



FW22 Norwegian Alpine Ski Team Q&A



Aleksander Aamodt Kilde

[FIS Biography](#)

29 World Cup podiums, 2 Olympic medals

What made you want to be a professional skier?

The passion for the sport and wanting to experience the world with good friends and teammates. And, of course, the feeling of achieving great goals along the way.

What hardships have you overcome in order to pursue a career in professional skiing?

There have always been priorities and choices to be made on the road, even since I was quite young. The most challenging ones have been having to choose to step away from opportunities you get as a normal boy at a young age in order to follow my dreams. Aside from that, there have always been thoughts and choices behind being able to reach a high level in alpine skiing.

What would you say is the biggest high point of your career, and the lowest?

My high was when I won the overall World Cup in 2020. My low was getting injured in 2021.

How do you prepare/do you have a ritual for your races?

My rituals are basically to just keep my warmup routines and preparations as similar as possible every race, so I know that I'm ready when it's go-time.

Could you describe a typical day of training with the team?

7:00

-Wake up

-Good breakfast

-Coaches on the hill preparing for the athletes to arrive – setting the course, checking safety of training, setting up timing

-Athletes arrive and do a physical warmup without equipment on

-Athletes get dressed and do warmup on skis

-Inspection of the course and training starts

-5-10 runs

13:00

-Head back to hotel and start 20-minute restitution before lunch

-Couple hours of rest/sleep

15:00

-Dry land training

17:00

-Physio training

18:45

-Team meeting

19:00

-Dinner followed by bedtime

And repeat 300 days a year.

How important is trust within your team?

Alpine skiing is definitely a sport that needs trust to be able to deliver results. Within the Norwegian Alpine Ski Team, working together to achieve our goals is one of our strengths, and doing this with passion and, most importantly, trust, we're able to reach new levels. Having that support and to trust that what you give is what you get is as important as getting passed and reaching those goals.

How do you manage the emotional and physical pressure of being part of the team?

Being part of this team comes with some pressure and high expectations – mostly because of its history and track record – and this is something you keep in mind every day.

But I always try to look at this pressure as a positive thing and think of it as something that gives me confidence, being a part of this great team. Training and competing on the mountain can be really tiring and hard, but we push through together as a team. The team pushes me every day, and it makes me want to give 100% back.

How do you balance your personal life with being a professional skier?

Being on the road, it's important not to lose the connection with the world outside of the team, because it's the reality outside that anchors us as human beings and shows us that there is more to life than skiing. It's always a hard balance, mostly because we are on the road 250 days a year, but I always try to keep close contact with friends and family. And traveling with the team year-round has allowed me to form a deep and unique connection to

my teammates and coaches. They sort of become your second family and they share the same passion and goals.

How does it feel being part of the legacy of the Norwegian Alpine Ski Team?

It's a privilege and an honor to be able to be part of this team and represent the culture, setting examples for the younger generations to come. It's incredible.

What is it about skiing and the mountains that make you feel alive?

It's the view, groomed slopes, quietness, feeling alone and free in nature. The adrenaline rush you get after a run and the feeling of success, but also just standing on top of a mountain, you have the whole slope to yourself. And you can go full gas and fight for hundreds of seconds down the course and give it your all, being able to feel the power of nature.



Ragnhild Mowinckel

FIS Biography

9 World Cup podiums, 1 Olympic medal

What made you want to be a professional skier?

The challenge of figuring out how good I could become and finding my best skiing.

What hardships have you overcome in order to pursue a career in professional skiing?

The choice to continue even though you've had a hard time improving or feeling any progress in your skiing. To go through several serious injuries, but never giving up faith that you can come back. And finding out who I am as a person - and not just an athlete.

What would you say is the biggest high point of your career, and the lowest?

High point is my first Olympic medal, and low point was getting another ACL injury 8 months after my first one.

How do you prepare/do you have a ritual for your races?

I like to have the staff or other racers at the start to talk about anything other than skiing. It's to get my mind off the seriousness of what's happening soon. Then, a switch comes on the minute I push out of the start gate.

Could you describe a typical day of training with the team?

I always do a 10–15-minute bike ride in the morning to kickstart my whole system. Then do some more ski-specific exercises both on snow and off. Then there's an inspection in the training course, ending with a free run or two before we start the real training in the course.

How important is trust within your team?

It's crucial to have trust while skiing. To have coaches and staff helping you make decisions that you're going to make in 100+km/h, we need to be able to communicate well both on and off the hill.

How do you manage the emotional and physical pressure of being part of the team?

I don't feel so much pressure from being on the team. I think it's good that we have a great standard for what we do and how we train, and that everyone contributes to keeping that culture up.

How do you balance your personal life with being a professional skier?

This life is more a lifestyle than a job. So, for me, I know that it's all-consuming right now, but it won't last my whole life. I think it's important to listen to yourself as a person first and then an athlete. But sometimes those choices can be hard to make.

How does it feel being part of the legacy of the Norwegian Alpine Ski Team?

Proud!

What is it about skiing and the mountains that make you feel alive?

The risk and living on the edge.

What don't people know about alpine skiing?

How much confidence and faith, in both your gear and your skill, matters to how you perform.



Jesper Saltvik Pedersen
Biography
6 Paralympic medals

What made you want to be a professional skier?

For me, becoming a professional skier has always been a big dream, but it has also kind of been natural to me. Ever since my parents tried sit ski with me when I was 2-years old, alpine skiing has been a big part of my life. And the most important thing, even from the early days, has been to always have fun and want to improve a bit every day. I guess I'd say this has led me to where I am today.

What hardships have you overcome in order to pursue a career in professional skiing?

I am from Karmøy, which is an island without mountains or snow, so my family and I have spent many hours in the car in pursuit of the mountains. That's something I hear quite often from my local community – when somebody from Karmøy can take Paralympic gold in alpine skiing, everything is possible. But I suppose that when you want something bad enough, everything really is possible.

What would you say is the biggest high point of your career, and the lowest?

Biggest high point until now is probably the Paralympics in Beijing. The lowest point in my career was when my dad, who is the reason why I am where I am today, died in 2020. It's been a hard time after that, but I have managed to focus on the things that I have the power to change and fix. I believe I am on track to have my best season so far, and I will do that to honor my dad.

How do you prepare/do you have a ritual for your races?

Before each race, I always visualize how I'm going to ski the course in the best way possible, and by having a plan that I trust, I can get the extra confidence I need to ski fast.

Could you describe a typical day of training with the team?

Training and race days typically start with the whole team eating breakfast together. The evening before, we've gone through the plan for the next day, so everybody knows what's going to happen. Then, we get up to the ski resort, take a couple of warm up runs and then

we're ready to inspect the training course. We usually do that in pairs during training and discuss the best plan for skiing as fast as possible. After each run, we usually have a chat at the bottom to give each other feedback and figure out the plan for the next run.

When we're done training, we get down to the hotel again, relax for an hour or two, and then there is usually some dry land training. After that, it's dinner and a new meeting with video analysis to figure out what we're going to focus on the next day.

How important is trust within your team?

In our team, trust plays a big part. We have to trust that the coaches know what they're doing and believe in their way of thinking. We also have to trust our teammates when we give each other feedback from our runs.

How do you manage the emotional and physical pressure of being part of the team?

To be a part of this iconic team is something I only see as an advantage. To be a part of the same team as Kilde, Solevåg and Mowinckel is unique for us in Norway, and to be able to tell our opponents that we train alongside them on a regular basis is something that gives us an advantage right away. Of course, there are some pressures that come with being a part of such a great team, but I think that only makes us stronger and more motivated to become better skiers every day.

How do you balance your personal life with being a professional skier?

To balance my personal life while being a professional skier can be difficult. When I'm home, I try to hang out with friends and family when I have the chance, and stay in touch with them on FaceTime, etc. when I'm overseas.

How does it feel being part of the legacy of the Norwegian Alpine Ski Team?

To be a part of the legacy of this team is a big honor and something that influences many of the decisions we take within the team. We want to live up to the great past and present of the team and contribute to this great culture.

What is it about skiing and the mountains that make you feel alive?

The sensation of not being hindered by the wheelchair (or anything really) and being able to do whatever I want is what makes me feel alive while skiing in the mountains.

What don't people know about alpine skiing?

Alpine skiing is something everybody can participate in, and there's always room for improvement, no matter what level you're at. In para alpine skiing, the feeling of freedom is the most important thing I think. To be able to be free in the mountains and do whatever you want on equal footing with friends and family, and not locked to a wheelchair, is an amazing feeling.



Thea Stjernesund

FIS Biography

1 World Cup podium, 1 Olympic medal

What made you want to be a professional skier?

Around the age of 14, I was surprised to learn that I actually could ski fast, and I've been surrounded by people who are great motivators. After breaking my leg and suddenly being away from the sport, it made me realize how important it was to me.

What hardships have you overcome in order to pursue a career in professional skiing?

I think it all comes down to handling the emotional stress and pressure. For sure the dedication and amount of hours that we put into training are also part of it.

What would you say is the biggest high point of your career, and the lowest?

I would like to think that my biggest high point is still to come in the future. But so far, I have to say a good one is the gold medal in the team event at the World Championship in Cortina and my first individual podium in Lech! The previous season was my toughest overall. Early that season, I felt like something was wrong, and after a couple of months ignoring the problem, I was diagnosed with asthma. At that time, most of the season was already history. It really affected my performance, and I'm still working on getting the confidence back.

How do you prepare/do you have a ritual for your races?

My only ritual before a race is to do everything thoroughly. I try not to have any "must do" rituals. I feel it's easy to just get more and more of those. So, I have a routine, not a ritual. I don't want to put too much "magic" into it. In my world, achievements are the result of hard work, not whether you wear your "lucky necklace" or not.

Could you describe a typical day of training with the team?

With analyzing video of my skiing together with my coaches the evening before, there is a clear goal and task set for the upcoming training. I also go to the ski room where the service team is and plan what equipment we're going to use for the next day.

I get up early and do my morning routines. That includes a solid breakfast and a physical warm up, about 20 minutes, where I engage mobility, balance, back, and core. Then, it's on with the ski gear, get to the hill, inspect the course, do two free runs with variation of slow drills and turns with a lot of force. Then I start doing the runs in the course as needed.

How important is trust within your team?

Trust is extremely important. Trusting your coaches' abilities to push you forward, trusting your service team with the equipment, and trusting and believing in the team you are part of. There are so many parts of a team that demand trust. But also, the trust in yourself is just as important to perform. And the good thing about that is, your team can help you get that. And on all these topics mentioned, good communication is the source of trust, in my opinion.

How do you manage the emotional and physical pressure of being part of the team?

The way I've dealt with the pressure, and still do, is by knowing myself as well as possible. Physical pressure is the easy part from my point of view, but the eternal battle is with the emotional stress, and I think that's true for most athletes. It's an ongoing process with maturing and constantly seeking equilibrium.

How do you balance your personal life with being a professional skier?

This sport has become a part of my identity and way of living. At the same time, I think it's very important to have a private environment and life that takes your mind off the sport when it's needed.

How does it feel being part of the legacy of the Norwegian Alpine Ski Team?

I'm very proud to represent this team where I know that everyone is doing their utmost to succeed.

What is it about skiing and the mountains that make you feel alive?

I was born as an outdoor person and seeing all those sunrises and beautiful nature just moves something in me. But also feeling the speed of going down the hill gives me a feeling I'm addicted to. It's a sport that allows you to play with nature's forces, and not only be surrounded by them.

What don't people know about alpine skiing?

I don't think that people realize that there are a lot of similarities between Formula 1 and alpine skiing. You have to fight for your position all the time to be in the circuit. And the World Cup (WC) is the third and highest level. So, in order to ski WC, you have to get through the national and the European level.



Kaja Vickhoff Lie
FIS Biography

What made you want to be a professional skier?

The environment, the people, and the travelling, and that we get to experience nature in a way almost nobody else does.

What hardships have you overcome in order to pursue a career in professional skiing?

It was a bit difficult to be the only child that had a clear goal from a young age and I made decisions based on that goal. I felt like I grew up much faster than the rest of the kids and felt a little left out. But then again, I had so many friends on the hill that I felt at home there.

What would you say is the biggest high point of your career, and the lowest?

Biggest high point was my first World Cup podium in SG in Garmisch. My lowest point was a month after that when I crashed in Italy and broke my leg, ankle and knee.

How do you prepare/do you have a ritual for your races?

I always visualize the places we're going to race long before we get there.

Could you describe a typical day of training with the team?

I try to wake up 1.5 hours before we leave for the hill, bike for 10 minutes and then mobility and stretching for another 10 minutes. Then, breakfast, back to the room, brush teeth etc., put on the gear, drive with my service team to the hill, take out all of the skis, unstrap them, inspect the course, then warm up at the start with the other women and discuss the course.

How important is trust within your team?

Trust and confidence are two of the most important necessities when it comes to racing. In the disciplines I ski, we only have one run to make it and therefore you need to trust the feedback from your coach and teammates 100% before your run.

How do you manage the emotional and physical pressure of being part of the team?

I don't feel like it's a pressure. When you come into the group, everyone knows what matters and what the standard is.

How do you balance your personal life with being a professional skier?

My personal life is to be an alpine skier, which is pretty cool, because we travel around having so much fun and then when I go home, I can relax.

How does it feel being part of the legacy of the Norwegian Alpine Ski Team?

It makes me feel proud and that I have the best team and drive around me to become a great skier.

What is it about skiing and the mountains that make you feel alive?

That the nature is so much bigger than us. Every day is different, every run is different, the nature is constantly changing.

What don't people know about alpine skiing?

How many people that are behind those 2 minutes we ski down the hill – coaches, organizers, service team, physical trainers...