

The background image shows two men in winter sports attire. The man on the left is wearing a white and blue jacket with the Olympic rings and the number '8' on it. The man on the right is wearing a blue and red jacket with the Olympic rings and 'PyeongChang 2018' on it. Both are wearing white headbands with goggles and are smiling. The text is overlaid on this image.

# Preparation process for men's 50 km Olympic championship

Olli Ohtonen, PhD student, Coach

University of Jyväskylä

Personal coach of Iivo Niskanen

# Content

- Brief flashback from the race
- How we came to this?
  - Longer perspective - training history
  - Shorter perspective – last months and weeks before Olympics
- Key points





# Brief flashback from the race

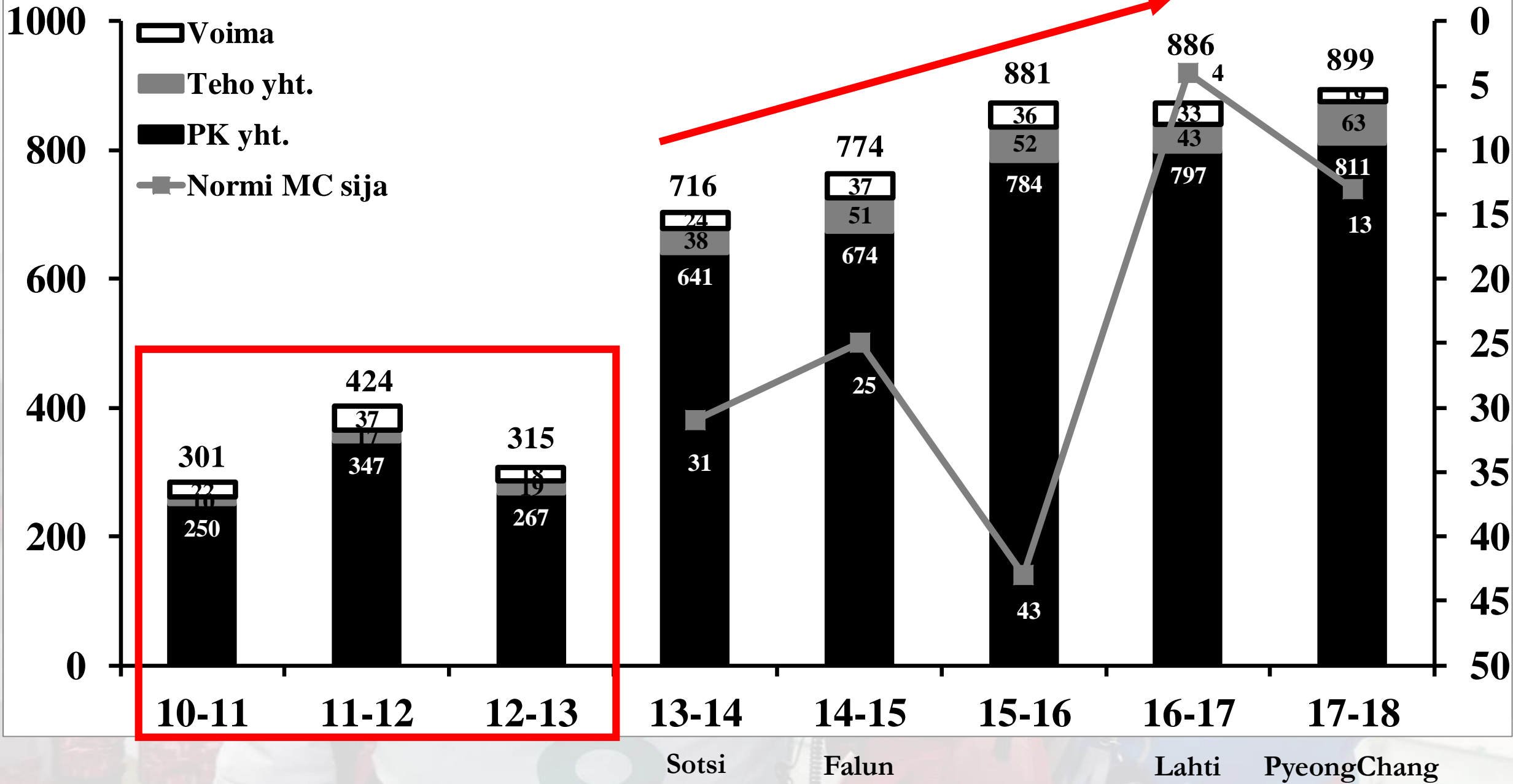
PyeongChang 50km race

A photograph of two athletes in winter sports gear, smiling. The athlete on the left is wearing a white and blue jacket with the Olympic rings and 'PyeongChang 2018' printed on it, and a large number '8' on the front. The athlete on the right is wearing a blue and white jacket with the Olympic rings and 'PyeongChang 2018' printed on it, and a 'FINLAND' logo on their headgear. The background is a bright, snowy outdoor setting.

**How we came to this – Longer perspective**

# Harjoittelu (h)

# Sijoitus



# Some points from history

- Incomplete training logs 2010-2014
- History of health problems (2009-2014)— several week pauses in training due to illnesses in training seasons
- 2014-2016 training seasons were healthy, but illnesses started around year change -> competition season was ruined
- Spring 2016 we needed to come up with something

# Ideas in spring 2016

- Follow up system for training load
  - Orthostatic tests, 6 minute morning tests at rest and standing, HRV
  - Over 25 submaximal running tests in treadmill for controlling the training status
  - Decisions for how much and how soon training can be started after camps based on these variables
- Training plan
  - Less training camps abroad -> less travelling -> more training days
  - More training in Vuokatti with personal coach
  - Strick follow of the training load and decisions based made based on follow up system
- Competition plan
  - Reduced amount of races compared to many others
    - 2016-2017: 20 races
    - 2017-2018: 25 races
  - All training and selected races were planned to serve the main goals 15km classic in Lahti and 50km classic in PyeongChang

A photograph of two athletes in winter sports gear, likely at the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics. The athlete on the left is wearing a white and blue jacket with the Olympic rings and 'PyeongChang 2018' printed on it, along with the number '8'. The athlete on the right is wearing a blue and white jacket with 'PyeongChang 2018' and the Olympic rings. Both are wearing white knit hats with goggles. The background is a bright, snowy outdoor setting.

# How we came to this – Shorter perspective



# Olympic season

- Goals for Olympic season
  - 50 km Classic
  - Skiathlon and/or Sprint
- Good start for season
  - Ruka 15 km classic 3<sup>rd</sup>
  - Lillehammer Skiathlon 7<sup>th</sup>, Sprint 10<sup>th</sup>
- Difficult period from mid December to beginning of Olympics
  - Sick after Lillehammer
  - Too short preparation for Tour de Ski
  - Recovery was delayed
  - Media things etc. before preparation camp effected on travel plans
  - Mediocre results from 15 km classic in Planica (10<sup>th</sup>)
  - Lots of modifications to training program

# The Olympics

- Skiathlon 19th
  - Mistakes from coaches and athletes side
- Sprint, 14th
  - Fatigue from skiathlon ruined top result in Sprint
- Relay
  - Fastest classic leg time
  - First good signal
- Team relay
  - Some discussions but it could have jeopardize 50 km

# Preparation for 50 km – last week

- Recovery
- Ski tests
- One preparation training on competition track
- Tactical aspects – based on previous races
  - Easy skiing – saving energy
  - 2 to 4 men group will breakaway
  - Final hit will come in some of the last three uphill – be prepare on this

# The Race

- Own decisions during race – breakaway in 18 km
- Not trying too long alone – skiing with Bolshunov
- Tactically wise ski change – teamwork
- Final hit in the right place and hard enough

# Key points



# Key points

- Highlighting only one to two main training goals per year
- Only on competition goal per year!
- Continuous discussion with the athlete
- Reacting to problems rapidly
- Use of tools (that athlete trust) on detecting training load
- Use of academic approach in coaching
- Own role as researcher and coach
  - Bringing thing from academic research to science and vice versa
- Good possibilities for training and testing in Vuokatti
- **TEAMWORK**

A photograph of two male athletes in winter sports gear, smiling. The athlete on the left is wearing a white and teal jacket with the Olympic rings and 'PyeongChang 2018' and the number '8'. The athlete on the right is wearing a blue and white jacket with 'PyeongChang 2018' and the Olympic rings. Both are wearing white knit hats with goggles. The background is a bright, snowy outdoor setting with other people in winter gear visible in the distance.

**Thank You**