
Impairment Will Not Slow Down Anna Kulíšková's Life Between School and Ski Slopes

While many college students are busy enough studying, Anna Kulíšková wins medals on the side. She brought a bronze one from this year's Paralympics in Vancouver, and even a gold from Turin four years ago. On top of that, she has won Crystal Globes in both downhill and Super G.

Anna Kulíšková races in the B2 visual impairment category (visual field of 4 degrees), as she lacks peripheral vision. At the Charles University Faculty of Social Sciences, you can meet her accompanied by a guide dog, a female Labrador, but otherwise she is not relieved of any work at school.

Three weeks ago, you returned from the Paralympics in Vancouver. How did you prepare for the event?

This year's season was very specific, we spent a lot of time training. In the Autumn, we were training on an iceberg. My sighted guide Míša has a regular job, so it wasn't easy for her either. She had to take leave of absence.

For how long have you been working with your guide, and how long does it take before you are "in sync" with each other?

This was our second season together. We are always perfecting our collaboration. Each race provides new experience and we keep learning from each other. But I think that we had synced during the last season and this year we could focus on further improvements.

What are your impressions and experiences of Vancouver?

In terms of sport, at first I was disappointed, because I kept failing at races. I fell in the downhill race that I thought would be most hopeful. Then, fortunately, I won a medal in Super G. Also, bearing a flag during the opening ceremony was a very emotional experience.

Did you have time to look around the city?

We were rather busy and only managed to look around on the last day.

Is this the end of the season for you?

This weekend, I packed my winter equipment, so the season is officially over for me. I can breathe out at last.



Is it hard to combine sport and college?

This year's exams were quite difficult. I was busy training and didn't have enough time to prepare for the exams. But I managed. And now it can only get better.

You have studied music at a conservatory – concert flute and guitar. Didn't you consider continuing with music?

I did, for a while, but if I went on to study music at college, I would have to focus on music fully and wouldn't have had time for sport. And I did not want that. I didn't want to give up skiing.

In the end, you started studying journalism. Why didn't you choose the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports?

I would have had many problems because of my impairment. They do many sports that I cannot, like gymnastics or ball games. I became interested in journalism when I came back from Turin and was being interviewed. I figured out that I might enjoy that job. In the future, I would like to focus on the topic of students with impairments and disabilities.

What are your plans for next year?

The world cup in Italy is drawing nearer, which will take place on the Olympic slopes. I would definitely want to go there. But for now, I want to focus on school more, because I have to start working on my Bachelor's thesis.

(Lucie Kettnerová)