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Story Headline: Olympic downhill skiing Champion Lindsey Vonn says ‘don’t underestimate me’ ahead of Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018 as the IOC names her a Winter Youth Olympic Games Lausanne 2020 Ambassador.

Location: St. Moritz, Switzerland

Date: 10th December 2017

STORY SCRIPT

Vancouver 2010 Olympic downhill skiing Champion Lindsey Vonn pledged her support to the next generation of young athletes today as the IOC named her a Winter Youth Olympic Games (YOG) Ambassador for the third time.

Speaking in St. Moritz, Switzerland, after meeting a group of aspiring Winter Youth Olympic Games Lausanne 2020 athletes Vonn said: “I think the Olympic spirit is very important and I wish I’d had the Youth Olympic Games when I was growing up.”



But Vonn also had a warning for those slightly younger Winter Olympic Games PyeongChang 2018 competitors she'll face next year on the slopes of the Republic of Korea: 'Don't underestimate me'.

Vonn said: "Most of the time younger athletes - I mean I was the same. They underestimate the older athletes. But the one thing that I have is experience. I know how to handle the pressure and I know, I know a lot about the sport, so..."

Talking Winter Youth Olympic Games Lausanne 2020 again and of her joy at being Ambassador for the third time the American added: "I think the most important thing the kids will learn from the Youth Olympic Games is cultures. It's a chance for them to experience things they normally wouldn't be able to experience; it's not so much about the competition, it's about them being together and sharing that experience



and learning from it and growing as human beings, and then going on in the future to hopefully becoming Olympians”.

Lindsey will assume the role for the Lausanne 2020 Winter YOG. The announcement by the International Olympic Committee was held in St. Moritz, which will host the luge, skeleton, bobsleigh and speed skating events in January 2020.

Vonn continued: “I think what the Olympics stand for and the Olympic spirit is definitely important, and I think if that message can get across to the next generation at a young age I think it could potentially have a big impact upon our lives and in a very positive way. There’s so much history in St. Moritz, Olympic history and sports history, you are able to compete with these young kids on the original bobsled track, I think built in 1908 or ‘04, that’s a pretty incredible experience, and to be able to do the speed skating out on the lake is going to be incredibly spectacular”.



Vonn, who famously returned from injury to win the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic women's downhill, was competing in this weekend's St. Moritz FIS World Cup ahead of the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018 where she will make her Olympic comeback. The Olympic champion made time after the competition to meet with local Swiss skiers aiming to make the grade for Lausanne 2020 and to speak with the media about her excitement to once again be part of the YOG.

"I have been anxiously awaiting these Olympics for the last eight years, I have been training especially hard this summer, really trying to make sure I don't miss anything from my diet, to my travel, and of course my workouts, my skiing, everything I've done has been in preparation for these Olympics, so right now I'm trying to stay healthy, going in - so far it's not going very well - but you know I think I'm saving all my luck for February, so hopefully everything will work out the way it's supposed to".



Vonn has been a Youth Olympic Games Ambassador since the inaugural event in Innsbruck in 2012 and is a passionate advocate for youth sports. Despite being unable to compete in the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics due to a knee injury the superstar has personally attended every YOG edition to date, using her platform to encourage the young athletes and to inspire fans at home via social media.

IOC President Thomas Bach said: “Lindsey is an inspirational athlete. Her dedication to sport, to giving her best and to helping the next generation make her a true champion.”

Lausanne 2020 Chairman Patrick Baumann said: “It is a great honour for Lausanne 2020 to have Lindsey Vonn as the first Ambassador and to announce her in St. Moritz, the birthplace of winter sport. As an internationally-renowned skier, she has a lot to share with young



athletes and we are looking forward to having her by our side on the road to Lausanne 2020.”

The 2020 Lausanne YOG will be the first YOG with complete gender equality, featuring as many female as male competitors.

Vonn, the 2010 Olympic downhill champion, is trying to make history this season as she chases Ingemar Stenmark's all-time record of 86 World Cup wins. She already holds the women's record with 77, and hopes to regain her Olympic title in 2018.

The third edition of the Winter YOG takes place in Lausanne 10 to 22 January 2020.

For more information go to <https://www.lausanne2020.com>