



Sgt. Nick Cunningham of the U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program, seen here jumping into the sled to drive Olympic gold medalist and WCAP teammate Sgt. Justin Olsen, civilians Johnny Quinn and Abe Morlu in Park City, Utah, finished 10th in the 2013-14 World Cup four-man finale Jan. 26 in Koenigssee, Germany. (Photo by Tim Hipps, Army News Service)

## WCAP Bobsledders Hit Stride As Sochi Olympics Begin

*By Tim Hipps*

Army News Service

**E**ight noncommissioned officers are part of the U.S. team that will take part in the opening ceremonies of the Winter Olympics today in Sochi, Russia.

The NCOs are part of a group of 10 Soldiers from the Army's World Class Athlete Program joining Team USA for the Games of the 22nd Winter Olympiad. WCAP, headquartered at Fort Carson, Colo., trains and promotes nationally and internationally ranked Soldiers who are vying to be a part of the U.S. Olympic team.

The 10 WCAP qualifiers are: Sgt 1st Class Tuffield Latour, Staff Sgt. William Tavares, Staff Sgt. Jen Lee, Sgt. Nicholas Cunningham, Sgt. Preston Griffall, Sgt. Matthew Mortensen, Sgt. Justin Olsen, Sgt. Dallas Robinson, Capt. Christopher Fogt and 1st Lt. Michael Kohn.

All of WCAP's Olympic participants reached various benchmarks along the way to qualification. Most recently, bobsled driver Cunningham teamed with Olympic gold medalist Olsen and civilians Johnny Quinn and Abe Morlu to finish 10th in the four-man bobsled

competition at the 2013-14 World Cup season finale Jan. 26 in Koenigssee, Germany. The group finished with a cumulative time of 1:39:21 in the event.

In Sochi, Cunningham will drive USA-2 with WCAP teammates Olsen, Robinson and civilian Quinn aboard. Cunningham also will drive USA-2 in the two-man event.

“It’s not just me I’m representing when I’m in the sled,” Cunningham, 28, told the Army News Service. “I have all U.S. Soldiers behind me as I slide down every track worldwide.”

Cunningham finished the World Cup season ranked 15th in four-man and 11th in combined points.

The four-man event in Germany was won by Capt. Fogt’s team. Brakeman Fogt, former WCAP bobsled driver Steven Holcomb, along with Curt Tomasevicz and Steve Langton, won with a time of 1:38.04.

“The momentum we’re building heading into the Olympics is incredible,” Holcomb said. “My team has worked so hard.”

Fogt finished 10th in the two-man bobsled event at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games, in Whistler, British Columbia, Canada, where his four-man sled, driven by Sgt. John Napier, crashed during their first run. At Sochi, Fogt will be the brakeman in the four-man USA-1 sled, driven by Holcomb.

“I try to apply the Warrior Ethos and mentality of never quitting or accepting defeat in my training and competitions,” Fogt said. “Being a Soldier-athlete helps keep me focused and working hard because I am representing more than just my team and myself. I’m representing the most powerful and respected organization in the world. I need to reflect that in the way I present myself, train and perform.”

The bobsled competition begins Feb. 15 and concludes Feb. 23 at the Sanki Sliding Center in Rzhanaya Polyana, Russia, about 37 miles northeast of Sochi. ■

The NCO Journal contributed to this report.



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