

Jeff Wattenmaker Scholarship Application

Brian Tidd

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Olympic Valley, CA



Colleges Accepted To

University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB)

University of California at Davis (UC Davis)

Saint Michael's College -Vermont

Saint Lawrence University -New York

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Jeff Wattenmaker Scholarship
04/11/11

As a Master's Athlete

An ancient proverb has never spoken truer words: It takes a village to raise a child. At a younger age, I understood this statement to mean that a child's upbringing is never solely on the shoulders of their parents. More recently, I have developed a deeper insight to the proverb's meaning, and now recognize why the "village" is responsible for a "child's" growth both physically and mentally. Hypothetically, a mother needs to leave the house for a few hours, and asks her neighbor to baby-sit her child. Although the neighbor watches over the child, and is therefore literally helping to raise him or her, the act of spending time with the infant and the experience the two share would indefinitely add and influence the child's life. This "village" can be friends, an actual town, family, school, or even an organization.

The summer before my sophomore year in high school, my family decided to move our lives from my childhood town of Saratoga to Lake Tahoe. After months of searching for a new place to call our home, we packed our things and moved to Squaw Valley. The transition was difficult for everyone; I was to attend North Tahoe High School where I knew hardly anybody, and both my siblings had to acclimate themselves to new scholastic situations as well. My father worked out of town for the majority of the first year, and as a result, my mother had to basically act as a single parent in raising us three kids. The common love of skiing essentially tied our family together.

Upon moving to Squaw, the widely renowned Mozen family introduced themselves, and helped my family with a more fluid transition into the new community. Their son, Isaac, became good friends with my younger brother, and upon doing so, our two families became great friends. Eddie introduced us to the Masters program, and although all Masters youth Athletes had already

been chosen, he had recommended that my sister and I attend the Masters training camp in Colorado during the Fall. For the entirety of the camp both Masters racers and Masters youth Athletes were welcoming. Everyone was united under the common goal of ski racing, but not one person let their focus interfere or disrupt a good attitude. Laughs were shared on the mountain, around the dinner table, and especially during video sessions. A particularly strong memory of mine was performing a skit in front of a restaurant filled with fun-loving Masters along with Olympians Stacey Cook and Marco Sullivan. Throughout the week my skiing greatly improved, and I created new relationships and life long friends, both with my peers and with fellow Masters racers.

Ever since that initial week in Colorado, I have had a connection with the Masters and to all of whom include themselves in the program. Countless times I have seen Masters Athletes at races, and every time they have seemed jovial and enthusiastic to see me. On many occasions I have been warming up for a race later in the day at Mammoth, and Masters racers have offered me an opportunity to train with them on their course. The feeling is practically indescribable to simply know that wherever I go, there are people cheering for me and always looking out for my better interests.

Having blown out my knee in December, this past ski season was suddenly taken away from me, and with it, my world had been turned completely upside down. The weeks that followed my injury were very emotional as I wondered what the future had in store. However, like always, the Masters showed their support as I received an endless stream of kind words and wisdom. Statements such as, "It's a speed bump. Trust me, this sort of thing has happened to every single member of the U.S. Ski Team, and they all come back stronger than ever," helped me to realize that the world was not indeed coming to an end, and that much worse things have

happened. Once I had refocused my thoughts with an entirely new perspective, it was game time. Nothing from that point onward would come in between myself and my goal: Coming back stronger than ever. And I have done just that, at least so far. Since my surgery back in February, I have dedicated myself to a fierce physical therapy program, and thus am currently weeks ahead of my estimated recovery schedule.

However, having this past season ripped out from under my feet has put an interesting twist on my initial plans for next year. Originally I had planned to hopefully race in college next year, and therefore applied to a few schools for which I had the opportunity to ski. After my injury, though, I had to assess a new plan. I have recently been accepted to both UC Santa Barbara and UC Davis. After hours upon hours of deliberation, I had devised a strategy, which I believe could supply the greatest outcome for my given situation. Regardless of whether I went to school next year or took an extra year to ski, next year would indefinitely be a “comeback” year, meaning I would not be as strong or ready next year to reach my full skiing potential. Therefore, in taking a post-grad (PG) year solely to race, I would not be able to make the sort of impact I would want. However, if I were to attend a UC, I could experience my “comeback” year on the school’s club team, training on weekends either in Tahoe or Mammoth. In addition, I would be able to train vigorously during the nearly one month Christmas break allocated by the University. Moreover, because Santa Barbara runs their school year on the quarter system, in two years—my sophomore year—I could potentially take the winter quarter off, and race throughout the entire ski season. In doing so, I believe I could tap into my full racing potential with all of my strength and ability.

The true beauty of the Masters Program is not allowing people to race, and is not giving scholarships to athletes, though both of these aspects are incredible. What the Masters program

has done, which only a select few other organizations have been able to accomplish, has been to bring people together and teach peers of every age how to better themselves for the good of themselves and everyone. The absolute selflessness surrounding the Masters has allowed for a jovial environment where everyone feels welcome, or at least, my experiences have entailed this outlook. Everyone always jumps at the chance to help their peers, and as I have already described, always hopes for the best in their peers as well. For this I am so grateful to the Masters, not only in backing me financially, but for including me in so many experiences which have helped me to become who I am today, and for supporting me with whatever my future holds. I am thankful to the Masters for supporting me, just as a village supports one of their own.

Brian Tidd
UC Application essay
10/21/11

To Persevere

At this time in my life, I think of myself primarily as an Alpine ski-racer. I train on snow for over six months a year; starting with summer and fall technical training camps, then continuously, once the snow falls in November, through the season-ending races each April. In the spring and summer I play baseball, but even then, my teammates and coaches call me “the ski-racer”. When I’m not on snow or the baseball diamond, I follow a physical training regimen to increase my power, endurance and flexibility – for ski racing.

While I started ski racing at age ten, my self-perception as a ski racer wasn’t solidified until the end of my sophomore year in high school (2008-2009). Prior to that time, my ski racing skills were mediocre. I was under-confident, and I struggled adapting as the “new kid” in high school and on the ski team.

In August 2008, right before the start of my sophomore year, my parents moved our family from the community where I grew-up. The move was a big risk requiring each of us to adapt in our own way. My dad worked out of town for the next fifteen months, my mom struggled alone getting us three kids to different schools and activities. Each of us kids had to make new friends in our classes, all the time wishing we were back-home with our childhood friends.

That fall, I remember feeling lonely. The kids I knew from my ski team were playing soccer. Some kids from school encouraged me to try-out for the Tennis team, even though I had

never played before. But, I quickly became uncomfortable in that environment because the Tennis team kids were generally poor students, many of whom used alcohol and marijuana.

Everything in my life just seemed to be mediocre, including my academic performance as a freshman. Toward the end of that first quarter of my sophomore year, I attended a fall ski camp. I was struggling skiing, and my coach pulled me aside to tell me something. “Do you love this sport?” I nodded my head in response, still upset with my performance. “Well then, why are you giving up out there? If you really love this sport as much as you say you do, don’t ever give up.” Those statements reminded me of a passage I read years before from the J.K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* novel series: “If you truly love something enough, nothing can prevent you from seizing it.” I interpreted the meaning of both my coach and J.K. Rowling as direction to persevere. From that moment a fire was ignited in me to work as hard as I could to persevere in my athletic and academic challenges.

Perseverance in my academics, sports, and work has proven to be my greatest acquired characteristic. Without the attitude to try my absolute hardest for something, there is no possible way I would have been able to achieve high quality grades in a public school environment while competing at a high level to become a nationally ranked Alpine ski athlete. The experience that I had in the fall of my sophomore year has transformed me to a focused, responsible student-athlete who is willing to work as hard as possible to achieve a high quality college education to ultimately become a professional and community leader.

Brian Tidd
Masters Wattenmaker Scholarship
4/10/11

Scholarships and Awards

Waiting for Response

BloodSource Scholarship

-Awarded to participants who have participated in a school blood drive.

Auburn Garden Club

-Awarded to aspiring students in the fields of forestry, horticulture, urban planning, and biological studies.

American Iris Society Scholarship

-Awarded to aspiring students in the fields of landscaping, horticulture, plant biology, or related fields.

Independent Order of Odd Fellows

-Awarded to Students who aspire to further their education.

Tahoe Truckee Community Scholarship

-Awarded to students of the Tahoe Truckee community in need.

Received

Cal. Grant

-Grant awarded to California student residents who wish to further their education.

Honor Roll

-Admitted to Honor Roll for North Tahoe High School every semester, all three years of attendance.

Distinguished World History Award

-Awarded after my sophomore year for exceptional work and understanding of world history.

Tahoe Ski Foundation Sportsmanship Award

-Awarded to the athlete with exceptional sportsmanship qualities. Past recipients include U.S. Ski Team members such as Nick Daniels, Keith Moffat, Travis Ganong, and Marco Sullivan.