

Nick Fairall Named to Olympic Ski Jumping Team

Chris Lamb still in the running

By Sandy Smith
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When Nick Fairall won his first national ski jumping title back in August, it couldn't have been a better start to an Olympic season for the Andover native.

Yesterday, back at the Park City, Utah, venue where he captured the large hill national championship, Fairall accomplished his next big goal. The 24-year-old won the US Olympic trials, stamping his ticket to the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, in February.

"It's excellent to be going to my first Olympics. It's something I have dreamed of since I was a little kid, but most importantly I am proud to go and represent the USA," Fairall said. "It's not a generic comment; I'm very proud. It's such a great opportunity that not many people get to do, and I'm so thankful for that."

Jessica Jerome won the women's trials, sending her to the first women's ski jumping competition in Olympic history.

The winner of the trials receives an automatic spot on the Olympic team, while the other three spots on each squad will be determined by results in international competition. Two other Granite Staters, Andover's Chris Lamb and Lebanon's Nick Alexander, are in the running for those spots, which are expected to be announced on January 22.

Fairall, who also was national runner-up on the normal hill in Lake Placid, New York, in October, won yesterday's trials with 253.5 points to earn his first Olympic spot. Anders Johnson was second, 4.5 points behind. Peter Frenette finished third with 245.5 points.

Jumping off the normal hill at the site of the 2002 Winter Olympics, Fairall

cleared 96 meters on his first jump to score 127.5 points and take a six-point lead over Johnson. After Johnson scored 126.5 points on his second jump, Fairall once again cleared 96 meters, scoring 126 points to secure the title and his Olympic dream.

"I like this format, and the crowd created such excitement, it was unbelievable," said Fairall, who began ski jumping at six years old with the



Nick Fairall is hoisted aloft by his teammates as he wins a berth on the US Ski Jumping Team and heads for the Sochi Olympics in February. Photo: USASJA

Andover Outing Club. "I tried to stay mentally strong today and not put too much pressure on myself, and it paid off. I'm really happy."

Lamb, like Fairall a product of the Andover Outing Club, finished fifth yesterday with 237 points. He cleared 93 meters on his first jump and 92.5 on his second, scoring 118.5 points on each.

Alexander was sixth with 231.5 points.

"Based upon how the guys have been jumping so far this season, I was really happy. It was a very fair competition, and I was pretty much expecting the guys that placed in the top three to be there," US men's ski jumping Head Coach Clint Jones said. "Nick Fairall has been jumping pretty well, and it was good that he was so consistent."

With his spot on the Olympic team secure, Fairall will be headed to Austria this week for the final two stops of the famed Four Hills Tournament, to be held on Saturday and next Monday.

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Will Furtkamp, AE/MS Geography Bee Champion, and runner-up Lily Furtkamp, his sister. Photo: Heidi Unger

Will Furtkamp Wins AE/MS Geography Bee

Next step: earn a spot at state level

By Jim Tucker, AE/MS teacher

The National Geographic Geography Bee has made a return this year to Andover. Eight geography experts of Andover Elementary/Middle School competed for the title of AE/MS Geography Bee Champion.

The competition began with every student in grades five through eight competing for a spot in the second round of the Geography Bee. With questions ranging from world geography to United States geography, the challenge for the students was at a very high level.

From the fifth grade, Lily Furtkamp and Ayla Caron; from the sixth grade, Ri-

ley Keezer and Will Furtkamp; from the seventh grade, Jack Newton and Aiden Kellogg; and from the eighth grade, John Maynard and Scout Armstrong – these were the finalists who faced each other head-to-head with a supportive audience of their fellow classmates.

The students put forth a fabulous effort, and the competition was full of entertainment. In the end, sixth grader Will Furtkamp rose through the ranks to win the final round and the right to call himself Andover 2013-2014 Geography Bee Champ.

The next step for Will is to submit a written test and hope he makes the grade to compete at the state level. The staff, students, and the Andover community want to wish Will, "Good luck!"

BEACON DEADLINE: THE 15TH!



Join the Proctor community for a celebration of Proctor Ski Area, Saturday, February 8, from 5 to 8:30 PM. Fires will be blazing outside Yarrow's Lodge, and a delicious supper will be served inside. Bring skis, snowboards, kids, and friends, and enjoy improved snowmaking, new lighting, and the finest conditions anywhere! The evening culminates with a spectacular torchlight parade. This annual celebration is offered to the community at no cost.

Photo: Chuck Will



Bring your skis, friends and family and join us for an evening of skiing and celebration at Proctor's Ski Area on Saturday, February 8 from 5:00-8:30 PM. You will enjoy great snow and terrain under the lights! Fires will be blazing both in and outside Yarrow's Lodge, where we'll serve you and your friends a hearty meal. RSVP to Debbie at 603-735-6215 or events@proctoracademy.com.

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