

Team Bridgestone PyeongChang 2018 Bios

The Team Bridgestone athlete ambassadors for the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018 include:



Nathan Chen (USA, figure skating)

Nathan has quickly emerged as a rising star in men's figure skating and a contender to win Team USA's first medal in the sport since 2010. At the 2017 U.S. Figure Skating Championships, he became the first person ever to land five clean quadruple jumps in a single program. He did it again one month later to claim the ISU Four Continents title at the Olympic test event in South Korea. The 18-year-old's run to PyeongChang 2018 comes just a year after a serious hip injury sidelined him for nearly five months. He has excelled with help from of an innovative off-ice training program designed by the Team USA training staff.



Erin Jackson (USA, long track speed skating)

Erin Jackson grew up on skates, just not on the ice. The Ocala, Florida, native won 47 national championships and 11 world championship medals across a decorated inline skating career before transitioning to blades in September 2017 to chase her Olympic dream. Despite training on ice full-time for only four months, Erin delivered a breakthrough clutch performance at the 2018 U.S. Olympic Trials, shattering her personal best in back-to-back races to place third overall and become the first African-American woman to earn a spot on the U.S. Olympic Long Track Speedskating Team. She will compete in the women's 500m race at PyeongChang 2018.



Maciej Kot (Poland, ski jumping)

Maciej Kot made history in 2017 as part of the Poland quartet who earned the country's first ever ski jumping World Championships team title in Lahti, Finland. It was a career defining moment for Maciej, who narrowly missed team honors at the Olympic Winter Games Sochi 2014 when the Polish team placed fourth. In the individual events, he finished seventh on the normal hill and 12th on the long hill in his Olympic Games debut. He recently revealed that he suffered with depression during parts of his career, but has fought to get his dream back on track with the hopes of winning an Olympic medal.



Elana Meyers Taylor (USA, bobsled)

Elana declared her intention to be an Olympian at the age of nine, hoping to represent the U.S. in softball – but the sport was removed from the Olympic program in 2005. With encouragement from her parents, Meyers Taylor transitioned to bobsled in the summer of 2007 and charted a new, history-making course. She won bronze in Vancouver as a brakewoman and then silver in Sochi as a driver, becoming the first female bobsled athlete to win a medal in both positions. The 33-year-old is also the first woman to win an international medal in a men's event and the first American to win a women's bobsled world championship – which she has now done twice.



Amy Purdy (USA, para-snowboarding)

Amy was just 19 when she lost her legs in a battle with meningitis. An avid snowboarder, she returned to the sport to win three medals at the 2001 USASA National Championships. In 2014, she won bronze in para-snowboarding's debut in the Paralympic Winter Games. At 38, Purdy continues to be one of the top-ranked adaptive snowboarders in the world and is the only female double-leg amputee competing at the world class level. She is also an accomplished motivational speaker, best-selling author, Dancing with the Stars finalist, and a proud co-founder of Adaptive Action Sports, a non-profit organization that helps those with permanent disabilities get involved in action sports.



Evan Strong (USA, para-snowboarding)

Evan lost his left leg at the age of 17 after the motorcycle he was riding was hit by a drunk driver. A rising star on the pro skateboarding circuit, Strong connected with the Challenged Athletes Foundation (CAF) during his recovery in hopes of finding a way to ride again and first tried snowboarding in 2007. Now at 31 years old, Strong is one of the most dominant athletes in adaptive snowboarding, winning multiple World Cup titles, a Winter X Games gold medal, and a Paralympic gold medal in the debut of para-snowboard cross at Sochi 2014. Determined to give back, Strong mentors youth and adult amputees through his work with Adaptive Action Sports.



Pierre Vaultier (France, snowboard cross)

A three-time Olympian in men's snowboard cross, Pierre won gold at the Olympic Winter Games Sochi 2014 just two months after tearing his ACL. He decided to chase his Olympic dream in Sochi before having surgery – which isn't surprising given how often Vaultier has battled back during his career. In 2008, he suffered a lumbar fracture (broken back) when he slipped while training, yet recovered to qualify for the Olympic Winter Games Vancouver 2010.



Ashley Wagner (USA, figure skating)

Ashley began figure skating at age five while living in Eagle River, Alaska, which was one of the seven places she lived with her military family before she was ten. She won a silver medal at the Junior Grand Prix Finals in 2007 and since then has won three U.S. national championships. The 26-year-old also has reached the podium 24 times in national and international competitions, including a bronze medal in the team event at the Olympic Winter Games Sochi 2014. Wagner claimed silver at the 2016 World Championships, becoming the first American woman in a decade to medal at the event. After finishing in fourth place at the 2018 U.S. Figure Skating World Championships in January, Wagner was named first alternate for the U.S. women's figure skating team for PyeongChang.



Japan Women's Ice Hockey Team (Smile Japan)

Bridgestone has proudly supported the women's ice hockey athletes of the Japanese Olympic Team, known as Smile Japan, for many years. The team made an exciting return to the Olympic Winter Games at Sochi 2014, where it competed for the first time since Nagano 1998. In February 2017, Smile Japan swept their final Olympic qualifying pool to earn a spot in the field for PyeongChang 2018. A short time later, the team also won its first-ever Asia Games women's hockey title. Smile Japan has helped create a brighter future for women's ice hockey in Japan and across Asia and is the embodiment of Bridgestone's "Chase Your Dream" Olympic message.

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