

Wise working on original tricks for '18 Olympics

Publisher's note: *This is one of a series of stories about Lake Tahoe area athletes who hope to compete in the 2018 Olympics in South Korea.*

By Kathryn Reed

PARK CITY, Utah – “I want to do something no one else is doing. It is more important to be a pioneer than to do a flawlessly executed run. I look at what is not being done.”

David Wise's philosophy has paid off in gold.

The Reno native was on top of the podium at the Sochi Olympic Games in 2014 for halfpipe skiing. He won gold at the X Games the last three seasons. In February, he hopes to add to his Olympic medal collection.

“I have some brand new things that have never been done. I hope to accomplish them in the Olympics,” Wise said.

His approach to tricks has evolved through the years. He used to dream something up and immediately go try it. Injuries have a way of refining how one does something. Wise said now he is more calculated.

Now a new trick may take him a couple years to perfect.

“What I hope to do in PyeongChang I thought about in Russia. I've been chipping away at it,” Wise said.



David Wise is taking his family to South Korea for what could be his last Olympics. Photo/Kathryn Reed

He didn't get to the top of the free skiing world in a conventional manner. At age 12 he was in the top five in his age group in ski racing. But that wasn't what he was passionate about. He quit racing and wound up in the bottom five of moguls. His determination and skills, though, propelled him to this elite level.

While he grew up at Mount Rose Ski Resort, now he says he doesn't have a home resort. Today he mostly skis at Rose, Squaw Valley and Northstar when he is home. "I have a soft spot for Alpine. I know all the secret spots on a powder day," Wise told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Family is one of the driving factor's in this 27-year-old's career – parents, siblings, wife and children. However, being

an athlete takes a back seat to being a dad and husband. Still, skiing is his job. He's had to learn how to navigate sleep, travel, media, training and competing.

In Russia, he regretted that his daughter was not at the finish line; instead she was at home watching her dad on TV. And while technically he (and everyone else) has not qualified for the 2018 Games, the flights are booked for his wife, daughter and son. Wise admitted at the Team USA media conference this fall that this could very well be his last Olympics.

Growing up Wise's two sisters were always encouraging him to be who he wanted to be. The entire family is athletic. He credits his siblings for why he is not self-centered.

Wise is more complex than some of his peers. Being a family man sets him apart from some; his kids are 6 and 3. He's been a youth pastor, saying how faith is a big part of who he is. At one time he thought he'd become a pastor; that's on hold for now. He's written a children's book that he hopes will be available near the Olympics.