



## Shaun White (USA)

<b>Age / Birthdate</b>	31 / September 3, 1986
<b>Hometown</b>	Carlsbad, California
<b>Birthplace</b>	San Diego, California

Olympic Medals		
Gold	Silver	Bronze
2	0	0

Prior Games
2006, 2010, 2014

**First Portrait:** A two-time Olympic gold medalist, Shaun White went to Sochi as a favorite to claim his third straight gold... Instead, he fell short, finishing just off the podium... The 31-year-old competed sparingly in the two seasons that followed, focusing on his business ventures, but returned in earnest last season, winning the U.S. Grand Prix in Mammoth and the US Open... White grew up taking trips to Mammoth Mountain with his parents and siblings, sleeping in the family van to save money... After a successful 2016-17 season, White proved he can contend for a third gold in 2018.

Halfpipe... Two-time Olympic gold medalist (2006, 2010)... No male snowboarder has more than two medals

### Potential History in Pyeongchang:

- Could become the first U.S. man to win the same individual event at three Olympic Winter Games (there are only eight athletes who have won three gold medals in the same individual event at the Olympic Winter Games)
- Could become the first snowboarder to win three Olympic gold medals
- Could become the most decorated male snowboarder at the Olympics (American-born **Vic Wild**, who won two gold medals in Sochi while representing Russia, will attempt the same feat)

### Highlights:

- Won the 2017 U.S. Grand Prix at Mammoth, finished first at the US Open and placed second at the Olympic Test Event
- Has won a record 18 medals (13 gold) at the Winter X Games, the biggest event on the snowboarding calendar besides the Olympics (he has also won five X Games medals in skateboarding)
- Finished fourth in Sochi, despite going to the Games as the gold medal favorite (see below). He competed relatively sparingly in the seasons that followed.
- On August 11, 2009, at the New Zealand Open, debuted the famed double cork – involving two off-axis rotations, or diagonal flips – that became the must-have trick in the lead-up to the Vancouver Olympics
- As a 15-year-old, attempted to qualify for the 2002 Olympics in halfpipe, but narrowly failed to make the team

2016-17 season: White made his season debut at the U.S. Grand Prix in Copper after returning from an autumn left ankle surgery, and did not qualify for the final... He then competed at the X Games, where he finished 11th in a crash-filled final... White looked more like himself at the U.S. Grand Prix in Mammoth in February, which he won with a score of 94.75... He had a strong showing at the Olympic Test Event later that month, where he scored 95 in his best of three runs, but was usurped by one point by Australia's **Scotty James** in the final run... Defeated James several weeks later at the US Open, though James will likely be White's biggest competition for gold in Pyeongchang... White said at the start of the 2017 season, "I feel like I'm at a better place than I ever was before," adding that he now has a regimented fitness routine and has a full-time physical therapist. "I'm really proud to be an athlete for one of the first times in my life... Now adding this level of fitness and all this, I'm pretty excited to see what's possible for me."

2016 ankle surgery: Decided to have left ankle surgery after an October training session in New Zealand... White says the ankle had been bothering him for seven or eight years, and he had a piece of chipped bone removed... "I was literally at the hospital, like, 'should I do this?' But I needed to do it. It would've been in the back of my mind the whole season," he says... He says he can now tie his boots looser and grab the board easier, which helps with his high-flying tricks.

Coach: White started working with 2002 Olympic bronze medalist **J.J. Thomas** in October 2015... Ironically, Thomas earning a spot for the Salt Lake Games meant White did not make the Olympic team that year... Thomas beat then-15-year-old White at the fifth qualifying competition... They started chatting while White was training in New Zealand in the

fall of 2015 and White decided to take Thomas on as his coach... "To be honest, we were just friends riding together and he was there coaching others, and I was like, 'man, you're really a great guy to ride with, and you get it, because you've competed before and all these things,'" White said in January 2016. "To be honest, our relationship is how I would describe my early days of snowboarding with my brother being my team manager or whatever...He's not really the drill-sergeant type of coach."

Pyeongchang pipe: At the Olympic test event, White called the halfpipe at Phoenix Park "incredible. It's one of the best pipes of the year," citing the fact that the "dish" of the pipe, where the walls meet the bottom of it, was smooth... White, like many other athletes, was critical of the halfpipe in Sochi, which some riders felt was not up to par with competition standards... After finishing second to Australia's Scotty James at the test event, White joked that he spent too much time shopping for suits in Seoul to properly focus on the contest.

Sochi 2014: White entered Sochi as the two-time defending Olympic halfpipe champion, attempting to become the first American man to win the same event at three consecutive Winter Games... Slated to compete in both halfpipe and slopestyle, White pulled out of slopestyle competition less than 24 hours before the start... White said on the TODAY show that he intended to focus on the halfpipe, citing concerns about the slopestyle course and the potential for injury... Despite pouring all of his efforts into the halfpipe, White was outshined by Switzerland's **Iouri Podladtchikov**, the inventor of the "Yolo" flip (a cab double cork 1440) that White completed in practice but could not muster in Olympic competition... He fell on the first of his two runs in the final after falling while attempting the Yolo, and had an imperfect second run... White left Sochi empty-handed after finishing fourth... "After Sochi's loss...it kind of took the wind out of my sails and I needed time to process that," he said in an interview on NBC during the Rio Games. "I'm so much better than I was, I think, as a person and as a competitor, having taken that loss. The worst thing I could've imagined happened...It was an amazing feeling to realize that I could lose, and I could still come back and still be me."

Slopestyle: White was once a dominant slopestyle rider, winning five X Games titles (2003-06, 2009), but after abandoning it to focus on halfpipe before the Vancouver Olympics, he returned to find that some younger rivals had surpassed him... After withdrawing from slopestyle competition in Sochi, he drew criticism from his rivals and others who felt he had taken someone's spot... White has since dropped slopestyle to focus full-time on halfpipe, and said in January, "Slopestyle is just really not something I'm as interested in right now. At the Olympics last time around, trying to do slope and halfpipe was, now looking back, I feel like one of the reasons why things maybe didn't go as well for either. It's hard to do both."

Vancouver 2010: As opposed to his first Olympics in 2006, when he was still essentially an action sports star, White entered Vancouver as one of the most recognizable athletes at the Games, a household name with mainstream sponsors... He also entered Vancouver with a target on his back, as a slew of rivals had jostled all winter to keep pace with White's ever-evolving array of tricks... Describing the pressure, White said "I've never been so stressed in my life."... But as in Torino, he didn't disappoint... After advancing directly to the final on the strength of his top qualifying score, White clinched the gold medal with his first of two runs in the final, which featured back-to-back double corks and earned him 46.8 out of 50 points... What the run did not include, however, was the trick White had been developing at his private halfpipe: the Double McTwist 1260, which involves two flips and three and half spins... So, although the gold medal was assured and his second run was essentially a victory lap, White had unfinished business... He opted to go for the new trick, which he dubbed "The Tomahawk" after a 30-ounce T-bone steak he had recently devoured in Aspen... His second run was filled with the same huge airs and acrobatic maneuvers as his first, except punctuated by the Tomahawk, which he landed to thunderous applause from the crowd... The win catapulted White from No. 51 (in January 2010) to No. 2 (in January 2011) on the "Bloomberg Power 100" list of the most marketable athletes in the country (**Peyton Manning** was the only athlete ranked ahead of White).

Torino 2006: Entering the 2006 Torino Games, White was widely considered the favorite to take the gold medal and did not disappoint, putting on a show worthy of his top billing... Riding to AC/DC's *Back in Black*, the then 19-year-old racked up 46.8 out of 50 points in the first run of the final round by landing back-to-back 1080s followed by a pair of 900s, each time with greater amplitude... Returned to the U.S. and was on the cover of *Sports Illustrated*, along with the rest of the U.S. snowboard medalists, and *Rolling Stone*... White and a friend took the medal out to celebrate and when they came home the ribbon was dirty... He was set to appear on several talk shows and was not sure how one might go about cleaning an Olympic gold medal... His solution – ask his mother to wash it... Explains White, "She goes to the dry cleaners like, 'Can we clean this? Is that cool?' With the medal on it!"... When they go to pick it up, the associate hands it back "on the hanger with the plastic and the whole deal and she wasn't even fazed by it. She's like, 'I can't believe he charged me \$10 for this little piece of ribbon.'"... White says that his mother was the most proud of his Olympic accomplishments, and rarely let an opportunity pass to share the good news that her son won gold... "You could have dropped your pen on the ground, 'Oh let me get that for you, my son won the gold medal.'"

Red Hair: Deciding it was time for a change, White cut his trademark red hair in December 2012 and donated it to Locks of Love, which makes wigs for needy children... He had worn his hair long since he was 12 or 13... His

recognizable mop of red hair had earned him the nickname “Flying Tomato,” although he tired of the name long before he tired of the hairdo... On his long hair, he said before the Vancouver Games, “I was always the one that stood out. I just got blamed for everything. If there’s like five of us doing something bad, I was always the one who got the wrath. But you know what’s been rad though? As of late, I’ll run into kids with long red hair, and they’re like, ‘Yes!’”

**Skateboarding:** White became the first athlete to compete in both the Summer and Winter X Games when he finished sixth in the vert competition at the 2003 Summer X Games... At the 2007 Summer X Games, White claimed his first skateboard title in the vert competition, becoming the first athlete to win titles at both events... He took the 2013 season off from skateboarding in order to prepare for Sochi... White has joined **Tony Hawk** for various events since the two started skateboarding together when White was nine and only a snowboard prodigy... While attending the Rio Games, White said he would like to compete in the inaugural Olympic skateboarding competition in Tokyo 2020.

**Background:** Born with a heart defect called Tetralogy of Fallot, White had two major surgeries before his first birthday... The condition causes a mixing of oxygenated and unoxygenated blood, decreasing oxygen flow throughout the body... White’s surgeries left him with a six-inch scar in the center of his rib cage... In his early years, White was so bowlegged that he had to wear corrective leg braces at night, but his parents recall him as an active and adventurous child... When Shaun was growing up, the Whites had a trampoline and a skateboard ramp in their backyard... He started out playing soccer, then began skiing during his family’s twice-a-year trips to Mammoth, California... At age 6, he wanted to try out snowboarding, but resort rules said that he had to be 12 to take lessons... His father, **Roger**, decided to take a lesson to learn how to get on a snowboard with Shaun... In the meantime, Shaun went up the mountain with his older brother, **Jesse**, and rode down the hill on an oversized board... The following year, at age 7, White entered (and won) his first amateur contest, competing in the 12-and-under age group... His result earned him a wild card to the national championships, where he finished 11<sup>th</sup>... Says White, “I remember snowboarding just being something that I always wanted to do. As a kid, I would rather skate or snowboard instead of play video games. Then it just turned into who I am”... The entire White family snowboards, with Cathy being the last to learn... Shaun would ride switch so his mom could keep up, something he credits with developing his full snowboarding repertoire.

**Family Sacrifice:** White’s snowboarding career put a significant financial strain on his family, costing his parents \$20,000 a year... In the early days of his career, the family would drive six hours to Mammoth every Friday in their 1964 Econoline van, nicknamed “Big Mo”... In lieu of paying for a hotel room, the five Whites – Shaun, Roger, Cathy, brother Jesse and his sister, **Kari** – would sleep in the van, cooking meals on a stove in the back... On the rare occasion that they would go out to eat at a restaurant, they would drink water instead of ordering soda to save money... As Shaun got older, the family started staying at a Super 8 motel... Cathy would drive Shaun to Mammoth on Wednesday so that he could get an early start on practice, and Roger would bring Jesse and Kari on Friday... Then, on Saturday, Cathy would drive back to San Diego to wait tables, and come back to Mammoth after her shift... In 2002, her 1998 Honda had 180,000 miles on it... White turned pro at 13.

**Notes:** Often wears a bandanna around his face while snowboarding... Among his business ventures, White designs products for Burton and Oakley, is the majority shareholder in global snowboarding competition Air + Style, and a stakeholder in Mammoth Mountain Resorts... Among his charitable endeavors is a scholarship fund he has established through the Boys and Girls Clubs of America (White is an alumnus of the BGCA); also works with St. Jude Children’s Hospital... Like fellow king of crossover Hawk, launched his own video game in November 2008 titled *Shaun White Snowboarding*... Started a band called Bad Things in 2013... They signed a record deal with Warner Bros. and went on a 12-stop tour in July and August 2013, including a gig at Lollapalooza in Chicago, but the band has since dissolved.



## Lindsey Vonn (USA)

<b>Age / Birthdate</b>	32 / October 18, 1984
<b>Hometown</b>	Vail, Colorado
<b>Birthplace</b>	St. Paul, Minnesota
<b>Residence</b>	Vail, Colorado
<b>Height / Weight</b>	5-10 / 160

Olympic Medals		
Gold	Silver	Bronze
1	0	1

Prior Games
2002, 2006, 2010

**First Portrait:** The 2010 Olympic downhill gold medalist was unable to defend her title at the 2014 Sochi Olympics after suffering a serious knee injury in the lead-up to the Games... The 32-year-old has dealt with further injuries since - including a broken arm that she sustained in a November 2016 training crash... Despite a laundry list of broken bones and torn ligaments, Vonn has still managed to rewrite the record books... In January 2015, she broke the women's record for most World Cup wins... And with every victory since, she has closed in on the all-time World Cup wins record (86)... The Minnesota native got her start on the slopes of the Buck Hill Ski Area, a modest hill with 306 vertical feet that is affectionately called "The Bump"... At age 11, Vonn wanted a bigger challenge than Buck Hill could provide, so she and her mother moved to Vail, Colorado... She made her World Cup debut in 2000 and Olympic debut in 2002.

Pyeongchang will be her fourth Olympics... 2010 Olympic downhill gold medalist... Owns the women's record for most World Cup wins

### Highlights

- Three-time Olympian (2002, 2006, 2010)
- Two-time Olympic medalist
  - Gold in downhill at the 2010 Vancouver Games
  - Bronze in super-G at the 2010 Vancouver Games
- Owns seven world championship medals (two gold, three silver, two bronze)
  - At the 2017 World Championships, won bronze in the downhill despite having only started her season a month prior
- Four-time winner of the overall World Cup title (2008, 2009, 2010, 2012)
- Owns the women's record for most World Cup wins
  - As of September 2017, has 77 World Cup wins
  - Passed the previous mark of 62, held by Austria's **Annemarie Moser-Proell**, in January 2015.
- Currently closing in on the overall record of career World Cup wins (86), which is held by Sweden's **Ingemar Stenmark**
- Owns the women's record for most World Cup discipline titles (16)
  - Tied for the most overall World Cup discipline titles by a man or woman — Stenmark also won 16 during his career
- Eight-time winner of the World Cup downhill title (2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016)
- Has won more World Cup downhill races than any other skier
  - Broke the previous mark of 36, held by Austria's Annemarie Moser-Proell, in January 2016
- Has won more World Cup super-G races than any other skier
  - The previous record of 24 was set by Austria's **Hermann Maier**
- First alpine skier, male or female, to win 20 crystal globes

**2016-17 Season:** Had a slow start to the season as she worked her way back from two injuries: three fractures in her left knee (sustained in February 2016) and a broken right arm (November 2016)... She made her return to competition in January 2017... She placed 13th in her first race back (a downhill in Altenmarkt-Zauchensee, Austria), but won her next race (a downhill in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany)... At the 2017 World Championships in St. Moritz, Switzerland, Vonn won bronze in the downhill... The result made Vonn, 32, the oldest female alpine skier to win a world championship medal... What makes the feat even more impressive is the fact that she accomplished it while dealing with lingering effects of her broken right arm... Due to nerve damage, she couldn't hold her ski pole tightly and resorted to duct taping the pole to her glove... Vonn concluded the season on a high note, recording second-place finishes in



the downhill and super-G at the Pyeongchang test event, and then placing second in the downhill at World Cup finals.

**Potential Olympic History:** If healthy, Vonn should be a top contender in both the super-G and downhill events in Pyeongchang. There are several Olympic records she has the potential to break:

- Vonn will be 33 years old in Pyeongchang. If she wins a medal, she would become the oldest female alpine skier to win an Olympic medal
  - The current record holder, Austria's **Michaela Dorfmeister**, was 32 years, 332 days when she won super-G gold at the 2006 Torino Games.
  - American Julia Mancuso, who is seven months older than Vonn, could also break this record in Pyeongchang
- Could tie (or break) the record for most Olympic alpine skiing gold medals won by an American. She could tie the record with one additional gold medal and break it with two
  - The current record holders are **Ted Ligety** and **Andrea Mead Lawrence**, both of whom have two Olympic gold medals
  - American **Mikaela Shiffrin** will enter Pyeongchang with one gold medal and also has the potential to tie or break this record
- If she wins two medals, she would tie **Julia Mancuso** as the most decorated American woman in alpine skiing
  - Going into the Pyeongchang Games, Mancuso owns four Olympic medals (one gold, two silver, one bronze)
  - Though unlikely, Mikaela Shiffrin could also match this record in Pyeongchang. Though she will enter the Games with only one medal, she could collect three if she does well in her typically strong events (slalom and giant slalom) and also wins one of her weaker events (super-G or super combined).

**Injury Timeline:** Vonn's career has been sidetracked on many occasions by serious injuries. The following list includes the most significant and recent injuries she has sustained.

**2016-17 Season:** On November 10, 2016, Vonn broke her right arm while training in Copper Mountain, Colorado... She had surgery, forcing her to further delay her return to competition... After rehabbing her arm, she made her World Cup return in mid-January, finishing 13th in the downhill in Altenmarkt-Zauchensee, Austria... Signs of problems with her right arm still lingered; she was slower out of the start gate than usual and she attributed her lack of speed to the injury, telling the *AP*, "I have a little start routine with my poles and I couldn't really do that with my right hand."... In her very next race, Vonn returned to the top of the podium, finishing first in a downhill in Garmisch Partenkirchen, Germany.

**2015-16 Season:** While at an August preseason training camp in New Zealand, Vonn crashed and fractured her ankle... She missed the World Cup opener on October 24th, but managed to return for a giant slalom on November 27th... On February 27, 2016, Vonn crashed in a super-G in Andorra and was taken off the course in a sled... Initial scans revealed one hairline left knee fracture, but she chose to race the next day, finishing 13th in a super combined... Two days later, she underwent more scans that showed she had suffered three, larger fractures rather than the one hairline, forcing her to end her season while leading the World Cup overall standings, eight races from a possible fifth World Cup overall title.

**2013-14 Season:** While preparing to return to competition after recovering from knee injuries, Vonn crashed during a training run at Copper Mountain, Colorado, and was taken off the slope on a sled... After undergoing an MRI, she announced that she had sustained a mild strain and partial tear of the ACL in her right knee... It was later revealed that the injury had, in fact, been a complete ACL tear, which she compounded with MCL and joint damage when she skied out of a downhill in Val d'Isere on December 21, 2013... On January 7, 2014, exactly one month before the Opening Ceremony of the Sochi Games, Vonn announced that she would be withdrawing from the Olympics in order to undergo surgery... She wouldn't compete again until December 2014.

**2013 World Championships:** In the opening race of the competition, Vonn crashed hard during the super-G... She was airlifted off the mountain to a nearby hospital, where doctors diagnosed her with tears of the MCL and ACL in her right knee and a fractured tibial plateau... The injury resulted in season-ending surgery.

**2011 World Championships:** One week before the start of competition, Vonn crashed during giant slalom training in Austria... She walked away from the incident with no major injuries, but was later diagnosed with a concussion... After much debate, she decided to compete at the World Championships in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. She finished second in downhill and seventh in super-G.

**2010 Vancouver Olympics:** Vonn came to the Vancouver Games banged up, having bruised her right shin during pre-Olympic workouts in Austria... Putting on a ski boot resulted in “excruciating” pain, but she competed through it and won gold in the downhill and bronze in the super-G... Vonn crashed during the giant slalom, breaking her right pinkie, and then crashed out of the slalom run of the super-combined competition.

**2009-10 Season:** Just weeks before the 2010 Vancouver Olympics, Vonn suffered a violent crash during her first giant slalom run in Lienz, Austria... She was taken to the hospital where doctors diagnosed her with swelling and microfractures in her left forearm... She continued to ski after the injury.

**2009 World Championships:** It is perhaps the most bizarre injury of Vonn's career... While celebrating her victory in downhill in Val d'Isere, France, she sliced open her right thumb on a broken champagne bottle... The next day, her sponsor Red Bull flew her to a clinic near Innsbruck, Austria, and she had surgery to repair the tendon... She missed the giant slalom, but returned in time to compete in the slalom with a specially made splint.

**2007 World Championships:** After winning silver medals in the downhill and super-G, Vonn crashed in a slalom training run and suffered a season-ending ACL sprain.

**2006 Torino Olympics:** While preparing to compete in her second Olympics, Vonn crashed during a downhill training run and was airlifted by helicopter off the mountain in Torino... She stayed at the hospital overnight... Once doctors were convinced she had suffered no serious injuries, she was released from the trauma center... Despite immense pain from a pocket of fluid trapped in her back, Vonn returned two days after the crash to finish eighth in the downhill.

Early Highlights: True breakout season was 2004-05... Won the first World Cup downhill of the season in Lake Louise, Alberta... Notched five more podium finishes (three super-G, two downhill) and finished the season ranked third in super-G, fifth in downhill and sixth overall... Emerged in 2003-04 with her first World Cup podium finish, placing third in a downhill in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy... Had the best result of any American woman at the 2002 Salt Lake Games... At age 17, placed sixth in the combined... Made her World Cup debut in Park City in November 2000 as a 16-year-old.

Opening up about Mental Health: In October 2016, Vonn published a book called *Strong is the New Beautiful*... In it, she discusses her fitness program, provides advice on what to eat, and opens up about her thoughts on body image... Vonn has talked about the insecurity she has felt about her own body... She says she especially began to notice it after the 2010 Vancouver Games, when she started attending red-carpet events and would stand side-by-side on the red carpet with models and other celebrities... Vonn has also been open about her experiences with depression... In a January 2017 interview with *60 Minutes Sports*, she spoke candidly about how she takes medication as part of her treatment... She also has found support from her dog, Lucy, who she adopted last year... "It's nice to have a friendly, smiling little puppy face excited for me to come home whether I win or lose."

Alpine Skier meets the Football Player: In November 2016, Vonn announced that she is dating **Kenan Smith**, a former assistant coach for the Los Angeles Rams... He played football and was a member of the track and field team at Sacramento State from 1999-2003... Smith attended his first ski races this past winter and was present at the 2017 World Championships and Alpine World Cup Finals... He also started taking ski lessons upon starting to date Vonn... Previously dated golfer **Tiger Woods** (2013-15)... She was married to former U.S. skier and 2002 Olympian **Thomas Vonn** from 2007-11.

Family: Started skiing at age two... Father, **Alan Kildow**, was a three-time national junior champion who blew out his knee at age 18... Instead of pursuing his skiing career, he went to college, earned a law degree and married Lindsey's mother, **Linda Krohn**... Linda had a stroke giving birth to Lindsey that left her with minor paralysis in her left leg... They had five children but are now divorced... Lindsey is the oldest, followed by **Karin**, and then the triplets, **Dylan**, **Laura** and **Reed**... Lindsey was estranged from her father for about six years until reconnecting in 2011... The two had increasingly been at odds, most publicly after the 2005 World Championships, over his involvement in her career and her involvement with Thomas, who is nine years her senior... After she and Thomas began divorce proceedings in late 2011, Vonn reached out to her father.

South Korean Connection: Her grandfather, **Don Kildow**, fought in the Korean War... He worked as an engineer in the army, constructing roads and often crossing enemy lines... As a child, Vonn spent every summer at her grandparents' home in Wisconsin, as the oldest of 13 cousins... Don and his wife **Shirley** have a collection of 39 binders with every postcard, photo, and press clipping related to Vonn's career... Both Don and Shirley have had some health issues in recent years... Vonn says of her grandfather, “He’s great with one-liners...[My family] is really witty, and I feel like we get that from him.”

**Slopes:** Lindsey began to ski at Buck Hill Ski Area, a hill near the Kildow home in St. Paul, Minnesota... The modest hill with 306 vertical feet that is affectionately called "The Bump"... Started learning under legendary coach **Erich Sailer**... At age 10, her father mapped out her skiing future – listing the level she would race at each year and what results she would have... On his schedule, she would win the Olympic downhill in 2006 and the overall World Cup title in 2007.

**The Move:** At age 11, Vonn wanted a bigger challenge than Buck Hill could provide, so she and her mother moved to Vail, Colorado for the winter to train at Ski Club Vail... Her mother quit her job of 17 years while her father stayed behind in Minnesota with her two brothers and two sisters... The following year, the rest of the family also moved to Vail... Lindsey continued her education through correspondence classes, but her real classroom was on the slopes.

**Picabo Inspiration:** Vonn's battle to recover from her severe knee injury in time to compete in Sochi was compared to the pre-Olympic challenge once faced by her idol, U.S. alpine star **Picabo Street**... Street won super-G gold at the Nagano Olympics 14 months after tearing three ligaments in her left knee while training in Vail... But the history between Vonn and Street goes back much farther than that... In 1995, when Vonn was ten, already a talented skier but still a gangly child, she met U.S. alpine star **Picabo Street** at Pierce Skate & Ski outside Minneapolis, Minnesota... Vonn waited in line for hours, got a close-up look at the silver medal and World Cup crystal globe, but was too nervous to talk as her parents introduced their daughter... Says Vonn, "Meeting her, it was pretty much all over for me. I wanted to be just like her"... Vonn's mother, **Linda**, framed a photo of Lindsey and Picabo and hung it in her daughter's bedroom... The encounter would tighten Vonn's focus to achieve the kind of success Street showed was possible... "I was kind of just doing it for fun" says Vonn, "But that triggered a different frame of mind for me where I really wanted to be an Olympian"... Their careers would eventually overlap, most noticeably at the 2002 Salt Lake Games, where Vonn was the U.S. women's alpine team's youngest member and Street the oldest... Street became a mentor to Vonn and the pair developed a close friendship over the years... After Vonn was helicoptered to a hospital following her crash at the 2006 Games in Torino, Street, whose own career was marked by triumphant comebacks, visited Vonn... "We were both sobbing," Vonn says. "Peek was like, 'Don't worry, we'll get through it.'"... After Street had a better gage of Vonn's physical status, she blurted out, "A real champion would get up and race!"... Then in October of 2008, after winning the overall World Cup title, Vonn returned to the same ski shop to sign autographs for similarly shy girls... Says Vonn, "The little girls were so cute! Their eyes were so big and they couldn't even say anything."

**Idolizing Federer:** An avid tennis fan, Vonn has a more-than-avid affection for **Roger Federer**... For several years, she dreamt of meeting the humble champion "to the point of obsession"... She got her chance in June 2009, taking a day's break from training in Austria to watch live as he won his first career French Open title at Roland Garros... Federer was in attendance at the 2017 World Championships in St. Moritz, Switzerland, the day that Vonn won downhill bronze... They watched the men's downhill race together.

**Notes:** Born Lindsey Kildow... Speaks fluent German and conducts interviews to foreign reporters in her second language... Honed her German through a combination of travel and taking classes through the two-week Hoyt Dartmouth College language program in New Hampshire... Calls German "the language of ski racing"... After the 2010 Winter Olympics, achieved a longtime dream by making a cameo on *Law and Order*... Prior to the 1999 World Championships in Vail, the then-14-year-old bought a replica U.S. Ski Team uniform and passed herself off as a team member who had lost her credential... Was able to get into various athlete-only areas and got several autographs.



## Nick Goepper (USA)

<b>Pronunciation</b>	gepp-er
<b>Age / Birthdate</b>	23 / March 4, 1994
<b>Hometown</b>	Lawrenceburg, Indiana
<b>Birthplace</b>	Fort Wayne, Indiana
<b>Height / Weight</b>	5-11 / 145

Olympic Medals		
Gold	Silver	Bronze
0	0	1

Prior Games
2014

**First Portrait:** Hailing from Lawrenceburg, Indiana, Nick Goepper has long tolerated the jokes about the small farming town in southern Indiana being the "mecca of skiing"... But the three-time X Games champion was determined not to let his geographic limitations get in the way of his skiing... Growing up, Goepper sold candy bars and mowed lawns to pay for ski passes at a nearby resort he calls a "glorified bunny hill"... He won bronze in slopestyle at the Sochi Games as part of an American podium sweep... The 23-year-old was slowed by injuries after Sochi, but had a resurgence at the end of the 2016-17 season, when he finished second at the Euro X Games.

Slopestyle... 2014 Olympic bronze medalist... 2013, 2014 and 2015 X Games champion

### Highlights:

- Started the 2017-18 season with a fourth-place finish at the World Cup in Cardrona, New Zealand
- Three-time X Games winner (2013, 2014, 2015)
- Finished second at the 2017 Euro X Games
- Won bronze in Sochi as part of an American slopestyle sweep, behind **Joss Christensen** and **Gus Kenworthy**
- First impressive results came during the 2010-2011 season, when he placed third at the Dew Tour stop at Killington and then won the Dumont Cup later that winter

**Post-Sochi reset:** Though Goepper continued to post impressive results after the Olympics (including a third straight X Games title in 2015), he says he sometimes struggled to re-grasp his love for skiing and was stalled by a dislocated shoulder in February 2015... "There were a few dry spells after the Olympics [when] I didn't want to go skiing," he said in April 2016. "I feel like I'm enjoying more and more now, more than four years ago...I sort of went through a lull after Sochi. I put skiing on too much of a pedestal...I guess just growing up, my perspective changed. I tried to balance out my priorities more...Because of the refocus, skiing is more fun now."

**Sochi:** Goepper, the top ranked skier heading into Sochi (sporting bib number one), nabbed an early lead in the slopestyle final with a promising first run in which he landed a triple cork... But he was upstaged by Christensen, who scored higher with a triple of his own... Goepper's first run score of 92.40 was enough to secure bronze... The American sweep was only the third time in history the U.S. had swept the podium at the Olympic Winter Games (the other two instances occurred in 1956 in men's figure skating and 2002 in men's snowboard halfpipe).

**Funding his Dream:** When Goepper was in middle school, he mowed lawns, pulled weeds and sold candy bars in order to buy himself a ski pass during the winters... Would buy candy bars in bulk from a Costco and then sell them out of his backpack on the school bus... Had to operate stealthily since it was against school policy... Would collect anywhere from \$500 to \$1000, which would fund his ski pass to Perfect North Slopes, a small ski resort just outside Lawrenceburg, Indiana... Describes Perfect North Slopes as a "glorified bunny hill," but says it had enough features in the park to learn most tricks...Since his parents were working, would contact as many people as possible to drive him to the ski resort, often exhausting the entire contact list in his phone... His parents would pick him up when it got dark... As a 15-year-old, was discovered at an action sports camp in Ohio and later offered a scholarship to a sports academy in Mt. Hood, Oregon... Attended Windell's his sophomore year and graduated in 2012.

**Small Town, Indiana:** Born and raised in Lawrenceburg, a small farming town in Southern Indiana with a population of around 5,000... Town is about 30 miles west of Cincinnati, Ohio... Goepper says the town is known for its brewery, casino and racetrack... Friends and competitors, who hail from more traditional skiing locales in Utah or Colorado, often joke that Goepper comes from the "mecca of skiing."



Family: The eldest of four kids, Goepper's two younger sisters, **Kasey** and **Brady**, were competitive gymnasts... Nick would occasionally practice his jumps on the trampoline under the guidance of his sisters' coach **Mary Lee Tracy**, who was the assistant coach for the gold medal-winning 1996 women's gymnastics team... Also has a younger brother, **Jason**... Says his parents, **Chris** and **Linda**, weren't big athletes when they were younger.

Notes: Started skiing when he was five years old... Played several sports growing up, including soccer, baseball, football and swimming... Was a talented rollerblader and would travel across the Midwest with his father to different skate parks... Started surfing a few years ago and will travel to the Oregon coast on the weekends to ride waves... Has a Star Wars tattoo on his right arm... Is a fan of Formula One and former driver **Ayrton Senna**.



## Chloe Kim (USA)

Age / Birthdate	17 / April 23, 2000
Hometown	Torrance, California
Birthplace	Long Beach, California

Olympic Medals		
Gold	Silver	Bronze
0	0	0

Prior Games

**First Portrait:** Chloe Kim qualified mathematically for the U.S. Olympic team in Sochi, but at 13, was not old enough to compete... The Southern California native has since become one of the sport's most renowned names, winning back-to-back X Games titles in 2015 and 2016 and two gold medals at the 2016 Youth Olympic Games... The daughter of two South Korean immigrants, Kim grew up taking trips to Mammoth with her father, Jong-Jin, who would drive her six hours each way on the weekends, forming a makeshift bed for Chloe in the back seat of their SUV... The 17-year-old is fluent in Korean and French, and one of the favorites for gold in Pyeongchang.

Halfpipe... No Olympic experience

### Potential History in Pyeongchang:

- Could become the youngest female snowboarding medalist at age 17, though she could be beaten to it by **Hailey Langland**, since slopestyle falls one day before halfpipe (please consult the research room for updates during the Games)

- The current women's record holder is Germany's **Amelie Kober**, who won silver in parallel giant slalom at 18 years, 99 days in Torino
- The overall age record is held by Japan's **Ayumu Hirano**, who was 15 when he won silver in Sochi
- The youngest **gold** medalist in Olympic snowboarding is Kelly Clark, who won in 2002 at 18 years, 199 days

### Highlights:

- 2018 season: won the season-opening World Cup in Cardrona, New Zealand
- Had a year-long win streak that started in January 2016 at the X Games and was broken in late January 2017 at the X Games, where she finished third
- 2017 season: Kim said she dealt with a cold and cough for much of the season and didn't feel like herself, though she still made the podium at most major events and won the US Open. She finished fourth at the Olympic Test Event in Pyeongchang.
- Won back-to-back X Games titles in 2015 and 2016, and also won gold at the 2016 Euro X Games
- Won gold in both halfpipe and slopestyle at the 2016 Youth Olympic Games
- At the 2016 US Open, Kim became the first female snowboarder to land back-to-back 1080s and scored a perfect 100 to win
- At age 13, Kim won silver at the 2014 X Games

Initial impression: On a snowboard by age four, Kim was admittedly not thrilled with the sport at first, and has said her father, **Jong-Jin Kim**, helped push her at the beginning... Initially an attempt to persuade Chloe's mother, **Boran**, to learn to snowboard with him, his efforts soon resulted in Chloe taking to the sport... They learned to ride together, and during early sessions on the slopes, Chloe recalls that her father would stumble when getting off the chairlift and grab onto her for support, often pulling them both to the ground... "At one point, I was getting really mad, and I was like, 'OK, stop. You can fall, but I'm not falling with you!'"... She entered her first competition at age six, and won junior nationals the following year.

Bonding with dad: After watching a snowboarding competition in Switzerland and thinking that his eight-year-old daughter could already do some of the same tricks, Jong-Jin quit his job in engineering in order to support Chloe's snowboarding pursuits, driving her six hours to Mammoth each weekend so she could train with the Mammoth Snowboard Team, and forming a makeshift bed for Chloe in their SUV... He also took her to skate parks in Orange, California, to help her hone her skills, which became a critical foundation for her prowess on the pipe... He bought a

large pair of jeans and sewed a patch of a yoga mat to the seat of the pants to lessen the impact of falls... Jong-Jin still travels with her, and though Chloe admits she sometimes wants to travel alone or with her teammates, his dedication isn't lost on her... "He wants to make sure I'm OK and make sure that I have everything I need, which is great. I know that living by yourself is a big responsibility, too, so it's nice that he's trying to take that off my shoulders."

South Korea connection: Kim is a first generation Korean-American... Her parents immigrated to the U.S. in 1998, though Jong-Jin previously moved to the U.S. when he was 26 to start an engineering degree at California State University, Long Beach... Chloe is fluent in Korean, as well as French, learned during her time in Switzerland (see below)... Her mother's side of the family still lives in Seoul.

Swiss bliss: Kim left California for Switzerland from third through fourth grade, living with her aunt in Geneva... She became fluent in French, and went snowboarding with her father when he came to visit, leaving at 4 a.m. to take two trains from Geneva to reach the halfpipe in Avoriaz, France... Went to a small school in the morning to practice her French, then attended public school for the rest of the day, and says she was confident in French after six months... Kim's parents met while both were working in Switzerland and moved to the U.S. in 1998.

Clark's successor: Often dubbed "the future of women's snowboarding," Kim has had the benefit of working with halfpipe queen **Kelly Clark**, a three-time Olympic medalist for the U.S., who won gold at the 2002 Olympics in Salt Lake City at age 18... Clark and Kim have shared the podium one more than one occasion... Of her younger teammate, Clark told *Sports Illustrated*, "When Chloe hit back-to-back 1080s at the Grand Prix [in February 2016], I celebrated that like a victory. I wasn't mad because I didn't do it, because look what we're doing. In that moment, she was carrying the sport forward... We have a great friendship. She knows I'm accessible. At this point in her career, I think the best thing I can do for her is to just be there for her"... Clark and Kim first met in Mammoth when a pint-sized Kim tugged on Clark's jacket sleeve while she waited in line for the chairlift, and asked if she could ride up with Clark... Clark obliged, and the two took a few runs together.

Notes: Was named as one of Time's "Most Influential Teens" in 2015... In 2016, was the flag bearer for the Opening Ceremony at the Youth Olympic Games... Grew up watching Kelly Clark, U.S. teammate **Arielle Gold** and 2010 Olympic halfpipe gold medalist **Torah Bright**... Says snowboarding has helped her to become more outgoing because "I was pretty socially awkward when I was younger. It was so overwhelming at the beginning"... Has two older sisters, **Erica** and **Tracy**... Likes glittery nail polish and often dyes her hair bright colors... Loves Skittles (the company sent her a large supply after hearing of her affinity for the colored candy) and other sweets... Plays the acoustic guitar... Loves to cook and bake cookies... Has a mini Australian shepherd named Reese... Kim says she watched gymnastics on TV during the Rio Games and met **Laurie Hernandez** and **Gabby Douglas** at a Nike event... Hernandez, she says, gave her good advice: "Take a step back and just focus on herself," while Douglas asked to exchange numbers in the hopes that Kim would take her snowboarding.



## Nathan Chen (USA)

<b>Age / Birthdate</b>	18 / May 5, 1999
<b>Hometown</b>	Salt Lake City, Utah
<b>Birthplace</b>	Salt Lake City, Utah
<b>Residence</b>	Long Beach, California
<b>Coach</b>	Rafael Arutunian

Olympic Medals		
Gold	Silver	Bronze
0	0	0

Prior Games

**First Portrait:** Nathan Chen is at the forefront of the American men's field as Pyeongchang approaches. Chen was the talk of the figure skating world last season due to his extraordinary technical ability: he became the first skater ever to land five quads in a single program at the U.S. Championships in January and tried six in his free skate at the World Championships, where he finished sixth in his debut at the event. At his first competition of the 2017-18 season in September, he successfully landed a quad loop, becoming the first skater ever to land five different quad jumps in competition (all but the Axel), and continuing to put pressure on other skaters to keep up with his technical content. Though he didn't perform every quad in his arsenal at that competition, he also showed great progress in the artistic side of his skating. The youngest of five children born to Chinese immigrants, Chen first tried skating on a practice rink built for the 2002 Salt Lake Games.

Highlights: 2017 U.S. Champion; 2017 Four Continents champion

Nathan: He is the youngest of five children. His parents emigrated from Beijing in order for his father to attend college in Utah. He began skating at the age of three after the Olympics were held in Salt Lake City; he first skated on a practice rink built for the Olympics. Chen initially began skating because of his interest in hockey. He followed his two older brothers to hockey practice and told his mother he wanted to be a goalie, but ended up figure skating instead. He is homeschooled, although says he prefers public school. He plays guitar and enjoys listening to music in his free time.

Ballet background: Chen took ballet for more than six years and used to practice at home with his sisters – back in Salt Lake City, he performed regularly. He says he chose his programs for the 2016-17 season in part because they worked well with his ballet experience.

Quads: Chen said he and coach **Rafael Arutunian** worked for quite a while on the “lift and power” required for the quad toe. But from when Chen first attempted the jump in practice, it only took him two weeks to land it cleanly. His quad ability has seemed to grow exponentially since then – he became the first to land four quads in a single program at the 2016 U.S. Championships, successfully executing two quad toes and two Salchows. But gone are the days of only two different quads – Chen can do the flip, Lutz and loop now as well. He became the first skater ever to land five quads in a program at the 2017 U.S. Championships, and the first to do so internationally at 2017 Four Continents. At the 2017 World Championships, he became the first skater ever to attempt six quads in a single program; he fell on two of them. At his first competition of the 2017-18 season in September, Chen successfully landed a quad loop, becoming the first skater ever to land five different quad jumps in competition (all but Axel).

Coach Raf: Chen initially came into contact with the famed Russian coach when Chen was still living and training in Salt Lake City. He began making occasional visits out to California to work with Arutunian, known for his technical expertise, on his jumps. A year later, Chen and his mother moved there to train with Arutunian in Lake Arrowhead (and now, Lakewood). At their initial meeting, Chen said, “I thought he was a really scary Russian.” Now their relationship is comfortable. “I think we work really well together,” he told us. Arutunian, of course, is also coach to **Ashley Wagner** and **Adam Rippon**. “It's really cool having them at the rink,” Chen said. “They bring a new level... all of us benefit from them skating here.”

2016-17 Season: Chen entered the season healthier and with more quads than ever before. At Finlandia Trophy, he attempted two quads in the short and five in the free skate, including the Lutz and flip in both programs. He fell three times on the seven attempts but his technical base was high enough to easily defeat his opponents, including his new training mate Patrick Chan. Chen was in good position to win a medal at Grand Prix France after a personal-best short program. He attempted five quads in the free skate again, falling on two. He also doubled all of his Axels at the competition. Although he achieved a then personal best in the free skate, his lower component scores and lack of



technical cleanliness cost him a spot on the podium and he finished fourth. He had trouble in the short at Grand Prix Japan, but his free skate was much stronger – he scored a then personal best in the segment and won the silver medal, which was enough for him to qualify for the Final. In Japan, he fell on both of his quad Lutz attempts and did not attempt a quad Salchow – the jump has been difficult for him all season. He called making the Final “a relief,” and on his falls at the competition, he said, “I made a few mistakes today that shouldn’t happen, but I think it’s a good step for me. The Lutz is a risky jump, but I’m glad I’m trying it right now.” He fell on his quad flip in the short program at the Grand Prix Final, placing him fifth in the segment, but he roared back in the free skate, landing four clean quads and earning nearly 200 points in the segment. The score helped him move all the way up to second, only behind reigning Olympic champion **Yuzuru Hanyu**. Chen called the result an honor, a shock, and huge confidence booster for him. He is the first American man to win a medal at the Grand Prix Final since 2009. He made a lot more history at the U.S. Championships, where he did a clean two-quad short program and five-quad free skate to win his first national title by an incredible 55-point margin. He became the first skater ever to land five quads in a single program and easily set new scoring records in every category at the U.S. Championships. “That was an amazing performance,” he said after the free skate, adding that he feels optimistic about his chances internationally this spring. “The U.S. is back on the map on the world stage. We’ve kind of not had the results that we should have had over the past few years.” He would prove those words at Four Continents, where he would give two more outstanding performances to win the title over Hanyu. Chen became just the third skater, other than Hanyu and two-time world champion **Javier Fernandez**, to earn 300 total points. He started having boot troubles after Four Continents; Arutunian told us that the boots “got soft” too quickly because of all the quads Chen was doing. Chen was using tape and hockey laces to stabilize the boots in Helsinki, but his jumps still seemed affected. He fell on his triple Axel in the short program, putting him sixth in the segment but only about four points from the podium. In the free skate, Chen attempted a record six quads, but fell on two of the attempts. He finished sixth overall and was openly frustrated by his mistakes afterward.

Recovery: Chen had surgery a few days after suffering an avulsion injury (when a piece of bone tears away from the main part of the bone) during his exhibition after the 2016 U.S. Championships. He spent about a month recovering at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista, California before going to Colorado Springs for more recuperation. It took two months for him to be walking without a brace and began strength training after three months. He was off the ice for five and a half months and then spent another month revamping up to full training on the ice. He says that in recovering he has gained a lot of information on how to train in a safer way for his body (Arutunian suggested last season that Chen had a tendency to over-train). “All of my injuries over the past have been growth injuries, and I’m reaching the end of my growth spurt, so I don’t think those will be the major issues anymore,” he told *Icenetwork*. “The biggest thing to be wary of is to make sure I don’t have overuse injuries, and I think I’ve learned to not push myself too hard at the beginning of the season.”

2016 U.S. Championships: Chen was riding a wave of momentum when he got to nationals and was expected to do well due to his quad advantage over the rest of the field. He became the first man to land two quads in a short program at the U.S. Championships, placing fourth in the segment because of low component scores and lost points on a spin. In the free skate, he became the first skater to land four quads in one program at the U.S. Championships and moved up to third overall. The next day he was chosen to represent the U.S. at the World Championships, but disaster struck when Chen suffered a season-ending hip injury during his exhibition program after the competition.