course, it's extremely disheartening," Jerome pointed out. "I feel like we were trying to do the right thing to advance the sport as a whole, not just for the girls currently competing, but for the

upcoming generation as well. Unfortunately, this decision will affect a lot of talented skiers. I am hopeful the future of women's ski jumping will look more promising.”

Ski jumping is the only sport in the Olympic Winter Games not open to both men and women. For a PDF copy of the judgment, go to www.wsjusa.com or www.courts.gov.bc.ca.

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