Sports and mediatization: a case of women’s ski-jumping

Ski jumping was the only sport included in the Winter Olympics, where women were not allowed to take part until the first week of April 2011, when IOC decided to let them in to the Olympic family, a major victory for women’s ski-jumping. Since 2004 the Norwegian media had women ski jumping as one important topic in their media coverage. The third of March 2010 the new Holmenkollen ski-jumping hill was inaugurated. It had been rebuilt for the World Championships 2011. The first jump on the hill was surrounded by an intense debate. Annette Sagen was decided to be the first jumper on the hill after a poll on the social media channel Facebook that gave Annette Sagen over 40 000 votes. However Tuesday the second of March Björn Einar Romören, a world cup jumper, did the first jump during a training session. This act started a significant chain of events. The biggest Norwegian web – magazines Verldens Gang and Aftenposten made this the head story and they invited the readers to interaction. Within 24 hours 11 000 comments were written, most of them in favor of Sagen and against Romören’s behavior. The Norwegian Ski Association excluded Romören from two World Cup competitions. What did happen during these days in the media? I want to present the activities, which went on in two web-magazines, and analyze the articles written on the topic. Main issues are to show what an impact a social media network had on the sport in this specific case and how different actors appeared in the media and discuss if Romörens exclusion was a result of the mediatization.

Keywords: Mediatization, Gender, Social media, Ski-jumping