

# FAR WEST MASTERS SKI RACING



## THE FORERUNNER MARCH 4, 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](https://masters.AdminSkiRacing.com/farwest)
- USSA Alpine Masters membership: [Masters Getting Started: us skiandsnowboard.org](https://MastersGettingStarted.us skiandsnowboard.org)
- First time racers get a temporary bib.
- Questions? Contact [membership@farwestmasters.org](mailto:membership@farwestmasters.org)

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### President's Message: Almost to the finish!

It was a very slow start to the season around here, but now March is "in like a lion" with this major storm. And, some really fun races coming up this month and next.

Speaking of which, I hope you got to see and experience the World Cup event at Palisades Tahoe, February 24-25th! And, great weather this year!

Personally, I was helping out on the training hill and "warm up" courses, getting to watch these amazing athletes in action. Mind-boggling how good these guys are! My favorite takeaway was riding the lift several times with American Isaiah Nelson and getting to know him. He's originally from Buck Hill Minnesota, and currently in his first full year on the World Cup. He described how winning the Nor-Am series was so different than racing on the World Cup. "It's a whole different level and has been a struggle for me this year," as he described it. I'll be watching and rooting for him. Seems like a great kid!

Several of our FW Masters were volunteers in different capacities at the World Cup, and thanks to all of them for their work. Couldn't do these big events without a large corps of volunteers.

And thanks to the members of our Masters who also volunteer to do a lot to keep this sport alive for us "older" kids!

See you at the Races!

- Rees



Rees and French World Cup racer Victor Muffat-Jeandet

Rees Palermo



Tough hill, great crowd

Rees Palermo



Some Swiss guy admiring the beautiful Palisades

Rees Palermo

## Upcoming races and parties

### Diamond Peak race update from Coach Ryan Ritchie

Diamond Peak is looking forward to hosting the Far West Masters slalom races March 16-17! We are already prepping a start area to give us a really fun and challenging course (get your left leg ready for the sidehill!). Our north-facing snow surface has been magnificent, with very firm, grippy and responsive snow.

Keep an eye out for details about a guest drop-in day on Thursday the 14th. Just in case you want a little taste of our hill before the big weekend...

### Awards Party at Alpine Meadows on March 8

There will be an awards party after the second Alpine Meadows slalom on March 8 from 3-5 in the room above the cafeteria. We'll have pizza and veggie platters for everyone to snack on.

### Awards Party at Mt. Rose on March 9

We will have an awards party after the Mt Rose race in the Winters Creek Lodge.

### End of Season Banquet and Raffle at Palisades April 6

Our first End of Season Banquet since 2019 will happen after the Palisades GS on Saturday, April 6. We will have speeches from Scholarship recipients, a silent auction, and dinner. Look for more details about this event, a list of silent auction items, and how to bid on the silent auction in the next newsletter. (Note: Parking reservations currently not required for the April 5-6 races at Palisades.)



In the start area of the January 21 Mammoth race 📷 Hamish Butler

All rules are in the [2024 Alpine Competition Guide](https://usskiandsnowboard.org/sites/default/files/files-resources/files/2023/2024_Alpine_Guide.pdf):  
[https://usskiandsnowboard.org/sites/default/files/files-resources/files/2023/2024\\_Alpine\\_Guide.pdf](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):  
[https://usskiandsnowboard.org/sites/default/files/files-resources/files/2023/Masters\\_Book.pdf](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<br>(Canceled)                      | Mammoth Mountain, CA | Masters race camp  | GS and SL                                 |
| December 2-3<br>(Canceled)                        | Mammoth Mountain, CA | Dave McCoy Memorial  | GS / SL                                   |
| January 20-23<br>[Sat-Tue]<br>January 21<br>[Sun] | Mammoth Mountain, CA | Mammoth Speed Races<br>DH National Championship & Speed Series | SGx2<br>SGx2<br>DH(t)x2<br>DHx2<br>GSx2   |
| February 5-10<br>[Mon-Sat]                        | Granite Peak, WI     | Masters National Championships                                 | SG / GS / SL<br>+ AC or Parallel<br>(tbd) |
| Feb. 24-25  | Palisades World Cup  |  | Men GS / SL                               |
| February 22-25<br>[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<br>+ FMC GS                  |
| March 8 [Fri]                                     | Alpine Meadows, CA   |  | SLx2                                      |
| March 9 [Sat]<br>(rescheduled)                    | Mt. Rose, NV         | McKinney Cup   | GSx2                                      |
| 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<br>Bernard Cup                         | GS/ GS                                    |

The schedule is subject to change, for the latest go to [farwestmasters.org/schedule](https://farwestmasters.org/schedule).

**Registration:** Far West Masters membership signup and race entries are available on AdminSkiRacing:  
[masters.adminskiracing.com/farwest](https://masters.adminskiracing.com/farwest)



## Granite Peak Nationals Report by Scott Malmsten

Wow, who would have thought a National Masters event in the central region would have turned out to be such a success? Although I am a bit biased, since I did move from Minnesota last season. Yes, there are no mountains in the mid-west, but there is still great skiing in Wausau, Wisconsin. Driving into Wausau at night, you see Granite Peak's lights brightly display the various ski runs from anywhere within Wausau.

Having National's was a first for Midwest Masters, but as with any Masters National's event, mother nature always presents its challenges. The attempt to run both the Super G and SL at the same time did have its challenges. The SL hill just was not going to work. I found with each slip the hill was progressively getting worse. So, the jury decided not to use that hill for any further events. All events were now going to occur on one hill - Exhibition.

Exhibition is Granite Peak's main race hill, the start shack is heated and insulated, but can only accommodate one racer at a time. The weather for this week was about 20 degrees warmer than normal. At night, the hill would freeze up and with Thursday nights rain created a "World Cup" water injected like surface, the iciest conditions on which I have ever raced. The hill did hold up well and periodic course slipping did not really help. The Super-G race was two runs versus the normal one run per race. To add some interesting terrain, Granite Peak added a few small rollers at the bottom of the pitch, just enough to hide the next gate. Everyone liked this hill feature which added a little more challenge to the hill.

New to Masters Nationals this year was the addition of the Parallel GS races. Although separately timed, Granite Peak's race staff created a head-to-head race start, which racers did their best to kick out of the start at the same time. Although it is a GS race, many racers used SL skis to run the course, me included. The set was about 17 meters. A few racers did not like the icy conditions and a few more chose not to start. For this race, you needed to qualify to continue. It was definitely a lot of fun but did take all day to complete.

The after-race events highlighted Wausau quite well. Each had a display of event champions on the podium. The Velvetten Plum had a roof top experience with night views of the ski hill off in the distance. The Great Dane Pub & Brewing Co had locally brewed favorites. The Granite Peak Chalet, although in tight quarters, had

a nice apres-ski atmosphere. And of course, the El Tequila Salsa Mexican Restaurant was just across the street from the Hilton Hotel.

Overall, this was a successful event with minimal race interruptions and for me it was great seeing all my Midwest friends again.

Our Far west participants were:

- Ara Papazian
- Deb Lewis
- Don Smith
- Kenneth Bailey
- Scott Malmsten
- Vera Savage

Check out the US Alpine Masters site for results:

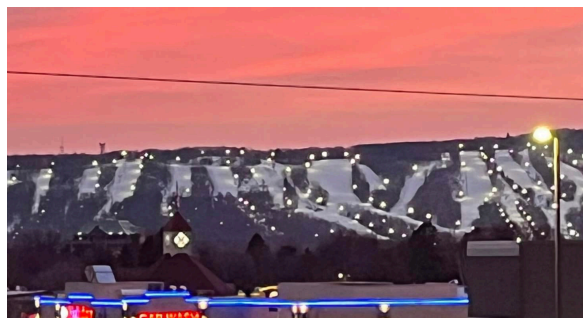
<https://usalpinemasters.org/2024/nationals>

If you'd like to see what Exhibition looks like:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VYycHgVB9ss&t=5s&pp=ygUcZ3Jhbml0ZSBwZWFrIGV4aGliaXRpb24gaGlzA%3D%3D>



The women of Granite Peak Nationals Vera Savage



Granite Peak at night Vera Savage



Granite Peak Nationals start gate Vera Savage

## Beaver Creek report: Mike Braun

Another great event at Beaver Creek last month for the FIS Masters Cup/Western Regionals. This was the third year in a row for the event, and it never gets old, with great conditions, blue skies, and warm afternoon temps. Put that all together and it equals a spectacular week of racing!

We had a strong showing of racers from Far West who made the trek, including Ingrid Braun, Mike Braun, Bob Davis, Deb Lewis, Scott Malmsten, Erik Nelson, Damian Palfini, Liesl Panke, Ara Papazian, Vera Savage, Dan Simmons, Don Smith, and Randall Sussek. The age groups were stacked with North American, South American, European, and Canadian talent. A high level of talent at that, especially in the largest group of competitors in the M08, Men's 60-64.

Some great racing by our members and too many podiums to mention, but I would be remiss if I didn't give a shout out to our Western Regional Champions for their age group (across all categories). They include: Erik Nelson M03, Ara Papazian M07, Vera Savage W06, Ingrid Braun W07, and Deb Lewis W09.

We are waiting patiently to hear where this event goes in 2025, but there is an unconfirmed rumor of Big Sky, Montana. Another spectacular venue that you won't want to miss...stay tuned!



Mike Braun kicking out of the start at Beaver Creek

Mike Braun

## Beaver Creek report: Dan Simmons

In a word, Terrific. This was truly an international event with competitors from Chile, Argentina, Netherlands, Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Canada, Switzerland, Sweden, Japan, and the United States.

Wednesday started under cloudy skies and cold temperatures with a super G fundamentals clinic with four sections: starting, a drill jumping over bamboo poles (challenging on long skinny skis) a gliding portion, and a section of five gates over a roller near the end of the course. Each section had a coach. A good warm-up for the next couple of days.

Thursday greeted us with four inches of new Rocky Mountain powder, which the crew and competitors easily slipped off the course for two SG training runs on a terrific SG venue for masters. That was followed on Friday with two SG races under sunny skies and temperatures in the mid-20's, which kept the snow perfect for racing. Liesl Panke fell at the finish of SG1 and injured her wrist. After Don Smith helped her tape it on the chairlift, Liesl went on to win the women's group C in the second SG.

Several other Far West Masters stood on the SG podium in SG1 and SG2: Deb Lewis (W9) 1,1, Vera Savage (W6) 2, 1 (and 3 overall in group C both races), Don Smith (M12) 2, 2, Dan Simmons (M11) 2, 3, Bob Davis (M10) 2, 2, Mike Braun (M8) 3 (and 3 overall in class B in SG1), Erik Nelson (M3) 1, 1, Ara Papazian (M7) 3. And Damian Palfini (M4) 3.

Under sunny skies and temperatures in the higher 20's (again perfect snow conditions, we had two one run GS races on the same track as the Super G. A challenging course with a steep final pitch encountered with burning thighs and heaving lings. Far West Masters once again achieved multiple podiums.

Sunday dawned a little warmer, but once again perfect snow conditions for the slalom. The larger class B men raced on one course and the class A men and women class C raced on the other. Again multiple Far West Masters stood on the podium

In the overall Western Regionals standings by class Ara Papazian was 5th (M7), Damian Palfini 3rd (M4), Erik Nelson 1st (M3), Don Smith 2nd (M12), Dan Simmons 2nd (M11), Bob Davis 2nd (M10), Scott Malmsten 6th (M9), Mike Braun 5th (t) (M8), Deb Lewis 1st (W9), Ingrid Braun 1st (W7), Liesl Panke 2nd (W7), Vera Savage 1st (W6).

Full results are at <https://usalpinemasters.org/2024/wr>



## Beaver Creek FIS Masters Cup/Western Regionals: photos



Deb Lewis and Don Smith

Mike Braun



Ingrid Braun

Mike Braun



Women's SG podium, with FW racer Deb Lewis taking the win!

Mike Braun



Men's SG podium, with FW racer Mike Braun in third!

Mike Braun



Men's GS podium, with FW racer Ara Papazian in second!

Mike Braun



## Coach's corner: Pierre Jeangirard

### Mammoth Mountain Masters

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In the last Forerunner, I discussed awareness of fore and aft and creating angles to arc your skis.

Now it's time to think about letting the ski do the work past the gate, and not forcing it across the hill. You're not extending the outside leg anymore, but flexing it and letting the side cut of the skis do the work for you. This means the skis have to be on edge as you finish your turn. You should also be moving forward from the hips in the transition, not by pushing yourself off the ski.

To keep from forcing the turn, you should be getting on the new edge without changing direction at the transition (no steering). That will let you be more progressive on developing edge angles and pressure, allowing you to have most of your pressure and angles done above the gate.

## Coach's corner: Seeing the Line for Slalom

### Steve Lehr, Palisades Tahoe Masters

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*Steve Lehr is on the coaching staff of Palisades Tahoe Masters. He has PSIA Level 3 and USSA 200 certifications.*

I was working with a group of racers when we began to discuss finding a faster line on the course. We happened to be training slalom. The discussion moved to that common statement coaches make about "keeping your vision down the hill" and "looking to the next gate or gates". Yes, that's good advice. It's always good to know where you are going. Let's investigate this a little more.

Seeing "the line" through the slalom course is extremely important. Seeing the line through each slalom pole is even more important.

In slalom, the shortest line is when the upper body travels inside the pole while your skis arc around the outside of the pole. The closer the skis are to the pole the shorter the line the skis travel. To get the skis nearer the pole you need to see inside the pole. The further inside the pole you see your line the closer the skis will be to the pole. This also means that your contact hand will move further from the center line of the body.

Try this at home.

Place yourself in a standard doorway. Stand with your right hip and shoulder against the right side of the doorframe. Stand with your ankles somewhat flexed

and feet about shoulder width apart. Now start taking small side steps to the left with your left foot then your right foot. Feel your hip and shoulder slide down the doorframe with each step. Stop taking steps when your left foot touches the left doorframe. At this point adjust your feet to again be about shoulder width apart.

Now hold your left hand in front of your chest as if you are contacting a slalom pole. Notice how far your feet are outside of the pole and just the right side of your upper body is taking the inside line. See photo A.



Photo A

Move the pole further to the left. See photo B. By seeing more inside the pole your feet can be closer to the pole and you shorten the line.



Photo B

Typically, the more your contact hand is closer to the center line of the body the less the angulation. The more your contact hand is toward the outside, the more the angulation. As with all good skiing, you must be on the outside ski and angulate for increased edge and balance.

By seeing your line further inside the pole you can reduce the distance your skis travel in the slalom course. This should make for faster runs.

## Current scholarship recipient update: Evi Barber

Evi is a first year winner of the Far West Masters scholarship. She skis for Northstar and was able to attend the Masters Copper camp this fall. She will forerun at Diamond Peak.



Dear Far West Masters,  
Thank you so much for the training opportunity in Copper and the scholarship money. The camp was truly amazing and the \$400 I received will be very helpful and help pay for my first FIS race in Snowking. I can't wait to see everyone on the hill and at the Master's races. I hope everyone has a great rest of their holiday season!  
Sincerely,  
Evi Barber

Dear Eddie and Barb,  
Thank you so much for such an amazing camp. Barb, you were so helpful with organizing everything around the condo and your food was delicious! Eddie, your expertise in running the camp was amazing and I loved all the dad jokes! I keep telling everyone back home that the Master's Copper camp was truly the best camp I've been to. It was so fun and productive, I miss being there already. I hope to see you guys soon.  
Thank you,  
Evi Barber

## Current scholarship recipient update: Bobbi Jo Griffin

Bobbi Jo Griffin has been a Far West Masters Scholarship winner for many years. She is a FIS athlete and has been very successful. She was picked to travel to Europe with the US Ski Team to race Europa cup races. Our program helped pay for that trip!



Masters

Thank you so much for the extra support. Being invited out to Europe to race EuropaCups is a huge step in my career. Your support in making this trip possible. I appreciate the extra support to make this trip happen. Thank you once again!  
-Bobbi Jo

To donate to the Far West Masters Scholarship program, go to: [farwestmasters.org/scholarship\\_program](https://farwestmasters.org/scholarship_program)



In the start area of the January 21 Mammoth race

Hamish Butler

## Additional North Tahoe racing

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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](mailto: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

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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](https://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](mailto: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

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**At this time, 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.

## Season scoring & Open class

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Far West Masters races are conducted following the standard US masters age class rules. An additional option is used by Far West Masters in our division races, allowing competitors to elect to be scored in an Open class drawn from all age classes rather than their age class for race awards and season scoring.

All competitors start within their age group in the race start order but may elect to be scored for race awards based on the overall ranking of Open class participants rather than within their age class. The season leader bibs are awarded based on the rankings of the Open class.

Note: due to limited racing in the 2023 "snowpocalypse" season, the 2023 season leader bibs are carried over for 2024 so that competitors have a chance to wear the season bibs they earned with their season results in 2022!

The 2024 Open class elections list is started with all current season bib holders registered by default. Everyone else (including "the usual folks") need to explicitly elect to participate in Open class. It's your choice - no one is obligated or expected to elect Open class - go Open if you'll have fun doing that, stay in your age class for scoring and awards if you're happy with the standard age class system.

- [FWM 2024 Open Class competitors](#)
- [FWM 2024 Season Scoring and Open Class rules](#)

To elect Open class, contact scoring director Deb Lewis at [dlewis@farwestmasters.org](mailto:dlewis@farwestmasters.org). Open class participants will be noted on start lists with "OP" designation and when possible on the finish board so that all competitors know who is competing within their age class and who is being scored in the overall Open class.



## Be a race official

Any member can learn to be a race official. Contact Lead Official Mark Mirviss & find info here: [fwskiing.org/content/far-west-officials-page](https://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 events, USSA Masters and FIS Masters (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 include profiles in the newsletter. 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 this season, effective June 1, 2023. New positions are noted in the list.

|                         |               |  |                        |
|-------------------------|---------------|--|------------------------|
| President               | Rees Palermo  | <a href="mailto:president@farwestmasters.org">president@farwestmasters.org</a>   | new for 23-24          |
| Past President          | Ray Tulloch   |  |                        |
| Officials               | Mark Mirviss  | <a href="mailto:mmirviss@farwestmasters.org">mmirviss@farwestmasters.org</a>     |                        |
| Race Scheduling         | Mike Braun    |  |                        |
| Membership              | Mary Feddis   | <a href="mailto:membership@farwestmasters.org">membership@farwestmasters.org</a> |                        |
| Communications          | Melissa House | <a href="mailto:forerunner@farwestmasters.org">forerunner@farwestmasters.org</a> | 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     | <a href="mailto:dlewis@farwestmasters.org">dlewis@farwestmasters.org</a>         |                        |



The January 21 Mammoth course

 Hamish Butler