



May 2015

End of Season Edition



President's Message

By Dan Simmons

In spite of difficult conditions we managed to pull off 18 races, capped by five terrific events at the Season final in Mammoth. Add to that the FIS Cup at Aspen and the USSA Masters Nationals at Sun Valley, and we've had an overall excellent season.

Many thanks to all of the people who made possible our successful season. Two unsung heroines require special mention. We all know that Deb Lewis has worked hard as our technical guru (is gura the feminine form). I, however, had little appreciation of the incredible amount of time and effort Deb invests both in our Far West program and nationally. She manages our web site, organizes registration with SkiRaceReg, prepares the start list files for all of the races, keeps the results, and manages our email communications. We would not have a program without Deb's efforts. My other unsung heroine is Diann Laing. Over the past two seasons Diann has organized our check-in process, including dealing with the difficult problems of temporary licenses and maintaining temporary bibs, and who showed up early on race days to assure that the whole process worked smoothly. It's to Diann's great credit and diligence that USSA is happy with our temporary licenses and that we have not lost a single temporary bib over that last couple of years, not to mention that she now has us all well-trained to show up and check in on race days. The bibs are important because it was the lack of temporaries that required us to purchase new bibs this year at great expense. Also thanks to Emily Andrews and Charlene Simmons for their help at check-in.

I am grateful for the hard work of many others who made the season possible. Mike Braun was responsible for scheduling and re-scheduling the season's events. Mike constantly has been on top of conditions and worked tirelessly with the areas to be sure we got races off. As I write, Mike is busy putting together a good looking schedule for next season. Mark Mirviss, our past president, has been a constant source of good advice for me as I've learned the job of President, and he coordinated our officials during the year. Thanks also to all who have served as TD or referee at the races, Hamish Butler, Doug Fulton, Paul Laudenschlager, Deb Lewis, Mark Mirviss, Eddie Mozen, Rees Palermo, Don Smith, and Ray Tulloch. I encourage others to take the referee course where you will learn how really complicated pulling off our USSA sanctioned races can be. Also, serving as an official is a good way to give back a little for all of the benefit we receive from the work of volunteers who make our program possible.

Special thanks and congratulations to Mary Feddis, the Teddy Cantanho award winner, who took over as membership chair and had to deal with the complications of getting new bibs out to everyone. Randall Sussek

arranged for our parties at Mammoth, and Mark Mirviss took care of arrangements at Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows. Also thanks to Brian Smith for the Kinder BBQ at the Bernard Cup. Jonathan Garey-Sage was the banner boy for the year, making sure that we had the banners identifying the program at every race course. Don Smith devoted a great deal of effort to produce an excellent nomination of Bob Bernard to the Skiers Hall of Fame (still no word).

Finally, congratulations to all of our Far West Season award and special award winners, and to our many racers who qualified for the Spyder National Team, Carol Levine the National Masters Woman of the Year, and Gaet DeMattei second overall in the World Masters FIS Cup, all of whom you can read about elsewhere in this newsletter. And of course-many thanks to Hamish Butler for his excellent work in putting out the newsletter.

Sadly my skis are covered with storage wax, but I'm already looking forward to next year's season, hopefully with lots of powder days.

Dan

Mammoth Season Finals

By Deb Lewis

The final event of the 2014-2015 Far West Masters race season wrapped up our warm-and-dry drought year with three days of beautiful weather and great course conditions at Mammoth Mountain. Mammoth's snowmaking and grooming wizards provided us with the foundation and the always efficient Mammoth Race Department put together an opening race day on Thursday with three SG races on the World Cup/ADG track. The track was firm but edgeable and there were plenty of smiles all day. On Friday we raced a long GS on the same track, with a high start at Redelsberger's Bump, on another lovely day with pleasant sunny conditions.

The final day of racing on Saturday was a SL on ADG (Andy's Double Gold) and there were positions in the season age class standings and overall gender rankings for next season's leader bibs at stake. The final men's rankings for season bibs 7-10 were all decided on the final day of racing, so there was some intense tactical strategizing and points computations in preparation for the final race runs on the 2015 season!

Far West Masters Scholarship Program

- by Sandy Hogan

Far West Masters Scholarship Program recipients: Where are they now?

Christie Higman grew up in South Lake Tahoe and skied for the Heavenly Ski Foundation for 10 years, receiving FWM scholarships from 1995-1999. After graduating from South Tahoe High School in 1999, she took a post-grad year to focus on ski racing. This was critical, as she was able to lower her points enough to earn an athletic scholarship to attend the University of Nevada, Reno in 2000. She skied 4 years for UNR, competed in NCAA championships in 2001, 02, and 03, and received "Academic All American" honors for maintaining above 3.8 GPA. She graduated from UNR in 2004 with a BA in English and Minor in Italian Studies.

While at UNR, Christie met her husband, Tom, who was on the Nordic Ski Team. They got married in 2006 in Tom's hometown of Truckee, and adventures together have included backpacking and back country skiing in the Eastern Sierras. They have two beautiful daughters, Eva (5 years old) and Maggie (3 years old), and are currently living in Reno and enjoy getting up to the mountains on weekends. They have introduced their children to both Alpine and Nordic skiing, and are waiting to see which wins out as the favorite!

After graduation from UNR, Christie coached for the Heavenly Ski Foundation, working mainly with U14 and U10-12 athletes. In 2007, she took a full-time position as Fund Development Coordinator for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northern Nevada, a non-profit mentoring organization in Reno, and held this position for 5 years, until her second daughter was born in 2012. At that point, she decided to go back to school for a Masters in Elementary Education, and she is currently student teaching and will graduate in May. She continues to be involved with Big Brothers Big Sisters as a volunteer. Christie has continued to coach U10-12 athletes part-time since moving to Reno, and for the past two seasons has coached for the Diamond Peak Ski Education Foundation.

In what little spare time she has, she has been co-writing, illustrating, and self-publishing a children's book series with a childhood friend, called "The Crazy Club" series. The stories are based on adventures and

friendships growing up in a mountain town. One of the future books in the series will be about ski racing!

Christie states, "I am certain my life would be quite different if I had not gone as far as I did in ski racing. I have the Far West Masters to thank for making that possible through their scholarship program!" And we are very proud of this accomplished young woman, also!

Squaw Valley Bernard Cup

The 2015 Bernard Cup races at Squaw Valley were moved from the traditional venue at the Exhibition race arena up to Racer's run on the upper mountain where snow conditions provided good racing. Saturday's two SL races were held in nearly perfect spring conditions that made jackets optional for most of the day. The course provided rolling terrain with an outstanding racing surface, holding up beautifully all day despite the warm weather.

Sunday's weather brought in a small cold front with clouds and light showers. Unfortunately, it also brought high winds that forced closure of the lifts accessing the race run. After jury and crew went up to check the conditions, the GS race was cancelled due to lack of access to the course.

The Bernard Cup is awarded to the top man and woman racer based on an age-handicapped scoring of the weekend's races. The 2015 Bernard Cup winners were Deb Lewis (W08) and Kurt Belden (M07).

Mt. Rose McKinney Cup

The annual McKinney Cup GS races were held at Mt. Rose in lovely spring racing conditions. Despite the warm and sunny weather the course conditions held up well through two days of challenging racing.

An early start ensured the first run was held while the track was firm, while providing enough time to get the second run in despite rapid warming through the day. Saturday's post-race party was highlighted by the presence of Tamara McKinney, just returning from the U18 national championships at Copper with her ski-racing daughter. The appreciative crowd of masters racers enjoyed her remarks about ski racing and her family, with some great anecdotes about her early days skiing at Mt Rose.

Sunday's awards wrapped up the weekend with the presentation of the McKinney Cup to the fastest man and woman racer for the weekend. The 2015 McKinney Cup winners are Annette Mirviss (W06), and repeat champion Mike Shklovski (M03), whose powerful skiing over both days edged out runner up Ryan Ritchie.

Far West Masters Scholarship Program

- by Sandy Hogan

Far West Masters Scholarship Program recipients: Where are they now?

Jamie Pettigrew received FWM scholarships in 1996, 1998, and 1999, which allowed her to attend more races to lower her points to achieve her racing goals. At Mammoth High School, she faced a difficult decision: pursue the dream of going to the Olympics, or go to college and open new doors.



With low points, Jamie was offered full ride scholarships to many colleges, but she still wanted to race speed events, lower her points and make it on the US Ski Team. At the University of New Mexico, Jamie skied on their NCAA Division I team. As a “speed girl”, she was ranked top 13 in the nation in downhill and twenty something in Super G, but not highly in tech events, so she studied hard and raced for 1 year, but realized she could always ski but it was time to focus on school.

Jamie grew up playing soccer in the off season from ski racing, so she moved to Los Angeles, attended Santa Monica College, and played soccer for two years. She knew that she wanted to become a nurse, and after completing nursing prerequisites at SMC moved to Reno. Jamie graduated from UNR with a Bachelors of Science in Nursing, and a minor with certificate in Substance Abuse Counseling, Prevention and Treatment. After working in the Emergency Room at Renown for a brief time, she moved back to LA.

For the past eight years, Jamie has worked as a registered nurse at UCLA Medical, initially in the heart/lung transplant unit for adults. As an “adrenaline junky at heart”, she transferred to the Emergency Department and worked there for about 2 years, learning more about critical care. As she always loved children, she transferred to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, trained in Pediatric Cardio/Thoracic Nursing, and has worked full time in the PICU for the past 6 years.

Most recently, she is the newest member of the UCLA Pediatric Critical Care Transport Team, flying in helicopters and airplanes in addition to ambulance transport. She currently works for the float pool department at UCLA in multiple departments, depending on needs. She can work in the Emergency department, PICU, Neonatal ICU and the critical care transport team.



In addition to the career she loves, she travels, skis, trains for marathons and continues to stay active. Jamie is another fine example of our Far West Masters Scholarship Program alumni, and hopefully we’ll see her race with us one of these days as a Masters racer!

Summer Board Meeting

The Summer Board Meeting will be held on July 18 at Dan Simmons residence in Tahoe Donner, with opportunities for hiking, biking and perhaps golf.



Far West Nationals Results

Thirty-two racers from Far West traveled to Sun Valley ID the week of March 15-20 for the 2015 Phillips 66 National Championships.

The week's racing opened with Super-Combined (SC) races for the C/D and A/B groups on Monday and Tuesday, respectively. With overnight temperatures not reaching freezing, the Sun Valley race crew was faced with a major challenge to prepare the SG and SL track on Warm Springs. Thanks to a lot of hard work the crew was able to stabilize the course and we had two exciting days of successful SC racing to open the championship week. Although the SC is not counted in scoring for class combined national champions, it is included in both Divisions Cup and the Spyder national masters team rankings, so points as well as pride were on the line for the 200+ racers competing at nationals.

Cooler overnight temperatures were a welcome change on Tuesday evening, with Wednesday's SG race contested by all groups under classic Sun Valley sunny skies and a firm track on Warm Springs that provided a consistent race surface for all competitors. Good weather continued for Thursday's GS races, with the C/D groups racing one last time on Warm Springs while the A/B men moved to neighboring Hemingway/Greyhawk. Friday's final day of racing was a SL carnival with groups rotating among three separate courses on Hemingway and Cozy, with firm conditions for all.

Far West Masters were well-represented on the podium all week, with 16 of our 32 team members winning medals and four named to the 2016 Spyder national masters team: Carol Levine (W09), Linda Crowell (W08), Pierre Jeangirard (M08), and Ara Papazian (M05).



Congratulations

Special congratulations to Gaetano DeMattei who finished second at the FIS Masters Cup at Aspen/Buttermilk, and to Carol Levine who was named USSA Masters Woman of the year following her outstanding results at Sun Valley, first place in all four events.

Summer events

Emily Andrews is planning a summer ride on August 22nd to celebrate her 60th Birthday and would like to extend an open invitation to all FWM bicycling fans and friends.

“The course will be a fun leisure ride including six passes. You can ride one pass, six passes or no passes. The no pass ride is part of the NO PASS SOCIETY which rides around the Markleeville, Woodfords and Diamond Valley area.

The ride will start around 6:30am and start up the West side of Monitor and down the East side. Turn around and ride back up Monitor to the Ebbetts Pass. Up the West side of Ebbetts down to Hermit Valley and up to Pacific Grade Summit and down the west side. Back to the top of Ebbetts and down to the Intersection of Monitor and Ebbetts. Don't worry, we will try not to get lost!

I will have sag support, extra water, and provide snacks. If you get tired we will put you in the car and haul you up to the top. Cheating is okay on this ride! LOL

Drinks and more food after the ride!
Party afterwards in Reno.

Please join me for the celebration, send an email for more information and training rides this Spring and Summer 2015 emily@saturnnet.com

See you on the Pass on two wheels!

Emily Andrews”

