

North Shore, Reno ski racers going to Olympics

By U.S. Ski & Snowboard

Olympic gold medalists Lindsey Vonn (Vail), Mikaela Shiffrin (Eagle-Vail, Colo.) and Ted Ligety (Park City, Utah), and two-time medalist Andrew Weibrecht (Lake Placid, N.Y.) will lead a strong U.S. Alpine Ski Team of 22 men and women at the 2018 Olympic Winter Games.

U.S. Ski & Snowboard on Jan. 24 announced its selections for the U.S. Olympic Alpine Ski Team that will compete at the Games in PyeongChang beginning Feb. 9. The selections will be confirmed by the United States Olympic Committee when it formally names Team USA this Friday.

The team includes 22 athletes who qualified for the team through one or more top-three finishes, top five finishes, and top 10 finishes, and then World Cup points. Qualification included 2017-18 FIS World Cup races through Cortina, Italy, and Kitzbuehel, Austria, on Jan. 20-21.

The alpine team will have its first Olympic competition on Feb. 11 with the men's downhill. The women will kick it off with the giant slalom on Feb. 12.

Team facts

The winningest female ski racer of all time Vonn won Olympic gold in downhill in Vancouver in 2010, but was sidelined with an injury and did not compete in Sochi. She is coming back with a vengeance, on a hunt for Olympic gold once again. Vonn will be competing in her fourth Olympics. She finished second in both the downhill and super-G Olympic test events in 2017. Vonn has been named the first international PyeongChang 2018 Games ambassador. She's won 79 World Cup races in all five

disciplines of alpine skiing – downhill, super-G, giant slalom, slalom and alpine combined – in her career.

Shiffrin is arguably one of the most dominant athletes in world sport competing today. She won the 2016-17 overall and slalom FIS Ski World Cup titles, and currently leads the 2017-18 overall, slalom and giant slalom World Cup standings. She became the youngest woman in U.S. history to win a World Championship and the youngest athlete in history (male or female) to win an Olympic gold medal in Sochi. Shiffrin has a hat-trick of World Championship gold medals in slalom – 2013, 2015 and 2017.

Known as “Mr. GS,” two-time Olympic champion Ligety underwent back surgery in January 2017, causing him to miss the rest of the 2016-17 season. The YongPyong Alpine Centre is a special venue for Ligety as it is the home of his very first World Cup giant slalom victory in 2006. He won his first Olympic gold in 2006 in the alpine combined in Torino, then again in his main discipline, giant slalom, in 2014 in Sochi.

Weibrecht grabbed the 2010 Olympic super-G bronze medal, and then in 2014, produced a truly inspirational run to claim silver. Nicknamed “Warhorse,” he has a knack for performing when it matters most – on the big stage.

The U.S. men’s American downhill racers are a strong and tight group of athletes. Veteran Steven Nyman (Sundance, Utah) suffered a knee injury in 2017 and is making a strong comeback for PyeongChang. In the 2016 Olympic test event, Nyman finished third in the downhill. Promising young talent like Bryce Bennett (Squaw Valley) – who will make his Olympic debut – as well as Jared Goldberg (Holladay, Utah), also look to make their mark.

Just 10 months after a significant knee injury, Laurene Ross (Bend, Ore.) has made an impressive return to competition and continues to have her eyes on the prize in PyeongChang.

Resi Stiegler (Jackson, Wyo.) clinched her spot on a third Olympic team. Her father, Austrian Pepi Stiegler, was an Olympic Gold medalist in slalom in Innsbruck in 1964.

Young up-and-comers Breezy Johnson (Victor, Idaho), and Lindsey Vonn Foundation ambassador Jackie Wiles (Aurora, Ore.) also look to make an impression in PyeongChang.

2018 U.S. Olympic alpine skiing team

Men's alpine

Bryce Bennett, Squaw Valley
Tommy Biesemeyer, Keene, N.Y.
David Chodounsky, Crested Butte, Colo.
Ryan Cochran-Siegle, Starksboro, Vt.
Mark Engel, Truckee
Tommy Ford, Bend, Ore.
Jared Goldberg, Holladay, Utah
Tim Jitloff, Reno
Nolan Kasper, Warren, Vt.
Ted Ligety, Park City, Utah
Wiley Maple, Aspen, Colo.
Steven Nyman, Sundance, Utah
Andrew Weibrecht, Lake Placid, N.Y.

Women's alpine

Stacey Cook, Mammoth Lakes
Breezy Johnson, Victor, Idaho
Megan McJames, Park City, Utah
Alice McKennis, New Castle, Colo.
Laurenne Ross, Bend, Ore.
Mikaela Shiffrin, Eagle-Vail, Colo.
Resi Stiegler, Jackson, Wyo.
Lindsey Vonn, Vail, Colo.
Jackie Wiles, Aurora, Ore.