

SETH WESCOTT Looks to defend Gold in Vancouver

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lift weights and train, but could not even rest properly. So I am super motivated for these next three months and will be as prepared as I was in 06 and ready to defend it," Wescott said.

"It means everything to defend it and it's one of my biggest goals in life to be able to get done with my career and say that I've done that a few times."

Not at all lacking in confidence, he explained some of the differences going into his second Olympics compared to his first.

"It puts a lot more pressure on me this time around. I was the world champion going into Torino. I think that one of the things that made it easier the last time around was it was my first Olympics and there is something that is so inspirational about that as an athlete. I know from a training standpoint, it was like I had the deepest well that summer and I could log countless hours of training." Now four years later, he's taken on many additional personal projects in his life, yet mentally and physically he's where he wants to be.

Wescott wants more than another Gold Medal in Vancouver this season and a third in Sochi.

"I really want to win the overall World Cup, I've been

"The older I get, the better I am mentally and I'm now much better in the competition scenario."

second; I've been third; and I've been fourth. I've never won the World Cup Globe yet and that's a huge thing that I want to accomplish before I get done."

Sometimes it's about funding, sometimes it's about luck, sometimes it's about just turning results, time after time in the day-to-day functions for World Cup athletes.

Today, he continues to train mostly in the outdoors of Carrabassett Valley —bringing us back to his "Rocky Balboa training." Training which he says is now poking fun at some of the management decisions within his ski and snowboard organization.

"I can get the same workout at the CVA Anti-Gravity Complex as I can get there," Wescott said.

He is referring to a top management decision to fund a \$30 million training building instead of funding the



Olympic Gold medalist Seth Wescott takes a hard turn ahead of competitors at Sunday River's World Cup event last winter. (Rick Bisson/Carrabassett Valley Academy photo)

national team last year. The US Ski and Snowboarding Association built the Center for Excellence, a high tech training facility located at the team's headquarters in Park City, Utah. With the funding decision, administrators had to make what they thought were appropriate cuts in spending, which troubles Wescott.

"I did not have funding to finish my World Cup campaign when I was numerically in the hunt to still win the World Cup last season. I had to pay for myself."

As an athlete, he explained, "it's really frustrating to see someone at the top of the organization make decisions that ultimately put a limelight on their career as an administrator versus giving the athletes the opportunity and funding for their needs to do the things athletically, which ultimately gets the organization program recognition."

"The US Ski & Snowboard team is not college athletics. You don't need a campus to draw people to our team. We are going to take the best people in our country and facilitate competition and training around the world."

Wescott said the new facility might be a better thing for younger athletes who are willing relocate there, but the funding decision is not great for those who are

established in their field, and those who are set in their own personal living environments. Wescott wanted and continues to want to call Carrabassett Valley, Maine his home.

He explained that the \$30 million could fund the national ski and snowboard teams for as long as a decade.

To under-fund your athletes while you're creating a physical building is troublesome, Wescott said. "Our entire career transpires all around the world. Having a giant physical building in one location doesn't do anything for the athletes in my eyes. To me it absolutely makes no sense."

Poking fun he said, "I can work out in our own town-built facility and get just as good of a work out. Maybe with a little less technology behind it, but I'll be just as strong as my teammates who are working out there."

The gold medalist hopes to wrap up his Olympic Qualification in December, lead in World Cup events in Europe in January, and then make pages in the history books in Vancouver.

In between events, he explained, he'll return to the slopes of Sugarloaf, for a couple of weeks to "put the miles on."

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