



SKI JUMPING
CANADA
SAUT À SKI



NORDIC COMBINED
SKI CANADA
COMBINE NORDIQUE

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WINSPORT ACTIONS PUT FUTURE OF TWO OLYMPIC SPORTS AT RISK

With closure of Calgary Facility, Canada's ski jumpers are now homeless, leaving the future of both Ski Jumping and Nordic Combined in Canada in doubt.

Calgary, AB, December 20, 2018 WinSport's decision to fully close the Calgary Ski Jumping Facility leaves Canada with no 60-meter jump to train athletes—a critical component needed for young athletes to transition from beginner jumps to advanced jumps—as well as no grassroots development jumps, and no headquarters for its provincial and national team athletes. The move puts the future of these sports in peril.

Ski Jumping Canada (SJC), Nordic Combined Canada (NCC) as well as Alberta Ski Jumping and Nordic Combined (ASJNC) and Altius Nordic Ski Club all condemn this decision. Athletes from Canada's national Ski Jumping and Nordic Combined teams equally condemn the decision.

"WinSport's unilateral decision to close the jumps reflects their utter disregard for the sports of ski jumping and Nordic combined in Canada. I am appalled and bitterly disappointed by their actions," says Mackenzie Boyd-Clowes, Canada's top ranked male ski jumper, a view shared by the entire ski jumping community.

"Not only has WinSport put our sports at risk by eliminating our beginner jumps and thus destroying our grassroots development program, they've given notice that we must be out of our offices and storage facilities by Jan. 30, 2019," says Michael Bodnarchuk, Chair of Alberta Ski Jumping and Nordic Combined. "We have literally been kicked to the curb."

Andy Mah, chair of Nordic Combined Canada agrees. "We were trying really hard to find a funding agreement with all levels of government but instead of working with us, we believe WinSport frustrated the process by spreading their views in the media regarding status of the jumps and the costs of maintaining them. This information was not consistent or agreed upon by the national sports organizations. We feel WinSport did not behave in the best interests of the high-performance sports it was created to support. "

Rod Strate, President of Altius Nordic Ski Club adds “I fully Believe that there will be condos up there in five years. WinSport has applied to have the land use designation changed. I guess they value development more than supporting Canadian athletes, which is the whole purpose of WinSport in the first place.”

This move will kill the Hopper and Provincial levels and will result in the ultimate demise of ski jumping and Nordic combined as there is now no feeder system for National level. Whistler, the only other facility in Canada does not have a 60-meter jump. The entire Whistler facility is only open two weeks a year and does not offer year-round jumping capacity. Calgary, however, does. The 13, 30, 60- and 90-meter jumps in Calgary have been in constant use and are in good operating condition. They have been certified as safe by FIS on a regular basis and could continue to be used with no upgrades for at least the next 5 years, over 10000 jumps a year are performed on these jumps.

“Our athletes safely complete over 10,000 jumps here a year. There is no other facility in Canada that comes close to this volume of use.” Says Todd Stretch, President of Ski Jumping Canada. “Whistler is too far away from a major urban centre to support a grassroots development program, and they don’t have a 60-meter jump. Without this jump it’s impossible for a young athlete to progress.”

Closure of the jumps could not come at a worse time in terms of opportunities being created by FIS and the International Olympic Committee (IOC). “Women’s Nordic Combined is coming on strong with FIS adding more competitions each year, and the IOC is very likely going to add women’s Nordic combined to the Olympic Games,” says Stretch. “But Canada will have no female athletes competing in these events if they have nowhere to train.”

SJC and NCC are hoping that the Canadian Sport community encourage WinSport to reconsider this action that totally abandons the legacy of the ’88 Winter Olympics and shuts down one of the most iconic landmarks in Calgary.

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