

KELLY BRUSH BIO

QUICK FACTS

Hometown: Charlotte, Vermont

Birthdate: July, 9 1986

College: Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont. Film & Media Culture major, graduating in May 2008.

High School: Green Mountain Valley School, Waitsfield, Vermont. GMVS is an internationally renowned ski academy where students are focused on both academics and top-level competition. Kelly graduated in 2004.

Athletics: Middlebury College Ski Team; golf, cycling, surfing

Sports have always been a central part of Kelly Brush's life. Kelly started skiing and gymnastics before she started school. She was the captain of her soccer and lacrosse teams in high school. Surfing was another favorite sport. Of all the sports she loved, skiing was the one she set her sites on. For high school Kelly attended Green Mountain Valley School, a prestigious ski academy, and she raced on the NCAA Div. 1 Middlebury College ski team in Middlebury, Vermont.

You might say athletics is in her DNA. Kelly followed in the foot steps of her older sister, Lindsay, who ski raced at GMVS and Middlebury. Her mother, Mary, was on the U.S. Ski Team and competed in the 1976 Olympic Games in Innsbruck, Austria. And her father Charlie coached football and skiing at Middlebury College. Skiing and golf, too, have always been serious fun in the Brush family.

It's hard to imagine Kelly without sports. So when she fell in a ski race on February 18, 2006 fracturing her spine and leaving her paralyzed from the chest down, those who knew her best wondered how such a physically active person would cope. Kelly coped by applying her trademark quiet determination to getting her life back and to getting back to the things she loved most.

Coping with her injury wasn't Kelly's only focus. She came away from her tragic fall resolved to turn a negative into a positive force for change. Kelly started the Kelly Brush Foundation that same year. The foundation's mission is three-fold: to improve safety in ski racing; to advance research on spinal cord injury and to help others living with spinal cord injury buy adaptive sports equipment—so they, too, can get on with life.