Lindsey Vonn Delays Surgery On Re-Injured Knee

Pat Graham, AP Sports Writer

Lindsey Vonn is delaying further surgery on her right knee for as long as possible in hopes of skiing at the Sochi Olympics.

Vonn partially tore one of her reconstructed knee ligaments during a crash in training two weeks ago at Copper Mountain. She is seeing if she can ski without another operation because that would all but end any chance of defending her Olympic downhill title in February.

Vonn says she likely would be proceeding in the same way even if this weren't an Olympic season.

"I probably would've done what I'm doing right now, test it out," Vonn said after a training session at Vail on Sunday. "If I felt like it was possible to keep skiing, I probably would've. Either way, at the end of the season, I have to reconstruct the ACL.

"So it's kind of like, might as well see how long it holds up. Not a lot of options. In the end, surgery is going to have to happen."

On a chilly morning, Vonn took two warmup runs followed by three aggressive passes through the super-G course in her race suit, hugging the corners tight and looking quite fast. Afterward, she said her surgically repaired knee felt "really good."

So much so that Vonn will travel to Lake Louise, Alberta, this week for downhill training on a course she usually dominates. If training goes well, she will race for the first time since tearing ligaments in her right knee during a high-speed accident at the world championships in February.

"Just trying to ski solid," she said. "I'm not trying to do race runs. I'm trying to build into it. Not push it too hard. But I was still be able to be aggressive and confident in what I'm doing so that when I get up to Lake Louise I can hopefully have a good feeling right away."

As she rehabbed the knee over the offseason, Vonn was anticipating a return for the nearby Beaver Creek races this weekend. She was on pace, too, before her wipeout at the speed center in Copper Mountain in which she partially tore her ACL.

Vonn said it's been difficult to watch Lara Gut of Switzerland win the downhill and super-G races on a new course Vonn was very much look forward to trying out before the 2015 world championships.

"Frustrating to miss the race," Vonn said. "Definitely with this current situation, there was no way I could've skied that bumpy, steep course. I know it was the right decision. That gives me a peace of mind. I'm trying to look forward to Lake Louise and cheer for my team."

Asked if she planned to attend the giant slalom race on Sunday, Vonn said, "Oh, no.

"My family is leaving so I'm spending a couple of extra hours with my family. Then, I'm going to pack up and get ready for Lake Louise."

Vonn needs three wins to match Austrian great Annemarie Moser-Proell's record of 62 victories in World Cup races.

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