



U.S. ice dancing partners Jamie Silverstein and Ryan O'Meara go through their routine during a training session for the Turin 2006 Winter Olympic Games in Turin, Italy, on Friday.

# Return to light

Games cap ice dancer's journey back to health

By NANCY ARMOUR  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**TURIN, Italy**  
Ice dancing was the dark and the light in Jamie Silverstein's life. Light because it was her passion, dark because it helped bring on an eating disorder that nearly destroyed her.

But Silverstein has found her way out of the dark and back into the light. Healthy again and stronger than she ever dreamed she could be, her remarkable journey has brought her to the Olympics with partner Ryan O'Meara, a triumph of both body and spirit.

"It's been overwhelming for me," she said Friday, her voice trembling.

Silverstein was the great hope for U.S. ice dancing when she and former partner Justin Pekarek won the 1999 junior world championships. Americans simply didn't win medals in ice dance, and their title was an early sign the country was finally being accepted on the international stage.

Shortly after, though, she and Pekarek had split, and Silverstein was out of the sport.

Silverstein says now she was struggling with anorexia, an eating disorder that affects about 1 percent of adolescent women.

"I don't think the sport was ever pressuring me (to be thin), I

just think that was how I learned to cope," said Silverstein, who turned 22 in December. "You don't like to say, 'I need a break.' I didn't want to say the wrong thing, so I internalized it."

Eating disorders are a risk factor in judged sports such as figure skating, diving and gymnastics, where appearance matters as much as athletic ability. The lives of elite-level athletes also are largely dictated by outside factors — training schedules and competitions, for example — and controlling even the tiniest part of their lives is vital.

For Silverstein, though, the struggle for control became destructive.

At first, her family and friends reasoned she was a skater or just naturally tiny. By her senior year in high school, though, Silverstein was significantly underweight.

Those close to her urged her to eat more, and encouraged her to get help.

Finally, Pekarek took Silverstein to a sports psychologist.

Silverstein underwent intense therapy, working with a psychologist and nutritionist. She focused on her education and gave up skating.

"When she made the decision, 'Hey, I'm not doing anything anymore,' that was kind of it. It was something she'd put behind her," her mother Robin Silverstein said. "I didn't feel good about it. I felt she had a lot of talent and a lot to give, and I was sorry about it. But this was what she needed to do."

# Skeleton athlete banned

The Associated Press

**CESANA, Italy**

A court agreed that Zach Lund is no drug cheat. Then it dashed the U.S. slider's Olympic dream anyway, and along with it, the turmoil-wracked skeleton team's best hope for gold.

Lund was banned from the Turin Olympics on Friday for taking a common hair-restoration pill with an ingredient that can be used to mask steroids.

The Court of Arbitration for Sport, while saying it believes Lund did not cheat, ruled he should serve a one-year suspension anyhow, retroactive to Nov. 10 and enforced immediately.

So instead of preparing to hurtle down an icy track face-first on a sled, Lund will spend a couple of nights in a Turin hotel, then head home to Utah early next week, before his teammates even compete.

"If you ask any champion, the road to the top is never easy," Lund said on a teleconference, his voice breaking while teammates readied for the Olympic opening ceremony.

"This is just another bump in the road," he said. "It's not going to keep me from my athletic goals and my life goals. One of them is being an Olympian. So I'll definitely be back."



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## Blood

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

clean. "It is not a problem because there is doping controls."

On Wednesday, Austrian Nordic combined skier Mario Stecher also gave blood and urine samples in the athletes' village, this time to a man posing as a journalist seeking an interview. The man followed Stecher into his room and then ordered him to provide samples.

The ruse to test Maier was just as elaborate.

"Obviously they like to play fun and games," Delle Karth said. "They were officials. They ... said they were great fans and wanted to see him."

IOC spokeswoman Giselle Davies would not say whether

Maier was tested, citing the athletes' right to confidentiality.

The account that emerged was based on remarks by Maier, Delle Karth and Austrian team officials in interviews with The Associated Press and SkiRacing.com.

The events began around 2 p.m. Thursday at the athletes' village in Sestriere when, according to Delle Karth, an Italian man and a woman approached Maier's coaches and asked about autographs and perhaps a photo alongside the Olympic champion.

Delle Karth then introduced them to Maier. Moments later, the two announced they were doping control officials, showed credentials that appeared credible and ordered Maier to submit to a test on the spot. He was taken to a clinic inside the village where he provided blood and urine samples, the agent said.

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