



NEWS RELEASE

Sept. 12, 2010

Jerome finds stride and podiums in Lillehammer

Jessica Jerome of the U.S. Women's Ski Jumping Team found her way back onto the podium, while teammate Lindsey Van made a successful return to Continental Cup competition over the weekend in a pair of events in Lillehammer, Norway.

The competitions were held Saturday and Sunday on the HS 104 hill in Lillehammer. Jerome, having finished second on back-to-back days on this hill in 2008, found it to her liking once again Saturday, finishing in third place behind Austrians Daniela Iraschko and Jacqueline Seifriedsberger. Jerome posted jumps of 93 and 97 meters and finished with 248.5 points. Iraschko won Saturday's competition with 268 points, which included a second jump of 106.5 meters, a hill record jump that was "really amazing and really fun to watch," according to Jerome.

"Since it was an afternoon comp and a little rainy, the air was doing some weird things and some people weren't as fortunate as others," Jerome added. "(My third place) is my best result in about two years now, so I was really satisfied with that. ... (Saturday) was overall a pretty good day for the Americans."

Van, the reigning World Champion in women's ski jumping from 2009 — the first time a women's champion was crowned in the sport — took last season off to give her mind and body a break. Saying it felt good to be excited about ski jumping again, Van posted back-to-back sixth-place finishes over the weekend, the second-best U.S. finisher both days behind Jerome (Jerome finished fifth in Sunday's competition). Van most recently jumped in competition in late July in Park City, Utah, capturing the large and small hill titles at the U.S. National Championships.

Abby Hughes, who has been working to gain confidence in tricky wind conditions for the past couple of seasons, punched a pair of top-15 results in Lillehammer (13th Saturday, 10th Sunday). "It's one of my huge mental blocks, but there are a few things I am doing so that I don't think about the wind," Hughes said. "I write notes on my hand, just key trigger words that help me mentally assess what I need to be doing on the end of the take off. (Coach) Kjell (Magnusson) just really wants me to 'just do it.' My technique off the hill really impresses him; it's translating it to the hill that's really challenging."

Alissa Johnson won a Continental Cup event in Lillehammer in 2008, but struggled to uncork a big jump this time, finishing 22nd on Saturday and 17th on Sunday.



Iraschko completed the weekend sweep Sunday by cruising to victory over France's Coline Mattel, outdistancing her by more than 20 points. Norway's Line Jahr finished third. Mattel did grab the lead in the Continental Cup standings with 343 points. Seifriedsberger sits in second with 280. Sarah Hendrickson, who didn't compete in Lillehammer, leads the U.S. women in fifth place.

The Continental Cup season continues Sept. 18-19 with two events in Oslo, Norway.

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The U.S. Women's Ski Jumping Team is supported by Women's Ski Jumping USA, a nonprofit 501c3 foundation. Learn more at www.wsjusa.com