

FAR WEST MASTERS

SKI RACING



THE FORERUNNER

JANUARY 2, 2024

Mission Statement

We, the Far West Masters, embrace ski racing as a lifelong sport. Our mission is to provide skiers of all levels with an opportunity to compete in quality, challenging, and fun alpine ski racing events.

Membership Info

- Both a Far West Masters and a USSA membership are required to race with us.
- Far West Masters membership for 2023-2024 for new and renewing members:
masters.AdminSkiRacing.com/farwest
- USSA Alpine Masters membership: Masters Getting Started: usskiandsnowboard.org
- First time racers get a temporary bib.
- Questions? Contact
membership@farwestmasters.org

In This Issue

- President's Message: p. 1
Rule Changes for 2024: p. 2
Season Schedule: p. 2
Additional N Tahoe Racing: p. 3
Membership Renewal: p. 3
Parking Update: p. 3
Honoring Previous Racers: p. 3
Coach's Corner: p. 4-5
Scholarship Program: p. 6
Be a Race Official: p. 7
Helmets & Wax for 2024: p. 7
Far West Masters Board: p. 7

President's Message: Feast or Famine

Compared to last season... well, there isn't anything that compares to the amount of snow we had last season. As of Dec. 31, we were sadly lacking in snow pack. Mt. Rose, with their higher base elevation, might be the only area not impacted by the rain. None-the-less, we remain hopeful, and anticipate a good season of adult ski racing!

I encourage everyone to sign up for the races early for several reasons. Larger numbers of participants encourages the resorts to do a better job of preparation for the event. And, it makes it easier for the administration to get everything in order. If "sign-ups" don't come in 'til the last minute, it can create quite a headache for our volunteers staff and board members.

As you've seen by now, there are several large events happening outside our division this year. **The Masters National Championships** will be taking place in Wisconsin for the first time. The organizing committee has been working hard to make it a "first class" event and would love some Far West participation.

The **Western Regional Championships in Beaver Creek, CO** are also part of the International FIS Masters series. They always put on some excellent races there!

And also, the International Masters World Criterium will be hosted at Kimberley, British Columbia, Canada, and is a great event.

I have participated in several of these over the years and it is truly memorable!

All these events are open to any Masters, and one only needs to request an additional FIS license to participate in the international events. Contact the USSA office in Park city to get one. It will be worth it!

So, let's get in the starting gate, and have fun this season!

-Rees

Visit the **USSA Masters Events & Schedules page** for links to all details on the events above: <https://usskiandsnowboard.org/masters/masters-events-schedules>

A few rule changes for 2024

I'd like to point out a few rule changes that have been added to the [2024 Alpine Competition Guide](#).

1. If you stop during your run in DH, SG, or GS, you may not continue through the rest of the course. Your time will be stopped and it is dangerous for you and the course workers if you go on. Generally, the same applies if a ski comes off.

There is no "hiking" allowed for a missed gate in Giant Slalom, Super G, and Downhill races.

In Slalom, however, one may hike for a missed gate, but one must be aware of any oncoming racer and not interfere with that person's run. If overtaken, you are done. No continuing on! This slalom rule regarding hiking is an American rule and **not** valid in International races. No hiking in **any** of their events.

And yes, we allow a second run for our Masters races if they DQ or DNF in their first run of SL or GS, if conditions allow.

2. If you anticipate forerunning any junior races, It is required that you take a "[Safesport" course on line](#), and a background screening. This will give you a USSS license "with requirements," which all coaches and officials have. This is now mandatory.
3. Should you cross the finish line if you know you've missed a gate or otherwise DQ'd?

No! It is very likely the timer has already stopped your time and you may interfere with the next racer's time. There should be a way to exit the course - usually near the finish.

An exception would be if you missed one of the last few gates and it would be unsafe for you to try to pull off the course.

There are many rules in ski racing.

As in all sports, It is the responsibility of the participant to know these rules.

-Rees

All rules are in the [2024 Alpine Competition Guide](#):

https://usskiandsnowboard.org/sites/default/files/files-resources/files/2023/2024_Alpine_Guide.pdf

Also review the [2024 Masters Competition Guide](#):

https://usskiandsnowboard.org/sites/default/files/files-resources/files/2023/Masters_Book.pdf

2023-2024 Season Schedule

Scheduling Director Mike Braun has put together a 2023-2024 race calendar with a good mix of events at proven venues. The schedule this season has different dates for some of our traditional events in consideration of the early Nationals races scheduled for February. The FIS Masters World Criterium is in March, a major event that only comes to North America every 5 years. A season highlight is the Masters National DH Championship in our home division at Mammoth Mountain.

| Date | Location | Event Name | Discipline(s) |
|------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| Nov. 28-Dec. 1 (Canceled) | Mammoth Mountain, CA | Masters race camp | GS and SL |
| December 2-3 (Canceled) | Mammoth Mountain, CA | Dave McCoy Memorial | GS / SL |
| January 20-23 [Sat-Tue] | Mammoth Mountain, CA | Mammoth Speed Races DH National Championship & Speed Series | SGx2 SGx2 DH(t)x2 DHx2 |
| February 5-10 [Mon-Sat] | Granite Peak, WI | Masters National Championships | SG / GS / SL + AC or Parallel (tbd) |
| February 10 [Sat] | Mt. Rose, NV | McKinney Cup | GSx2 |
| Feb. 24-25 | | Palisades World Cup | Men GS / SL |
| February 22-25 [Thu-Sun] | Beaver Creek, CO | FIS Masters Cup / Western Region Championships | SGx2 / GS_1x2 / SL (Sat: two 1-run GS) |
| Mar 1-7 [Fri-Thu] | Kimberly, BC, CAN | Masters World Criterium | SG / SL / GS + FMC GS |
| March 8 [Fri] | Alpine Meadows, CA | | SLx2 |
| March 15 [Fri] | Northstar, CA | Northstar Speed Series | SGx2 (both NSS) |
| March 16-17 | Diamond Peak, NV | Viva Italia | SL / SL |
| April 5-6 [Fri-Sat] | Palisades Tahoe, CA | Season Finals & Banquet Bernard Cup | GS / GS |

The schedule is subject to change, for the latest go to farwestmasters.org/schedule.

Registration: Far West Masters membership signup and race entries are available on AdminSkiRacing: masters.adminskiracing.com/farwest

Additional North Tahoe racing

If you're looking for additional racing opportunities in the North Tahoe area, [check out the 2024 Schedule for the Bay Area Snow Sports Council races](#). The [Bay Area Snow Sports Council](#) and the [Far West Skiing Association](#) provide recreational racing opportunities for adult and children skiers and riders in the North Lake Tahoe area. Race courses are designed for all ability levels and ages, from beginning skiers and riders to former college racers.

To sign up as day racers:

1. [Pre-Register for the race online](#)
2. Print & sign [Release of Liability Form](#) and bring to check-in
3. Check-in on race day ([check-in location and other race day info will be posted here](#)) and get temporary bibs
4. Questions - at check-in, direct to Debi Phelps, OpenLeagueRacing@gmail.com, chair of Open League

Payment is \$40. [Pre-pay by Venmo@MrColey61](#) or pay at check-in with cash or by check to OLRC.

Membership renewal

We are once again using Admin Ski Racing (ASR) for membership and race fees. Far West Masters membership for 2022-2023 is now open at masters.AdminSkiRacing.com/farwest. Activate your account for the season and pay your Far West Masters dues online.

This was a new process for us last season, and there were some challenges. Deb Lewis has been working closely with the ASR team and we hope many of the issues have been resolved. The Far West page at ASR has detailed instructions to help you with the system. If you need additional assistance, you can contact Deb Lewis at dlewis@farwestmasters.org.

Don't forget, your Far West Masters membership is **in addition** to your US Ski & Snowboard Alpine Master membership. Your FWM membership dues supports organizing our division race calendar and provides you with a permanent race bib for all our Far West masters races.

Far West Masters membership is not required for first-time racers or competitors from other divisions. Mary Feddis, our Membership Director, will contact you with additional information after you sign up for a race.

Palisades & Northstar parking update

As of December 31, 2023, **advance parking is not required for any of our races**. Palisades and Northstar are not requiring or offering parking reservations on Fridays or in April.

Our races on Friday, March 8 (Alpine), Friday, March 15 (Northstar), and Friday and Saturday, April 5-6 (Palisades) **do not require reservations at this time**.

We will send an update by email if this changes.

Honoring those who came before us

With the recent passing of Gate DeMattei, it seems appropriate to honor him and some others who have helped the Far West Masters program evolve to what it is today. These significant individuals made various contributions to our program but no longer race with us. All were regular participants, some have passed away, some are very much alive! Some were notable "characters," but all were contributors in some way.

First and foremost, Bob Bernard.

Also:

Joe and Norma Lausmann
Dave McCoy
Georgene Bihlman
John Gianotti
Gary Mouck
Lynn Johnson
Gayle DeMattei
Rosie Moschel
Buck and Nina Thys
Eddie Aincas
Chris and Warren Hellman
Teddy Cantanho
Bob Frantz
Martin Sulzer
Fritz Sigenthaler
Jorg Dutschke
Hans Muhlgraber
Toot Joslin
Sandy Hogan
Greg and Sue Hawthorne
Grant Wells
Mark Antis
Eddie Zuckerman

Thank you! We will always remember you!

Coach's corner: Pierre Jeangirard Mammoth Mountain Masters

Before going into the technical aspect of making a turn (a topic for a future newsletter), I like to make sure everyone understands how a ski works and what part of the ski you have to focus on:

- tip at the top of the turns
- middle of the ski at the maximum pressure
- apex, at the gate or slightly above the gate
- the tail of the ski below the gate

So, all this has to do with angles and pressure.

The ski won't bend unless it is on edge. So, first thing as you move forward (another subject!) in your transitions, you need to roll the skis on edge from the ankles and knees (starting from the ankles, inside your boots). That will activate your ankles and give you more stability doing so (toes to the nose).

As we progress through the season, we take this understanding of how the ski works and apply it as we work on the next steps in edging and creating your arc. I'll continue to build on this in future newsletters.

Coach's corner: Mark Mirviss Palisades Tahoe Masters

As we begin this season, without much snow, and limited training venues, despair not! This paucity of gate training, gives rise to technique improvement through directed free skiing and drills. We have now had six days of training on brush/stubbie gates, and EVERYONE improved over last season's end (I looked at last year's videos).

So, while training might not be as "fun" as if we were training in tall gate gates, it is at least, and probably more beneficial for most, at this point in the season! So, go forth, enjoy and improve! It's about concentration, and concentrated effort. One athlete (full disclosure, who lives with me) after proofreading this missive, told me she probably made gains in the last two weeks, that she may not have made in a season!

Coach's corner: Ryan Ritchie Diamond Peak Masters

The Diamond Peak Masters program is off to a great start for the '23-24 season! The staff at DP has done an exceptional job preparing our hill given the limited snowfall. The snowmaking team in particular blew enough snow for a spectacular surface and great coverage at this point in the year.

We've seen great early season participation in the Far West Masters Scholarship Program, where we are sponsoring a really great group of kids pursuing their ski racing dreams. Don't forget to send your year-end donations to Eddie.

Our Masters team at DP has grown once again this year, so we should see some new racers for FWM events especially in March when we host our two-day slalom series.

On hill, we have been doing as many "creative" (ie weird) drills as possible to challenge our neuromuscular systems in new ways to create new movement patterns. We focus on:

- balance (1,000 step turns, can you skate well? can you one ski?)
- body position (javelin turns, R-squareds, switchies)
- edge control (pivot turns, short swishies)

If you don't know what any of those are, you'll have to ask Coach Chris or Coach Ryan next time you see us. We're seeing fantastic improvements in new and veteran racers alike - now we just need a little more snow so we can transition into gates!



Palisades Tahoe Masters

Coach's corner: Ray Tulloch Mt. Rose Masters

A look Behind the scenes!

While my fellow coaches have been sharing practical tips - warm ups, stretching etc. - I thought I would provide our members some insight in to what happens behind the scenes to actually deliver a training/race program. While a lot of this may appear to athletes to be seamless and "just happen" there is a huge amount of work that takes place behind the scenes to bring this to fruition.

As Ski Team Head Coach at Mt. Rose the Masters program is just one part of my race program responsibilities which also includes U12, U14, U16, FIS, Free Ride and Tahoe Race Series program. So, like most businesses, there are a lot of moving parts to sync up and actions to take to ensure effective program delivery.

Planning for the next season actually starts around February of the previous season when we review a number of data points including athlete numbers; what has been working; what needs to be improved; athlete and parent feedback; actual v. budget results to date; etc. We can then consider what, if any, additional programs or program expansions should be offered; any programs that should be discontinued due to lack of demand; projected athlete numbers; coaching resources; estimated budgetary costs; training hill space requirements etc. Based on this review proposals can then be discussed with Ski Area Management to agree program parameters, scope, costs and targets. Typically this will take place during March to enable the following season program options to be communicated to athletes and parents before the end of the season and discount opportunities to be offered to encourage early sign-ups, typically before the end of April, and to also sync up with discounted Season pass sales. As an example for season 23-24 we added a Saturday expansion option to our Masters program based on discussions with, and suggestions from, our athletes.

Early sign-ups provide critical feedback on whether further modifications to our product offerings may be necessary to match demand. During March/April as the end of the season approaches we do a true up of actual program costs v. revenues to identify whether next season pricing and budgets require further refinement to ensure viability.

Then, after a short end of season break, the logistical and resource challenges begin:

- How many coaches do we need to support all the programs?
- How can we coordinate hill and lane space to ensure all programs get sufficient training time while minimizing closures that impact pass-holders?
- What are possible mountain opening dates?
- How many additional/replacement coaches do we need to recruit?
- What do the race schedules look like for the different programs? What level of travel coaching support is required for each program? How will this impact training program support?
- What races will we be hosting at the mountain and how many race crew will be required?
- Coach training and certification requirements

For part-time programs, ensuring adequate coaching resources can be particularly challenging, especially to support any mid-week training requirements. Recruitment and outreach to coach candidates becomes a major focus during September/October. In parallel with this we are also working on athlete recruitment and parent/athlete outreach and communication.

Moving into October the tempo increases further as we consider possible program start dates; coach onboarding and training; equipment advice and sourcing for athletes; race equipment inventory and condition (e.g. gates, timing equipment); travel plans and hotel bookings.....and praying for snow - or at least cold weather to allow snow-making!

Then November rolls around and, no matter how well we may have planned (to paraphrase Mike Tyson - "everyone has a plan until they get punched on the nose"), season opening hits us and there is a scramble to get communications out, finalize and stagger program start dates; get coaches on snow training; and most importantly, get athletes on snow to prepare for early season races. From there on, it is heads down and full speed ahead with training, travel communications, on the fly weather-driven adjustments etc. until the cycle repeats!

And you thought it was just about skiing and providing training and feedback... 😊

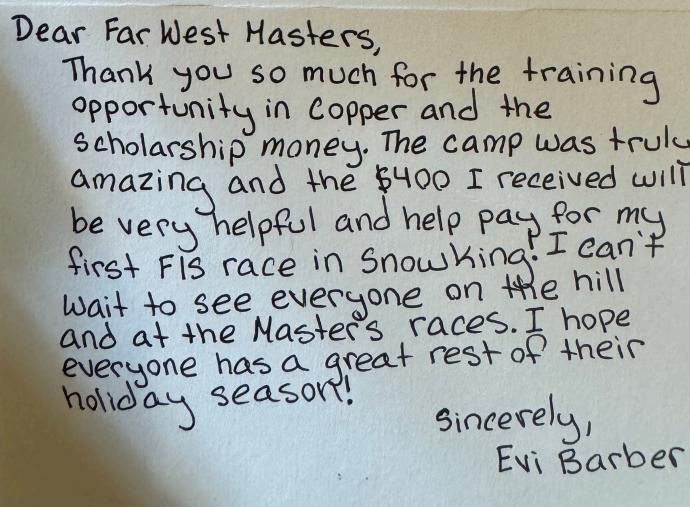
Scholarship Program: In the beginning

The Far West Masters scholarship program has been providing funding to student racers for close to 35 years. Bob Bernard (of the Bernard Cup) worked with USSA to include Masters in the early 80's. At the start, Bob was the director for all of the Masters divisions, and started the initial fundraising program for Masters to give to USSA programs. He started with a program to provide edited videotapes of the best World Cup runs to USSA to give to the kids programs to learn to be better racers. However, Bob quickly realized that the Far West division was raising most of the money, and about 20% was going to production costs for the videos. Eddie Mozen suggested it would be best to give all of the funds directly to the kids instead of paying those production costs. This way, all the money raised went directly to the kids. The program continues to donate 100% of funds raised to the student racers.

In the first couple years of the program, about 8-9 kids were accepted. Today, about 35-40 kids are accepted out of about 70 applicants each year. Far West Masters raises the money, and the fiscal year runs from November 1 - October 31. This way, the program volunteers know exactly how much money they have to give each year and will accept as many students as they can with the funding on hand. Any funds raised starting November 1 will be applied toward the following year's scholarship recipients.

In the next newsletter, we'll write about the application and selection process.

Past scholarship recipient update: Evi Barber



Past scholarship recipient update: Morganne Murphy

My name is Morganne Murphy and I am currently an emergency medicine resident physician at Riverside Community Hospital.

I grew up in Truckee, CA and was a part of the Palisades Tahoe ski team. I went on to race at Colby-Sawyer College in New Hampshire and competed on the NCAA circuit. While in college, I studied abroad at the University of Wollongong in Australia where I took courses in terrestrial ecology, psychology, and philosophy.

After graduating in 2017 with a degree in Biology and minor in Chemistry, I worked as a scribe at Tahoe Forest Hospital in Truckee, CA in the emergency department. Over this next year while taking the MCAT and applying to medical school, I also coached for the Palisades Tahoe U14 alpine ski team.

Then, I attended the University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine and graduated in 2022. I began my emergency medicine residency at Riverside Community Hospital in Spring of 2022, and plan to graduate in Summer 2025.

Eddie Mozen's note: In addition to being in the scholarship program for 4-5 years, Morganne worked with me as a scribe (our local internship program) between college and Med school, and is now in residency, specializing in Emergency medicine (quite an honor for me, having her follow in my footsteps).



Past scholarship recipient Morganne Murphy

To donate to the Far West Masters Scholarship program, go to: farwestmasters.org/scholarship_program

Be a race official

Any member can learn to be a race official. Contact FW Masters President Rees Palermo & find info here: fwskiing.org/content/far-west-officials-page

Helmet & wax info

- A FIS-certified race helmet is **required** for all GS / SG / DH events
- A helmet is also required for SL, a face guard is recommended
- Fluoro race waxes are NOT ALLOWED in any US events (ban instituted in 2021)

Getting to know you

We'd love to get to know our members in upcoming newsletters. If you're interested, answer a few of these questions and send us 1 or 2 photos (with & without a helmet) and we'll include your profile in the late January newsletter.

- How did you get into ski racing, and what keeps you passionate about it?
- What's been your most memorable ski racing moment or achievement so far?
- Have you ever participated in Masters races outside our area? What was your experience like?
- Are there any specific training routines or rituals you follow before a race?
- Outside of skiing, what interests or hobbies do you pursue?
- What advice would you give to someone starting in ski racing?

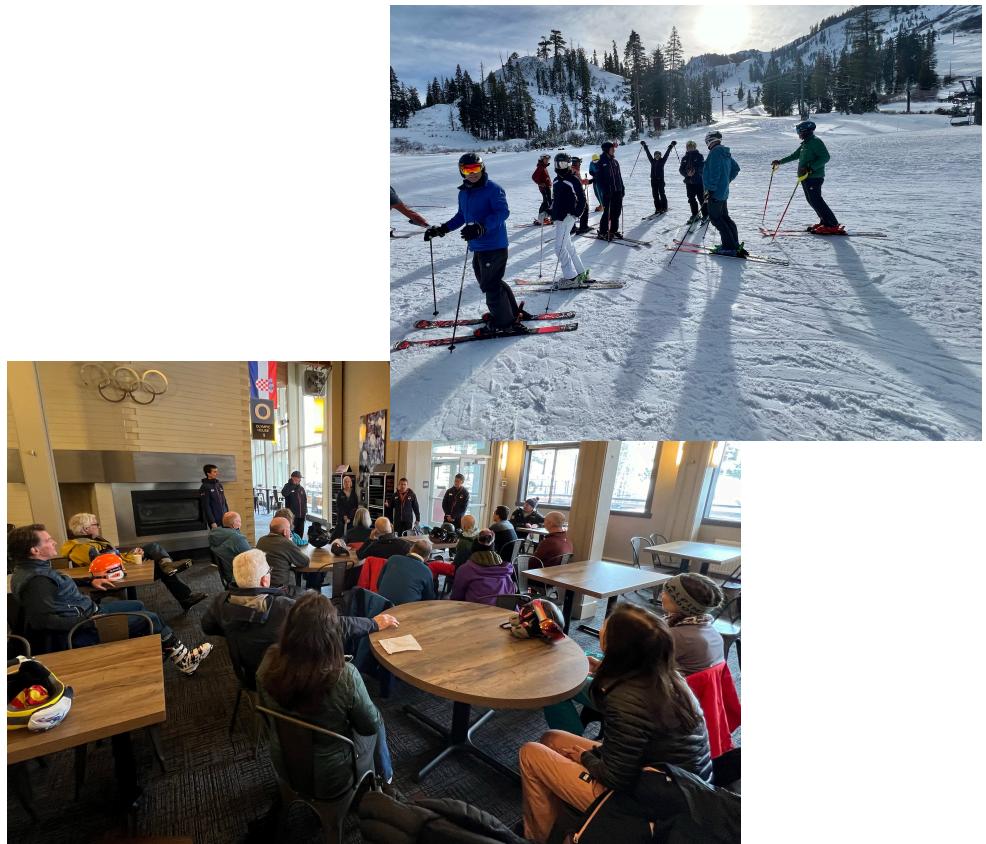
Race day profiles

@fisalpine on Instagram asks racers questions and posting their fun and candid responses. We're going to try this at some of our events and post them to our social media. If you see Melissa taking video and would like to participate, let her know!

2023-2024 Far West Masters Board

The Far West Masters board met on May 7, 2023 and voted on new board members for the 2023-2024 season. Many of our board members are returning, but a few have changed. Here is the list of our board members for the upcoming season, effective June 1st. New positions are noted in the list.

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|--|------------------------|
| President | Rees Palermo | president@farwestmasters.org | new for 23-24 |
| Past President | Ray Tulloch | | |
| Officials | Mark Mirviss | mmirviss@farwestmasters.org | |
| Race Scheduling | Mike Braun | | |
| Membership | Mary Feddis | membership@farwestmasters.org | |
| Communications | Melissa House | forerunner@farwestmasters.org | new for 23-24 |
| Secretary | Linda Crowell | | new for 23-24 |
| Treasurer | Hamish Butler | | new to this role 23-24 |
| Chief Technical Officer | Deb Lewis | dlewis@farwestmasters.org | |



Palisades Tahoe Masters: Early season 23-24 meeting & fun on the slopes