

Skater who trains in S. Tahoe headed to collegiate championships

By Dan Hinxman, Reno Gazette-Journal

Figure skating is beauty and grace and elegance in a sequin dress.

Hockey pucks.

“It’s a lot tougher than people realize,” Barbara Johnson said of her daughter, Jaclyn Johnson. “She always likes to say it’s the extreme sport that nobody recognizes as extreme.”

Jaclyn, a 22-year-old University of Nevada student, has got the body to prove it: Both patellar ligaments are detached, victims of multiple impacts with the ice; one hip ligament is torn; she’s had at least five sprained ankles; she’s got a little scar on her chin from a meeting with the ice (“No stitches, though; I butterflied it closed.”); and one of her front teeth needed a root canal from another inadvertent kiss with the ice.

“We don’t get any pads,” a chuckling Jaclyn said Tuesday before one of her sessions at Framework Personal Training, where she works mostly on injury prevention and recovery with owner Paul Fischer.

Reaching one of the highest levels in U.S. Figure Skating has taken its toll on Jaclyn, who grew up in Washoe Valley and graduated from Damonte Ranch High. But the physical part pales in comparison to the other major hurdle in her pursuit, travel.

“It’s a huge challenge,” said Jaclyn, who leaves today to compete in the U.S. Collegiate Championships, Friday and

Saturday at Sun Valley, Idaho. "I don't have any free time. I'm pretty much always in the car."

That would be the 1995 BMW that knows what it's like to be Jaclyn. It has 200,000 miles on it, has been totaled and repaired, has a cracked windshield, and has a front bumper that is partially held together with duct tape.

It's amazing, really, that Jaclyn has reached the level she has, Junior Lady, in U.S. Figure Skating. It's the seventh of eight levels. Only Senior Lady, where Olympians are culled, is higher.

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