

ALPINE MASTERS SERIES



News and Information
of the Alpine Masters

autumn 2015

www.ussa.org/masters

Making Pressure Your Friend in GS

Pressure in the start house is usually not welcome, but pressure while skiing is prerequisite to turn. We can pressure the tip, tail, underneath foot, as well as adjust pressure from ski to ski. Pressure is increased with higher speeds and can be created by leg extension, reducing the turn radius. All pressure movements are in the sagittal plane. Edging, the close cousin of pressure, is from lateral movements in the frontal plane. The ankle, knee, hip and entire body move sideways to create edging. Moving in two different planes which are perpendicular to each other creates distinct and unique actions. Understanding and appreciating each will help to clarify how they affect the ski turn. Ultimately your choice in ski selection and the line you ski in the race course is a product of these two interrelated skills.

Edging is easy to see and not difficult to achieve with modern skis. This rapport with edging has created an obsession among ski racers for high edge angles. While high edge angles are usually advantageous, they are irrelevant without pressure. This ski/snow interaction is the decisive piece in the ski turn puzzle.

Even to the most trained eye, seeing pressure can be imperceptible and definitely unexciting. When was the last time you looked at a photo and said "Wow, look at that pressure!?" With this in mind, let's take a look at how we can use an understanding of pressure to an advantage in the race course.

Pressure comes from the snow

While we feel an outward pull during the turn, it is actually the pressure of the snow pushing back on the ski that makes the skier turn. Pressure is a force per unit area. If your foot gets stepped

on by guy wearing a running shoe it may hurt, although it would hurt much more if he had on a high heel stiletto (not to mention the social implications). Tipping the



The snow pushing back on Ted Ligety on his way to World Championship gold in Schladming.

ski up on edge will make the ski go from running shoe pressure to stiletto pressure...same weight, less surface area, therefore, more pressure.

Pressure is the ski racer's friend. Managing pressure, as opposed to manhandling pressure through the turn, is a less frustrating and more fruitful option. Focus on the snow and how you can cultivate the pres-

sure from the snow. Remember, more is not always better. Don't try to make Ted's 50 mph angles to create pressure when you are traveling 30 mph. You may have less speed than Ted, but you probably have more sidecut radius in which to accomplish the task.

Line will be dictated by your capabilities and the tool you have selected that is strapped to your boots. How we interact with pressure is a key to a good line and the secret of going fast.

Edge, then pressure

The skills of edging and pressure are so intertwined they could end up in a Hollywood tabloid. Separating their individual contributions to the turn is important. This allows us to control the order of the two movements in the ski turn recipe. Specifically, edging the ski first, then pressuring the ski. This will allow the ski to excavate just enough snow to create the platform that will push back on the ski creating the turn. When performed perfectly, this crucial order is imperceptible.

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Racing for the Future

by Lisa Densmore Ballard, Chair,
USSA National Masters Committee



First, a big thank you to Steve Slivinski, who served as chair of the USSA National Masters Committee for the last half-decade. Next time you see him rip down a race course, please cheer a little more loudly for "Sly" as he flies by.

I'm honored and excited to be your new Masters committee chair and promise to bring the same energy and passion to the position as I feel in the starting gate. When

Steve handed me the reins of the committee at the 2015 Phillips 66 U.S. Alpine Masters Championships in Sun Valley, I promised to make two things a priority: increasing the number of Masters racers across the United States, especially among the younger age groups, and holding topnotch events into the foreseeable future for all of us. After the Nationals, I drafted a nine-page document called, "A Vision for USSA Alpine Masters Ski Racing." It was circulated around USSA's management and the Masters division chairs, and is still posted on www.USSAMasters.org. Please read it when you have a moment, and let me know your thoughts.

We've already accomplished quite a few things in the Vision Statement, thanks to the excellent input and enthusiasm of your division chairs; other volunteers such as Deb Lewis, Esther Della Quadri and Bob Davis; and the USSA staff, especially long-time Masters Manager Bill Skinner. Bill works hard for all of us every day.

Among the changes that excite me: membership in USSA is now only \$90, and there are unlimited \$15/day short-term memberships available online. So tell you friends, especially those who might want to try it without a big commitment or who dropped out of ski racing but still harbor a need for speed now and again. If they are a USSA-certified ski coach, they can get continuing education credit for racing!

We're planning to get the word out about Masters racing with ramped up social media efforts and pre- and post-event press releases within each division. We're also looking at ways to recruit new Masters racers from NASTAR (which is now part of USSA) and

from among USCSA college teams and clubs. Notice I said, "we." The more of you who become my teammates in this effort, the better for Masters racing in general. Thanks for being a Masters racer!

Hopefully, that *El Niño* building off the west coast will dump lots of snow on us this winter (but not on race days). I'm looking forward to racing with you soon, perhaps at Red Lodge's Dust-the-Rust-Off Camp and Masters GS's in December, at an event in your division, and for sure at the national championships at Big Sky, Montana. Ski fast!

USSA Coaches—compete in a Masters ski race and earn a quarter point a year towards your recertification! And you can add a Masters membership to your Coach's at no cost. Just call the Membership Hotline 435.647.2666

The 2016 Schedule Poster is Here!

Track all the upcoming events and show your support for Masters ski racing. Contact your division chairman or pick up some posters at your first race and spread them around!



Masters Membership News

by Bill Skinner, USSA Masters Manager



Of big importance to me: I moved out of the gruesome class 7 to high hopes in class 8. They were waiting for me in Chile where Big Bob Davis and Canadian Mike Robbins spanked my hiney in both SL and SG. Such is Masters racing.

As you have noted, we have a new Masters chairperson. I would like to thank Steve Slivinski for keeping the Masters wagon running smoothly through his tenure. Steve was our steady leader for seven years, pulling us along during the depths of the recession and kept our sport alive and well. Hats off the Slivinski and shake his hand at the finish as he continues to race.

Taking over is Lisa Densmore Ballard, an active leader that has already put a spark into our sport. Lisa has surrounded herself with some younger—some older—motivated fellow racers with new ideas that will reinforce our sport going forward.

In the trenches, we have our division leaders that carry on the day-to-day work of local race organization, as well as competing themselves. A few have stepped back—thank you, Amy Lanzel and Ann Ozuna for your effort and leadership in Intermountain and PNSA. Welcome aboard, Stew Marsh, Francis Noel and Bob Cravens.

Our division schedules are full for 2016 and with the major championship events at Big Sky, Okemo and Aspen, this would be a good year to have a "great one." All we need is snow, and I will see you at the start.

2016 Alpine Masters Schedules (Subject to change)

Alaska Alpine Masters

Jan. 2 Alyeska GS
 Jan. 23 Alyeska GS
 Feb. 6 Alyeska GS
 Feb. 20 Alyeska SL
 Feb. 27 Alyeska SL
 Mar. 5 Alyeska SL
 Mar. 26 Alyeska GS
 Info: Gary Randall 907.242.2927

Central Alpine Masters

Nov. 15-18 Koznick Fall Camp
 Copper Mtn, CO
 Dec. 19-20 Afton Alps 3SL/3GS
 Jan. 9-10 Spirit Mtn. 2SL/3GS
 Jan. 14-18 Ski Cooper .2DH/SG/GS/SL

Central/Southern Championships

Feb. 19-21 Granite Peak 2GS/2GS/2SL
 Feb. 22-23 Buck Hill GS/GS
 Feb. 29-Mar.2 Buck Hill GS/GS/GS
 Mar. 7-9 Buck Hill SL/SL/SL

Central/Northern Regional Championships

Mar. 12-13 Spirit Mtn. 2GS/2SL
 Info: program.director@midwestmasters.org
 www.midwestmasters.org

New England Masters/Sise Cup

Dec. 12-13 Killington GS/SL
 Jan. 9-10 Sunapee GS/SL
 Jan. 16-17 Middlebury SL/GS
 Jan. 21-23 Stratton SG/SG/GS
 Jan. 24 Bromley SL
 Jan. 30-31 Shawnee Peak SL/GS
 Feb. 6-7 Ragged Mtn. SL/GS
 Feb. 20 Cannon SL

Eastern Championships

Feb. 24-28 Okemo DH/SG/GS
 Feb. 27 Suicide Six SL

Sise Cup Finals

Mar. 5-6 Waterville .GS/SL Banquet
 Info: nemasters.org

New York Masters

Jan. 3 Swain GS/SL
 Feb. 13 Hunt Hallow GS/GS

Eastern Championships

Feb. 24-28 Okemo DH/SG/GS/SL
 Feb. 28 Swain GS/SL
 Info: Jack Eisenschmid 585.288.4554
 www.nymasters.org

Southern Masters (SARA)

Dec. 20 Bryce Resort GS
 Dec. 29-30 Sugar Mtn. SL/GS
 Jan. 9-10 Bryce Resort SL
 Jan. 23-14 Sugar Mtn. SL/GS
 Jan. 30-31 Snowshoe, WV SL/GS
 Feb. 6-7 Wintergreen GS/SL
 Feb. 20-21 Timberline GS/SL
 Info Contact: Horst Locher 540.856.2121
 www.skisara.org

Far West Masters

Nov. 30-Dec. 4 Mammoth Camp
 Dec. 5-6 Mammoth GS/GS
 Dec. 19-20 Alpine Meadows SL/SL
 Jan. 8-10 Heavenly 2SL/2GS
 Jan. 23-24 Sugarbowl SL/SL
 Feb. 20-21 Squaw Valley 2SL/GS
 Feb. 27-28 Mammoth SG/SG
 Mar. 4 Northstar SG/SG
 Mar. 5-6 Mt Rose GS/GS

Far West Finals

Mar. 31-Apr. 2 . Mammoth SG/GS/SL/BBQ
 Info: Dan Simmons 530.587.4864
 www.farwestmasters.org

Intermountain Masters/ JANS Cup

Dec. 6 Red Lodge, MT GS/GS
 Dec. 13-14 Sun Valley GS/GS
 Jan. 9-10 Snowbasin SL/SL
 Jan. 22-24 Sun Valley 2SG/GS/SL
 Jan. 29-31 Park City 2SG/SL/GS
 Feb. 19-21 Nordic Valley GS/SL/GS
 Feb. 22-24 Soldier Mtn. trDH/3DH
 Feb. 26-28 Snow King, WY 3GS/SL
 Mar. 4-6 Snowbasin 2SG/GS/SL
 Info: Stew Marsh 385.315.4817
 www.intermountainmasters.org

Northern Masters

Dec. 2-5 Red Lodge . .Pre race camp
 Dec. 6 Red Lodge GS/GS
 Dec. 12-13 Sun Valley, ID GS/SL
 Jan. 22-24 Sun Valley, ID .2SG/GS/SL
 Feb. 25-28 Schweitzer, ID .3SG/GS/SL
 Feb. 26-28 Snow King, WY . .2GS/SL

National Championships

Mar. 14-19 Big Sky DH/SG/GS/SL
 Info: Fran Noel 406.586.5759

Pacific Northwest Masters

Dec. 19-21 Mt. Bachelor 2GS/GS
 Jan. 9-10 Crystal GS/GS
 Jan. 16-17 Summit at Snoq. . .GS/GS
 Feb. 13-14 Alpine/Snoq. 4SL
 Feb. 19-21 49 Degrees N . . .trSG/2SG
 Feb. 25-28 Schweitzer 3SG/GS/SL
 Mar. 5-6 Ski Bowl 2SL/GS
 Mar. 12-13 Stevens Pass GS/SG
 Apr. 7-10 Mt Bachelor SG/SG/GS/SL
 Info: Robert Cravens 541.419.3893
 www.pnsamasters.org

Rocky Mountain Masters

Dec. 5-6 Echo GS/SL
 Jan. 15-18 Ski Cooper 2DH/SG/SG/SL

FIS Masters Cup/ Western Champs

Feb. 4-7 Aspen SL/GS/GS/SL
 Feb. 8-9 Aspen DH/DH
 Mar. 11-13 Ski Cooper . . .trDH/4DH
 Mar. 26 Tricombi .SG/GS/SL 1 run
 Apr. 2-3 Breckenridge . . .2SG/GS
 Info: Lauren Beckos 267.496.1320
 www.rmmskiracing.org

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

Phillips 66 Masters National Championship

Mar. 14-19 . . . Big Sky, MT .DH/SG/GS/SL
 Bill Skinner 435.647.2633

Phillips 66 FIS Masters Cup/ Western Championships

Feb. 4-7 Aspen, CO . .SL/GS/GS/SG
 Scott Nichols 970.544.3005

Eastern Championships

Feb. 24-28 . Okemo/Suicide DH/SG/SL/GS
 Bill McCollom 802.234.9561

Summer Fun Nationals

July 16-17 Mt Hood, OR GS/SL
 Meri Stratton 541.490.5888

Phillips 66 National Speed Series

Jan. 15-17 Ski Cooper, CO . . .DH/SG
 Jan. 21 Stratton, VT SG/SG
 Jan. 29 Park City, UT SG/SG
 Feb. 7-9 Aspen, CO SG/SG/DH
 Feb. 19-21 49 Degrees N, WA .SG/SG
 Feb. 22-24 Soldier Mt., ID . . .DH/DH
 Feb. 25-26 Schweitzer, ID SG/SG
 Feb. 24-27 Okemo, VT DH/SG
 Mar. 15-17 Big Sky, MT (Nationals)
 DH/SG

Masters adult racing: Age class competition for skiers 18 years and older. For more information contact Bill Skinner at 435.647.2633 / Bskinner@ussa.org.

Schedules subject to change. For complete info on Masters Racing visit www.ussa.org/Masters.



Lauren Beckos at the Summer Fun Nationals

How to Master Selecting Your Race Ski

by Dave Brennan with Bill Skinner

“What’s the best race ski for me?” This question comes up a lot on the hill, in the shop and over a beer. But don’t expect an easy answer because it’s a process of evaluation—of your own technical ability and then the equipment.

Evaluate Your Skiing

Your individual skill set, conditioning and physical characteristics combine to determine what design specs will fit you the best. Rather than on brand or model, the emphasis should be on design specs because you’re trying to match these to your

- c. Should you make gear selection adjustments for your age or an injury?
- 3) *Confidence Factor*: On the race course, do you attack, park & ride, or slip & slide?
 - a. When you inspect, you look for areas that will allow you to create more speed.
 - b. During inspection, you’re looking for a comfortable line to run.
 - c. Looking at the course, you typically feel tentative about speed and line.
- 4) *Weight*: Energy to bend the ski is developed from your weight and speed.
 - a. Are your weight, strength and condi-

Ski Design 101: Reviewing the Basics

Design variables for ski geometry include length, width and thickness profile which, when combined with materials and construction type, determine the range of dynamic characteristics for flex and turn shape. “Range” is a qualifier noting that skier input—you bending the ski and changing edge angles—is a critical factor in producing turn shape.

Race Ski Design Categories for Masters

(See manufacturers’ listings in chart)

- 1) *Race Room /Race Stock Skis*: (Strict FIS Rule Specs for Length & Radius)
 - a. Not generally available at retail but possible to acquire from factory-sponsored athletes.
 - b. Flex patterns and stiffness vary greatly, typically specific to athlete’s needs, venue and conditions.
 - c. Not built to hold up under daily abuse of training and racing.
 - d. Designed for technically stronger, quicker, more flexible athletes (see #1 thru #3 above)
- 2) *Production Race Skis*: (FIS and non-FIS specifications. NOTE: Masters exempt from FIS ski design rules except SG lengths)
 - a. Overall geometry, flex patterns and stiffness are similar to Race Room skis.
 - b. Non-FIS models offer more turn-friendly options for Masters but a narrower selection of flexes.
 - c. Several Masters-specific ski designs are found in this category.
 - d. Compared to recreational race skis, they are typically narrower, stiffer and have less “shape”.
- 3) *Transitional Race Skis*: (This is an expanding category of U18/U16 production race skis)
 - a. Full-blown race skis designed to provide a transition from Non-FIS to FIS specs.
 - b. Overall geometry and flex patterns are similar to Race Room skis.
 - c. Key differences are shorter lengths, softer flexes and tighter turn radius profiles.
 - d. Well suited for smaller-framed, lighter-weight Masters and those needing to bend the ski more.
- 4) *Recreational Race Skis* (NASTAR®, Town Series/Beer Can Races)
 - a. Typically a little wider overall with more “shape” (shorter sidecut radius).



Ted Ligety displaying his 70° edge angle.

skiing. More often than not, the right specs for you will be offered by multiple manufacturers. Because skis can vary greatly in their “personality” (feel characteristics), make sure demoing is a big part of your plan.

Criteria to Evaluate Your Skiing

- 1) *Technical Ability*: It’s all about skier input—balance, pressuring the ski, edge angles and timing.
 - a. Consider your current and anticipated technical strengths for the coming season.
 - b. Where are you relative to mastering edge angles, ski pressure and timing?
 - c. Is your ability improving, staying the same, or slipping a bit?
- 2) *Conditioning*: What’s your physical fitness level? Athleticism, strength and agility play a big role.
 - a. Are your strength and flexibility where they need to be?
 - b. How’s your cardiovascular level?



The author showing an under-60° edge angle.

- tioning in relative proportion to one another?
- b. If not, should you make adjustments in the equipment specifications (length, flex, shape)?
- c. Weight + technical ability + conditioning = your ability to bend and control the ski.

- b. Initiates turns easier, generally more forgiving of input errors.
- c. Not designed to be skied aggressively with big edge angles on full-length courses.
- d. Good match for fun racing and for those Masters in "Criteria to Evaluate," #3c above.

Ski Design 201: Understanding Turn Radius

One of the most misunderstood ski design specs is the number marked on the top surface of race skis similar to this: >25 Meters (> symbol means greater than). This value represents the "sidecut radius¹" which theoretically is the maximum carved turn radius a particular ski can make. But it's often mistakenly interpreted as the "turn radius²".

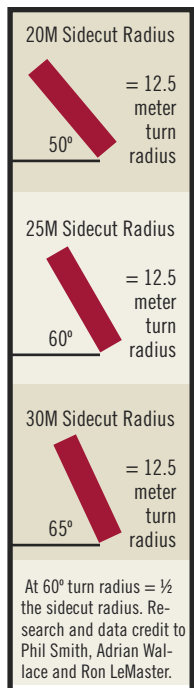
While "sidecut radius" is a fixed dimension, "turn radius" is a dynamic value influenced by skier input. As edge angles increase, turn radius shortens in response, eventually reaching the minimum carved turn radius a given ski can make. The illustration below shows the changing relationship between edge angle, sidecut radius and turn radius.

¹ Calculate sidecut radius: <http://member.fis-ski.com/skicalc.htm>
² Turn Radius = Side Cut Radius x cos (edge angle).

To put this in simple terms, turn radius varies as edge angle is applied to sidecut radius—when edge angle increases, turn radius gets shorter. In a lab environment, predicted turn radius can be calculated per degree of edge angle change. But in the real world, actual turn radius is impacted by continuously changing variables such as snow conditions, terrain, ski stiffness, and course offset, as well as a significant skier input

force—pressuring the ski. This all sounds complicated, so let's look at a practical example that could be useful when evaluating GS ski design specs.

Assume in a GS course the gates are 25 meters apart. At this distance it would require a 12.5-meter radius arc to maintain a "carved turn" between gates (half of a 25 meter circle). Applying the formula above, the math says a 12.5 meter turn can be made using a sidecut radius of 25 meters with an edge angle of 60°. But there's more than one right



Pick Your Best Ski

Brand	Model	Race Category	Length cm	Width mm	Sidecut Radius M
Atomic	Redster DD FIS GS	Men's FIS	195/190	65	35
Atomic	Redster DD FIS GS	Women's FIS	188/183	65	30
Atomic	Redster DD RS	Masters	191/183	68.5/67	27/23
Atomic	Redster DD GS	Transitional	187/180	65	26/24
Atomic	Redster DD GS	Transitional	173/166	65	20/18.1
Atomic	Redster DD XT	Recreational	182/175	65.5	16/15.5
Atomic	Redster DD GS	Non-FIS	184/178	71	18/17
Fischer	RC4 World Cup GS	Men's FIS	195/190	65	35
Fischer	RC4 World Cup GS	Women's FIS	188/183	65	30
Fischer	RC4 World Cup Masters	Masters	188/183	65	25/23
Fischer	RC4 World Cup	Transitional	180/175	65	23/22
Fischer	RC4 World Cup	Transitional	170/165	65	17/17
Fischer	RC4 World Cup RC Pro	Recreational	180/175	68	18/17
Head	WC Rebels iGS RD FIS	Men's FIS	195/190	65	35
Head	WC Rebels iGS RD FIS	Women's FIS	188/183	65	30
Head	WC Rebels iGS RD	Masters	186/181	65	25/25
Head	WC Rebels iGS RD	Transitional	176	65	23
Rossignol	Hero WC FIS R21	Men's FIS	195 ¹ /190	65	35
Rossignol	Hero WC FIS R21	Women's FIS	188/183	65	30
Rossignol	Hero R21 WC Master	Masters	185/180	71	23.1/21
Rossignol	Hero R21 WC Master	Masters	175/170	70	18/16
Rossignol	Hero FIS GS R21 Racing	Transitional	182/175	65	25/23
Völkl	Race Tiger GS WC	Men's FIS	196	65	35
Völkl	Race Tiger GS	Men's FIS	191 ²	65	35
Völkl	Race Tiger GS WC	Women's FIS	188	65	30
Völkl	Race Tiger GS	Women's FIS	183 ²	65	30
Völkl	Race Tiger GS	Masters	188/183	67.5	27.5/25
Völkl	Race Tiger GS	Transitional	176	65	23
Völkl	Race Tiger GS	Transitional	171/166	65	17/17

¹ Race Room ski ² One less layer of metal

The Ski Reps Offer Their Two Cents

Andrew Tiner, Atomic: "Consider geographic location—hill size, terrain and snow conditions—when determining your design specs."

Pearson Neal, Fischer: "The transitional category allows a lighter weight Master racer to get a full flex and smooth transition to the next turn without having too much pop or too little stability."

Andrew Couperthait, Head: "For better turn performance, underestimate your ability rather than overestimate when picking a GS race ski."

Jake Stevens, Rossignol: "Going shorter and softer is better if you need help creating early pressure and bigger edge angles at the top of the turn."

Chris Adams, Völkl: "Our 191 and 183 FIS skis are, by design, softer and will initiate turns easier so they could be very well suited for better Masters-level racers."

answer! The same 12.5-meter carved turn can be accomplished using a 20-meter sidecut radius at a 50° edge angle. A 30-meter sidecut radius ski will require a 65° edge angle. So sidecut radius choice is edge-angle dependent.

Understanding that edge angle acting on sidecut radius determines turn radius—knowing what *you* can consistently produce for edge angles—is a critical element of your technical proficiency evaluation. Matching your edge angle number with

the appropriate sidecut radius choice is vital to optimizing turn radius: too long a sidecut radius and you'll under-arc, too short a sidecut radius and you'll over-arc. A benchmark for measuring your own consistent edge angle development is that of top World Cup GS racers who can consistently get edge angles approaching 70°. Technically strong Masters racers may get angles greater than 60° but most are likely in the 60° and under range.

If the Boot Fits, It's No Accident

by Matt Schiller



Let me start out by saying there are many fitters and theories about the proper ski boot set-up out there, and the best fitter for you is one that listens and adapts your equipment to you. My goal at the newly-formed Park City Boot Room is to guide racers, pros and hard-core skiers to equipment that works for them while addressing possible boot-related deficiencies in their skiing. But more importantly, I want to address the entire ski/boot/binding interface and the need to adjust each set-up for the dynamics each discipline requires.

For some, the following guidelines are old news; for some it will be revolutionary... hopefully you are in the middle and this year can rethink your approach to equipment. Follow these essentials when seeking a new boot, consult a specialty boot fitter, stay on track and don't rush the decision. Bright and shiny new boots tend to leap onto people's feet without proper analysis.

Essential components to address:

Footbeds: This specialized, individual, custom foot platform needs to work with your foot shape and flexibility—or lack thereof. There is no absolute in this department, so make sure your bootfitter takes time on the front side, before the casting is made, to get a bit of measurements, movements, and manipulations of your foot. The goal is to support the entire underside of the foot and neutralize the excess movement.

They should have different blank, stock footbeds to choose from, each with a support and form characteristic. Then, depending on your foot's dynamic mobility, the boot choice, and volume inside the boot, each footbed can be "built up" with a varying degree of posting materials, from firm cork to lightweight foam—or nothing at all.

Boot choice: I could write a full weekly blog about what to look for in a new performance boot, nuances of different brands' shapes, benefits to designs and materials, etc....but lucky for you, other people do just that. Plus, each boot will be adjusted beyond the stock settings, anyway! My simple, core advice is to get your foot measured, not only in length, but also in width of forefoot, ankle circumference and

lower-leg profile. The last is most crucial in that much can be done for comfort to accommodate fore- and mid-foot shapes into plastic and foam (big toes, sixth toes, high insteps), but the ability of a boot to match the rear part of the foot (ankle, heel, lower shin, Achilles), and register as almost "uncomfortably snug" in this part of your foot, usually is a good place to



To get a perfect fit, it's more effective to take a grinder to the boot than to your foot.

start! If the ankle joint and its parts are well-contained, then the joint can activate the boot properly and flex/extend as technique and terrain dictate, without losing contact, energy or balance.

Fitting: I take immense pride in the plethora of tools and techniques I have to beat a plastic boot and its foam inner liner into submission, all in the name of a few millimeters. It takes time and careful skill, but just know that you do not have to suffer with red, inflamed boney parts or cold, numb appendages in a specialty boot shop. More than likely, a good boot shop can relieve most of the "tension" a new boot presents, and following up after a few long days on snow should solve the rest.

Stance and balance: Whenever I teach boot fitting clinics, talk to high level instructors or share video clips of elite racers, 99% of the root of all the boot questions are directed toward knee alignment. Knee alignment is one small tweak to the overall stance and balance system. There are no extra points to get your knees to look symmetrical! Think of the body and all the major joint planes, starting from the ground up: ankles, knees, hips. Now think

of a house and a foundation: cinder block, sub floor, walls, ceiling and roof. If ONE of the layers or balance blocks are askew, then everything else will be off-kilter. This needs to be looked at side-to-side, as well as front-to-back. We can and should adjust forward lean of the cuff, add or remove a spoiler, drop or increase the inner boot board heel height, adjust the upper cuff independent of the lower shell, soften or stiffen a boot, add a Booster or cut down upper cuff height, etc. My goal is to start with the boot and balance all those parts on top of a solid foundation.

Now, the really cool part. Once the side-to-side and front-to-back angles are symmetrical or equally engaged during flexion and extension, I concentrate on the binding ramp, or delta, of each system and how it mounts to each ski and where. You could be really strong in your boots only, standing on a fancy device in a high-dollar

boot shop, but what happens when you step into your SL ski, versus DH ski, versus your powder ski? That's the moving target! Small corrections in the overall package are where I'm spending my time with clients. There are some key

baselines that have been established per discipline, body type, skiing style, etc., and I initially start with the gear assessment to bring things into a proven range. Then, through testing on snow, with coach or instructor eyes and timing and video for back up, we will verify what is measured in-store, before any permanent corrections are made. So, back to alignment: it's critical, but it's not the ONLY adjustment. Did we confuse anyone?

So, it's time to rush right out and buy that new top-of-the-line WC race boot from your favorite color brand and hit the course! Nooooo...spend some quality time on the phone or in the store, asking and listening to the bootfitter's philosophy, and getting those key measurements and background questions shared. Once you have a plan, stick to the rules and try a few brands best matching your foot shape and skiing ability, focusing on the most true fit of the ankle region. Then go through the calculated and systematic fitting process (takes a few visits), then get your balance checked and adjusted. Take those notes to your coach or instructor, try

Continued bottom of next page

Notes from a Balmy Summer Fun Nationals

by Hugh Mitchell

The morning scene was out-of-worldly: silhouetted against the sun rising over the southeast shoulder of the volcano, a line of people in helmets and boots, carrying their equipment, trudged through the stark moonscape-like dirt toward a worn wooden ramp. Every footstep threw dust into the air that was further blown by an early wind into a cloud that blurred the progression. These weren't astronauts on some foreign landscape, but skiers in July, trying to catch

markable job snow farming to maintain as much snow on, to, and from the snowfield as possible. The weather couldn't have been better, with temperatures in the extremely comfortable range. As racers waited for their bib number to be called by the wranglers, there was no need to either bundle up nor seek shade—it was one of those sweet weekends on Mt. Hood where the registered racers wondered what could possess their other friends and competitors to even think of

Dreyer was awarded the Atomic skier of the year award for his outstanding service to Masters racing.

The Sunday after-race awards party was held at the Timberline Lodge pool with more complimentary food

and beverages along with the daily awards, combined and special awards. The Skoch Cup combined winners included women: Carolyn Phillips (class 11), Meri Stratton (10), Tracy Frankel (8), Chris Paup (7), Cristin Goodwin (5), Lauren Beckos (3), Lizzie Barrett (1), Kiera Bertell (WU14), and Lilla Mullin (FU10).

For the men: Dave Prochazka (class 11), Nick Hudson (10), Greg Dilger (9), Bill Vernon (8), Joseph Mucci (7), Mike Smith (6), Peter Dodd (5), Brian Bogatin (4), and Ethan Golik (MU14). The Putzi Cup SL Fastest Man and Woman were Jake Keith and Reece Bell. The Eigenvector Fastest Family Award went to newcomers Ella, Ethan and Daniel Golik.

The fastest 10 men from the first run each day are pulled out of their class and a Superseed is created—always an inspiration. For Saturday's GS were (in descending order): Jake Keith, Marcus Caston, Minam Cravens, Martin Bell, Corbin Kray, Jay Pollock, Chris Maxwell, Ken Park, Tim Hill and Franz Fuchsberger. For the Sunday SL: Jake Keith won again, followed by Minam Cravens, the incredible Dr. Tim Hill and then Marcus Caston, James Magurno, Martin Bell, Franz Fuchsberger, Corbin Kray, Chris Maxwell and Ken Park.

Afterwards, everyone enjoyed the sun, pool and Korbel champagne, then said their goodbyes and extended wishes of safe travels. Racers all left with hopes for more snow in the Pacific Northwest this coming winter, especially so that this gem of an asset for ski racers to get their summer fix, can be in tip-top shape when they reconvene back here again July 15–17, 2016. Hope to see you there!



There was a bit of snow between the lava fields.



“Palmer,” the second chairlift that would take them to the shrinking snowfield at 8,540 ft. Many of them were Masters alpine racers, some from as far away as Vermont, North Carolina, Alaska, Colorado, Utah, New Mexico, Idaho and California, as well as those from the Pacific Northwest, who had come for their summer spurt of snow and racing at the 27th Annual Summer Fun Nationals at Timberline, on the spectacular Mt. Hood in Oregon.

It had been a trying winter in the Pacific Northwest. Those racers from Idaho, Washington and Oregon had not had much training or racing and were overjoyed to just be on snow again, despite the dust and melt that had made it much dirtier than usual. The mild and low-snow winter had also not replenished the high-altitude snowfield as it had in previous years. Skiers had to always be on the lookout for stray lava stones—which were more frequent than usual—lest their evenings be spent repairing base gouges or worse, shortening valuable time at Charlie's Bar in Govy. However, the groomers and snow-cat personnel did a re-

missing this annual gathering of summer racing bliss.

Meri Stratton and her merry band of 30 race workers (gate grunts), including officials Knut Olberg, Rob Cravens, Ann Ozuna, Bob Dreyer and Jeff Kray, put on a fantastic race. The salted, yet abbreviated GS course held up perfectly, and there was some fantastic skiing for both the GS on Saturday and the SL on Sunday. Marcus Caston was presented with a saltless Margarita for the “salter of the year” award for his outstanding job of salting both courses!

At the Saturday evening banquet in the Timberline Lodge, everyone enjoyed great grub and complimentary suds. It is always a highlight, with awards and raffle prizes generously donated by the race sponsors, including Fuxi Racing, Atomic, K2, Reliable Racing, Saucer Wax, Komperdell and Korbel Champagne.

Of course, “Fuxi” regaled the crowd with his legendary “soft-sell” address, leaving no one in doubt of where you could go to get the best deals in ski racing equipment. It wouldn't be the same without him. Bob

some new things in your boot or ski and tweak your new package to your needs. Hope this helps. I'm available for consult!
Matt Schiller has spent 25 years working in

the ski industry as a PSIA Level 3, USSA national coach, Lange/Nordica/Atomic Factory race representative, USST WC ski and boot technician, Masterfit Univ instructor, Skiing Maga-

zine tester, and now shop owner of Park City Boot Room, in Park City, Utah. Visit ParkCityBootRoom.com or call 435.901.2562 for boot fitting needs.

2015/16 FIS Masters Cup: Race for a Globe

by Bob Davis with Dave Brennan



The start wand was officially tripped in the 2016 race for a "Globe," with four FIS races in Chile in September, marking the South American

Masters Championship. Competitors from across the globe raced in some of the best conditions in recent memory. "In my 12 years hosting race camps in Chile, this was as good as it gets!" said Bill Skinner, who along with his brother Bob made their annual trek to **Valle Nevado**, escorting a large contingent of Masters racers to get a jump-start on the 2016 season.

Back in the U.S., the North American FIS Championships will once again be held in **Aspen** February

4-7, with the speed events at **Buttermilk** and the tech events staged at **Highlands**.

If you want to get an early start on building points, then head over to Italy in December, where you can back-to-back **Abertone** (abetone.com) Dec. 5-6, with **Pila** (pila.it/en/) Dec. 13. Gate DeMattei has been there and done that, and recommends flying into Florence. Regarding Abertone, Gate says "...the courses are not overly challenging, but they are fun... spending a few days in Florence adds icing on the cake!"

If Austria is more to your liking, then check into **Maria Alm** (hochkoenig.at/en) Dec. 19-20. Pepi Neubauer, our Austrian connection, recommends "...flying into Munich...it's only a two-hour drive from there. Lots of B&Bs, but reserve early, as Christmas is always busy."

Another opportunity to get back-to-back races is to couple **Morgins**

(morgins.ch/ski) Jan. 22-24 with **Megève** (megeve.com), Jan. 29-31. It will be a tight travel schedule getting back to Aspen, but you'll pick up six races in one trip. Anne Nordhoy went to Morgins and had this to say: "It's a very small town and an easy 90-minute drive from Geneva. It's part of Porte de Soliel, a resort destination with about 13 ski areas." Mike Robbins is a veteran of Megève, and says to rent a car in Geneva "...for the little over one-hour drive and to travel up to Cote 2000, where the races take place. On race day, park in the large lot below the lift to boot up. Slopes are challenging; SL hill is steep, SG has a nice steep drop at the finish."

sorts/Piancavallo) for one of the best SG tracks in Europe. Bob Davis talked me into racing there last year, and I had a blast. The SG starts out on the flats but quickly builds speed into a steep, pulse-pounding middle pitch that drops into the last section of sweeping rhythm gates to the finish. The venue and race organization is fantastic, creating an atmosphere like a full-on World Cup event including hot air balloons, cow bells and Umpa bands. Don't miss the great food at the old world restaurant on the beginner's hill. The Masters FIS World Criterium will be held in **Spindleruv Mlyn** (spindleruv-mlyn.com/en/) in the Czech Republic. Who better than Dasha Kadulova to talk about this venue: "You can fly to Prague which, is only about 165km from the resort. It's about 2.5-hour drive, depending on weather and road conditions. If you have a group of individuals, you can book private transfers from the airport directly to the resort for around \$150, one-way. There are plenty of accommodations available, but book your hotel early. The races are held around spring break holiday and hotels may be tough to get. If you travel through Prague, take couple of days and explore the city; there's plenty of history to see and great food—not to mention the best pilsner beer!"

If your points say that a Globe is possible, then you'd better book early for the Finals in **Les Menuires**, France (en.les-menuires.com/?r=1). Located in the famous Les Trois Vallées, this venue is 143 km from the Geneva airport. Expect a very large field, with this central European location and because the points double during the finals. Bringing home a Globe is an experience of a lifetime that few ever achieve. Leading the points race in their respective categories in 2016 from North America are:

Men: Gate DeMattei 300, Larry Tomie 400, Dave Evans 400, Pepi Neubauer 400, Tom Kronthaler 340, Rick Slabinski 380, Nate Schwing 200, Phillips Armstrong 400.

Women: Lilla Gidlow 340, Lanice Drake 340, Shannon Thomas 400.

Before booking any trip to Europe for the Masters races, make sure your FIS license and USSA membership are current, and check in with Bill Skinner, bskinner@ussa.org, for specific race entry forms and information.

FIS Calendar Masters 2015-16

When	Where	What
Dec. 5-6	Abertone, ITA	GS/GS
Dec. 12-13	Pila, ITA	SL/GS
Dec. 19-20	Maria Alm, AUT	SL/GS
Jan. 9-10	Hasliberg, SUI	SL/GS
Jan. 16-17	Kaprun, AUT	SG/SG
Jan. 22-24	Morgins, SUI	SG/SL/GS
Jan. 29-31	Megève, FRA	SG/SL/GS
Feb. 4-7	Aspen, USA	SG/SL/GS/GS
Feb. 13-14	Zagreb, CRO	SL/GS
Feb. 20-21	Goetschen, GER	SL/GS
Mar. 4-6	Piancavallo, ITA	SG/SL/GS
Mar. 12-13	Cerkno, SLO	SL/GS
Mar. 19-20	Strbske Pleso, SLV	SL/GS
Mar. 21-25 Criterium	Spinleruv Mlyn, CZE	SG/SL/GS/GS

If you have time to get away before the U.S. Masters Nationals, head back to Italy for another three races at **Piancavallo** (snow-forecast.com/re-



Go for the Globe!

(Continued from pages 4 and 5)

Another variable in regard to changing turn radius length is “Edge Pressure,” which can be developed in two ways:

1) Increasing edge angle, 2) increasing the downward force on the ski—especially forward of the toe piece. In a perfect arcing turn, there’s an optimum balance of edge angle and downward pressure that maximizes speed—too little edge angle means having to add more downward force. But more downward force ends up scrubbing speed.

Recently, in Valle Nevado, Chile, Masters racers were training on the same run and snow conditions as the U.S. Men’s D-Team. After only a few racers, the Masters’ course had deep ruts and chatter marks below the gates. In contrast, the D-Team course had shallow arcing tracks above the

while many of the Masters racers had to apply more downward, digging force to save the turn radius—clearly slower.

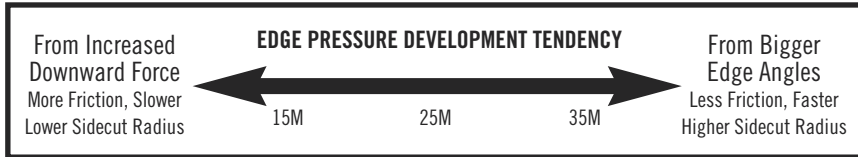
Knowing the tendency of how you adjust edge pressure—by increasing edge angle or by adding downward force—is a significant factor in determining your ski design specs. Matching proper sidecut radius with appropriate length, width and flex patterns for your technical ability, conditioning, confidence level and physical characteristics will lead to optimizing the performance of your ski selection. Getting bigger edge angles and early pressure is the goal!

Modern GS skis for Masters

Our supply of old, 27-meter GS race stock skis is all but depleted, replaced now by longer, 30-meter-plus straight-shaped skis

section of the industry’s top manufacturers. Included are full-blown FIS spec choices, non-FIS production race skis, Masters-specific models, recreational race (NASTAR®, Town/Beer Can Series) options, and an alternative category we’ll call “transitional”—race skis having similar geometries and flex patterns as their FIS counterparts but available in shorter lengths, softer flexes, and more turn-radius friendly specs. This transitional category could be a good match for Masters. Similar to when men switched to women’s FIS skis, transitional race skis can address the needs of technically-capable Masters who, due to their size, weight or level of strength, find it difficult to get maximum performance from stiffer-flexing race skis.

One last thought: DEMO, DEMO, DEMO!!! Identify the most likely candidates from your evaluation process. Keep it to 2–3 choices of different models and/or different sizes within a model. Spend a day on typical snow conditions free skiing, doing drills and, if possible, running gates. A structured approach to demoing on properly tuned skis—preferably factory specs—can give you the best chance of making the right call on mastering your race ski selection.



gates. The observable difference was the D-Team racers had the ability and timing to apply optimum edge angles to develop edge pressure and maintain turn radius,

we used to to ski...20+ years ago! As Masters, what choices do we have now? Actually, more than ever! On page five is a partial list of GS race models from a cross

NASTAR for Masters

by Bill Madsen



Ted Ligety and the National Team will set NASTAR’s par time at Copper Mountain in November. The Putnam Investments NASTAR Pacesetting Trials will be the first official pacesetting trial since

1993, when a young rising star on the U.S. Ski Team named Daron Rahlves came out firing and won.

Headlining the national pacesetting trials will be Olympic gold medalist Ted Ligety (Park City, UT), along with an impressive list of both current and former U.S. Ski Team athletes, including World Champion Daron Rahlves, two-time Olympian Kaylin Richardson, World Championship medalist AJ Kitt, and five-time Olympian and X-Games winner Casey Puckett.

The Masters will be represented by Ryan Fuller, Ken McAdam, Bill & Bob Skinner, Steve Smith, Mark Murvis, Gary Ericsson, Pierre Jeangirard and Franz Fuchsberger. The National Training Group

will also get a shot to test their skills against the National Team. Handicap discounts will be set by Paralympic athletes, World Cup snowboarders, and telemark racers.

The NASTAR regional championships will provide all racers with an opportunity to compete against AJ Kitt and their peers to qualify for the Nature Valley NASTAR National Championships.

Eastern Championships

Okemo, VT, Jan. 30–31

Midwest Championships

Welch Village, MN, Feb. 26–27

These events will include individual races on Saturday, with participants divided into age and ability groups. On Sunday there will be a Race of Champions to determine the fastest overall racers, using handicapped times and raw times. In addition, there will be a team race with separate divisions for family teams and teams of friends.

The Nature Valley NASTAR National Championships will be an event you will

not want to miss.

National Championships

Steamboat, CO, Mar. 124–27

The Nature Valley NASTAR National Championships offers two days of GS racing to determine the overall NASTAR National Champions. There will also be team races and NASTAR SL racing. The event will feature Ted Ligety, Steve Nyman, Stacey Cooke and U.S. Ski Team alumni AJ Kitt, Kaylin Richardson, Casey Puckett and Heidi Voelker. Don’t miss this opportunity to compete against the best GS racers in the world.

There are 115 resorts with Nature Valley NASTAR race courses, from coast to coast, providing Masters with accessible racing and training opportunities. Every time you race, you earn a handicap that represents the difference between your time and the time of the national pacesetter, Ted Ligety. Results are posted on the NASTAR.com web site and participants are ranked with their peers in their ability group at the host resort, in their state of residence and nationally.

Continued from page 1

If you were digging a hole in the ground, you would point the sharp edge of the shovel on the dirt, then step on it. In skiing terms, edge it, then pressure it. Or take this into the kitchen while buttering a slice of bread. If you press the knife into the bread then rotate it on to its cutting edge it will tear the bread. If you tilt the knife toward the edge first, the bread will stay intact. The same is true of ski-to-snow interaction. Creating an initial edge angle to the snow will afford the ski the opportunity to penetrate the snow and ultimately accept the pressure.



Ted edging the ski before he pressures the ski in Méribel.

Pressure in the fall-line

“Pressure in the fall-line” is heard so often, it’s become a cliché. This worthy instruction unfortunately gets diluted with the additional advice of “early pressure.” While we see Ted tip the ski up early, remember, he is Ted. What we mere mortals must understand is that pressure in the fall-line is essential, and it trumps early pressure. Pressure before the fall-line is nice, but think of it as discretionary. The problem is when the ski racer gets early pressure, but there is nothing left for the fall-line. And since the turn has to get completed, the only option available is late pressure. Late pressure is the surest way to scrub speed and find your line lower than the Titanic. The rule of thumb is: pressure in the fall-line is mandatory, early pressure is virtuous, and late pressure is for emergency use only. If you are feeling Ted-like, go for the early pressure, which, if it works out, is great. But depending on how your run is going, it is a risk-reward tradeoff. If it works, congrats. If not, you’re buying the beer.

Pressuring a large part of the turn

First we said “pressure in the fall-line.” Now we are proposing, “pressure a large part of the turn.” This may seem contradictory. Before you start a fire with this newsletter, let me explain. Making a turn requires pressure...remember the “snow pushing back” scenario earlier? Well it takes a specific amount of pressure to make a given turn, so we need to do a bit of a balancing act. To achieve the optimal ski/snow interaction and create the smoothest and roundest turn, pressure needs to be spread over a distance that is congruent with the ski racer’s capabilities. If that pressure is over too short a distance, it builds up too quickly and the skier gets bucked out of the turn.

Pressure may be what turns the ski, but if there is too much, too quick, *hang on, space cowboy* because you’re on a loaded spring and you’re going to fly. To make the “pressure in the fall-line” rule of thumb work in your favor, think of the fall-line as a gray area. Not just some piece of the turn that is pointed exactly down the hill. But for the hill, your personal skill level, and the skis you are on, this gray area can be expanded to accommodate the pressure that is required for the turn. Learning to tease some of that pressure earlier up the hill will result in pressuring a larger part of the turn that will end up distributing the pressure into a manageable amount.

“While we see Ted tip the ski up early, remember, he is Ted.”



Alexis Pinturault pressuring early in the turn.

Pressure from tip to tail

Coach Warren Witherall taught us many years ago that we ski *in* the snow, not *on* the snow. His insight aligned well with physics by pointing out that we need something to push back at us—specifically, the snow, if we want to turn. So how do we get “in” the snow? When the front of the ski is pressured, the tip excavates a groove for the rest of the ski to follow. This is where ski tip side-cut along with torsional and longitudinal flex become important, and why GS skis are torsionally softer than slalom skis and often have a more hinging tip. After the groove is established, the ski continues the cutting or carving action as pressure progresses to the tail.

Athletes with the smoothest tip-to-tail translation of their center-of-mass are the fastest. So it is not just moving or pressuring from the ski tip to tail, but moving in a smooth fashion. All good skiers move about the same fore to aft distance, the great ski racers use the entire ski and do it smoothly.



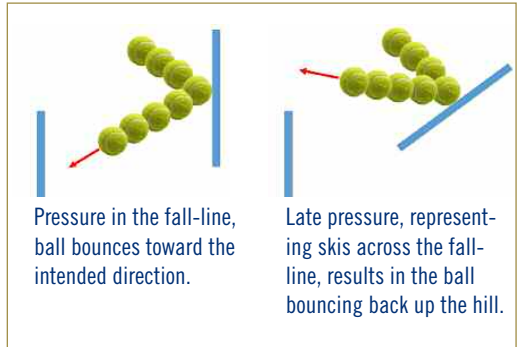
Marcel Hirscher releasing pressure to move toward the new turn for silver at the World Ski Championships in Beaver Creek.

Releasing pressure in the fall-line

To get across the idea of releasing pressure in the fall-line, U.S. Ski Team Men’s Head Coach Sasha Rearick demonstrates with a ball ricocheting off a wall. The wall is positioned in the fall-line and Sasha rolls the ball toward the wall. The ball ricochets toward another wall like what you would see on a billiards table, all while moving down the hill. Sasha points out that it is the

movement across and down the slope that’s important. He then repositions the wall such that when he rolls the ball toward the barrier it rebounds more up the slope. Now replace the ball with a skier and the wall with the pressuring of the ski. When the skier has pressure in the fall-line they release that pressure and ricochet in the direction of the next turning gate. A skier with late pressure ends up ricocheting back up the hill as when Sasha’s wall was positioned more across the slope. You may have felt late pressure as a rebound or getting bucked out of the bottom of the turn. A difficult way to ski the course and definitely not a fast strategy!

Pressuring actions and pressure control - the counterpart of edging - are important components of a fast run. Managing pressure and making it your friend will go a long way in maximizing your potential on the race course.



Pressure in the fall-line, ball bounces toward the intended direction.

Late pressure, representing skis across the fall-line, results in the ball bouncing back up the hill.

By Ron Kipp
Photos: Getty Images

Ron Kipp is the USSA Alpine Sport Education Manager. He has worked with the U.S. and Norwegian Ski Teams.



Tim Jitloff pressuring the ski in the fall-line in Adelboden.



U.S. Ski Team member Brennan Rubie skiing from tip to tail for a podium finish during the Winter Games NZ in August.



Pressuring with skis across the fall-line eliminates Frida Hansdotter in Val d’Isère.

Pressure is the ski racer’s friend

Getting in Skinner's Skin

by Ben Hallen

Ben Hallen of Midwest Masters had a chance to speak with Bill Skinner, and ran this article in Fast Times. Bill has been involved with Masters racing 25 years and is our USSA Masters Manager since 1998.

Q: You have a history and passion for ski racing. How did you get into ski racing?

A: I grew up in New Jersey skiing as a flat lander where we didn't get much snow, but loved it when we did. My parents introduced me to ski racing as a kid. I can still remember looking at the trophies at my first race and wanting one. You could say that the first race didn't go as planned, as it took me three minutes to get down the course, along with multiple falls. I knew at that point that I could either quit or stick with it. Well, you can probably guess that I stuck with it and ended up with some successes along the way. I became the second person from New Jersey to make the Junior National team. Things were different back then, when you either went to college or made a go at the U.S. Ski Team. I weighed my options and decided on college, first to Johnson State College, Vermont, then the University of Utah on scholarship. I turned pro after college and then went to work for Park City and ran their race department for a few years. My summers were spent river guiding the Grand Canyon. Eventually I left Park City, then found my way back. I noticed that Park City didn't have a viable outlet for adult ski racing; that's when I decided to start our Masters training program 25 years ago.

Q: What are some of the biggest changes with ski racing from past to present?

A: I would say going from straight skis to shaped skis, from a coaching standpoint. The old technique was to slide into the turn and finish with a J turn. With the new skis, you actually carve into the turn. So, grasping the new technique would be the biggest change.

Q: What would you say to those individuals that used to race or are curious to try Masters racing?

A: Unfortunately, there are many people that grow up ski racing that end up burned out from the sport. Somewhere along the way, the fun of the sport was lost because of outside pressures to be competitive. Masters racing offers the best of both worlds as it is the most competitive outlet

for adult ski racing from a local and national level, but also offers a unique and fun environment for the first-time racer to the former high-level competitor.

Q: Where do you see Masters racing going in the future?

A: I see the future growth of Masters with the younger generation found in the terrain park today. My hope is that they look to ski racing when they are older to improve their skiing, once the terrain park is not an option. Masters racing will offer an outlet for those individuals looking for challenge and improving their skiing.

Q: What is one thing that surprises you about Masters racers each and every year?

A: That they show up to the start top of the mountain in freezing cold, terrible weather in their underwear (speed suit). Definitely a special breed of cat.

Q: How do you think the sport has evolved over the last few years, with the new race technology?

A: The skis are an obvious answer, going from the straight skis to the new shaped skis. The other area of change would be the new FIS rules that trickle down from the World Cup to the USSA programs. These rules and regulations can hamper participation for the younger racers, which isn't good for the growth of our sport.



Masters Manager
Bill Skinner

Lucky for us, the new FIS rules implemented do not necessarily translate to Masters rules and regulations, which makes for a more enjoyable experience.

Q: What do you do to stay in shape for ski racing during the off-season?

A: Well, I spent 30 years river guiding the Grand Canyon, hiking and just staying active in the summer. Now that I am older, I need to keep my knees in shape, so I head to the gym a few times a week. I also head to South America for a few weeks to ski in the summer, which is always a fun time.

Q: Any recommendations to those racers that are looking to improve their skiing agility?

- A:**
- Do a lot of skiing
 - Avoid mindless skiing. Ski with a purpose, i.e. drills, etc.
 - Take yourself out of your comfort zone with drills.
 - Run gates!

Q: What have you found helps you when preparing mentally on race day?

A: This is personal for each and every person. I like to ski quite a bit before race day. I realize that if I ski a lot, then I ski well. I also know that if I don't ski enough, that I tend to ski poorly. I also make sure that I leave enough time to do a few drills to get into race mode, along with plenty of time to inspect the course.

Q: What would you say to those that are thinking about going to Masters Nationals?

A: Prepare to have a good time. Big Sky is an awesome mountain and I would recommend getting there a day or two before the festivities to acclimate to the altitude, as well as the length of the hill. Big Sky is definitely a top-10 mountain in the U.S. and a top-echelon resort when it comes to terrain. Be sure to be in good physical shape, as it is a demanding hill to race at.

Q: Is there any message you'd like to share with Masters racers in the Midwest?

A: Masters is the pinnacle of adult ski racing in the U.S. from the local to national level. My hope is that folks from the Central division will continue to support Masters as it will foster and support our future for racing.

Division News



PNSA

By Rob Cravens
pnsa.org

Two months until... "10 weeks!"

As we approach the coming 2015–2016 season, Ann Ozuna has passed the torch to Rob Cravens. Ann's efforts and dedication are greatly appreciated. Rob will be working to communicate pertinent information to PNSA Masters, at both regional and national levels.

The PNSA Masters coordinators are busy updating the FB page, race schedules and the PNSA Masters website. The national Masters committee, under the leadership of Lisa Densmore, is focused on 1) increasing the Masters membership, 2) improving divisional coordination, and 3) providing excellent communication.

Let's have PNSA lead the national movement in recruiting and mentoring new members!

HERE'S THE CHALLENGE: each PNSA Master needs to sign up a new member; each PNSA Master needs to bring a friend to training and have that friend participate in (at least) one race. Remember: new racers are allowed a short-term membership (\$15 dollars per day). USSA coaches are able to race Masters under their coaching membership. Can you

imagine how excited the juniors would be to see their coach rip a couple of race runs? Increasing Masters membership is truly the key to our future. "It takes a village," so please step up and do your part!

The season kick-off is the Russ Read Memorial Race, Dec. 19–21 at Mt. Bachelor (GS/GS/SG). This is a great opportunity to race early season, and it is combined with a Junior race. Let's show those young guns that we can still point them down! From there, we have:

The 2015–2016 schedule is posted on pnsamasters.org and at skiracereg.com under "PNSA Masters Racing." Race registration will open for all races Dec. 1 on skiracereg.com. There is no additional charge to sign up and pay for races on the website. We have a Facebook page, which will have all news and updates for PNSA Masters throughout the season. Search Facebook for "PNSA Masters Ski Racing."

Lots of discussion regarding FIS-approved helmets for Masters. Here is the bottom line: Replace "Old Stinky" this season with an FIS-approved helmet. You're going to need it next season, 2016–2017.

Many thanks to our PNSA Masters coordinators: Knut Olberg, race schedules; Carolyn Phillips, temp membership/bibs; Luke Keenan, webmaster; Karen Kilian, Facebook; Peter Christian, new racers; Jim

Doudna, member at large (or just large). The support and contributions of these athletes benefit us all. Please give them a hearty "thank you" when you see them on the hill!

Five...four...three...two...one...go!



Alaska

By Gary Randall
alyeskaskiclub.org

We had 3" of snow fall last week and we are all excited about getting *on it!* The mountain's crew has been busy grooming the hills, and they're looking like golf fairways.

Our schedule for this year is to hold four GS races and 4 SL's. We're trying to put together a speed series for this spring.

Last spring, Alyeska hosted the NCAA finals with great conditions: sunshine and hard snow.

The annual ski swap will be held the last week of October, with Masters working the swap to sign up new members.

Last spring, we had 10 athletes attend the nationals at Sun Valley, and we hope we have even more attend Big Sky. Hope everybody had a good summer, and we'll see you at Big Sky!

Bringing On the Next Generation: The Far West Masters Scholarship Program

By Sandy Hogan

Far West Masters is very proud of its Far West Masters Scholarship Program, started in 1992 by Eddie Mozen, the late Joe Lausmann and Doug Fulton. Eddie continues to lead this effort, as he has for the past 23 years, awarding more than \$800,000 to over 250 deserving Far West junior skiers. Each year, up to 50 athletes have received scholarships, and some, such as Stacy Cook, Marco Sullivan, Tim Jitloff, Lila Lapanja, Mark Engel, Jonna Mendes, and Travis Ganong have gone on to join the U.S. Ski Team. Others have received scholarships while racing in college. All money raised comes from Far West Masters racers,

supporting sponsors, and donors. All administrative activities involved in the fundraising and review of athlete scholarship applications are done on a volunteer basis by members of the Far West Masters. This allows us to distribute the funds with no overhead to Far West junior athletes.

Our program initially raised money simply by direct contributions from Masters racers. However, over the years, the program has expanded to include more fundraisers such as: raffles at most races (with great prizes), silent auctions, and a dual race that includes Masters racers and junior scholarship winners. In addition, the Jeff Wattenmaker scholarship endowment allows us to award one \$10,000 college scholarship (\$2,500/year) to one of our outstanding young athletes, with three having been awarded thus far.

Our young racers earn their scholarships based on a combination of financial need, ski racing potential and exemplary work ethic. In turn, they must forerun one of our races and speak at that day's awards ceremony. It's always fun to see these hot juniors tear up our courses, and equally impressive to listen to them talk about their goals and desires.



Scholarship skiers Claire DeAngeli, Forrester Peterson, Cody Wilson, Lila Lapanja, and Maddie Johnson.

Division News

New England Masters

Nadine Price

www.nemasters.org



As the leaves are turning and the evening temperatures are dipping closer and closer to frost, our thoughts are turning ever more seriously to ski racing. Of course, your tireless board has been thinking about ski racing all summer, and thanks to their efforts we have a great season planned. Our schedule is, in the words of our scheduling guru, "knock yer socks off, best ever!" Clinics are being planned and parties are being scheduled. And thanks, once again, to USSA's generous assistance, New England Masters will have its eighth annual booth at the Boston Ski Expo. We intend to continue building our brand recognition, strengthening our existing connections with other industry stakeholders and forging new ones. This year, we will be next to the Skier's Edge booth and hope to exploit that proximity for all manner of fun. As it did last year, USSA will be providing a terrific national Masters poster which will be unveiled and available at the Expo. If your plans include a trip to the show Nov. 12-15, make sure to stop by. And make sure to pick up a couple of posters, one for your tuning bench and one or two to share at your favorite shop or watering hole!

We are once again scheduling a clinic at Wachusett Mountain in Massachusetts and planning at least one more at a venue to be announced. The Wachusett clinic has been incredibly popular in the past and, with USSA's new affiliation with NASTAR, should help us reach and recruit even more potential racers. Past clinics have produced a number of starts for first-time Masters racers and we expect this season will be better than ever. We will be giving each participant a voucher for a complimentary short-term membership good for any one of our events and we expect this to help get some of our campers into the starting gate. Check our website for details and updates.

Our scheduling chair, Bill McCollom, and his committee, have outdone themselves yet again and we have a wonderful lineup of races this season. In the sixth edition of our almost-annual tradition, we will be kicking things off at Killington in December with a joint venture with ASRA, a ski racing organization with races in Vermont and points a little west and south.

Events will include SL, GS and, of course, a Saturday evening party!

After the holidays we will be returning to one of our most popular stops, Mt. Sunapee in southern New Hampshire, for a SL and one of the best GS's in New England. And we will be revealing a little surprise for everyone at Sunapee. You'll have to be there to see it. January will also include the very traditional weekends at Middlebury and Stratton and Bromley. Traditionally, Middlebury will feature a full length GS on Sunday and, untraditionally, on Saturday we will be running a "Sprint" GS. One season when the snow wasn't cooperating, we ran a three-run GS on the lower part of the mountain and it turned out to be so much fun, we have incorporated it intentionally into this year's schedule.

new racers and those who haven't raced in a while. So bring everyone you know and don't forget to put together a team for our second annual "Battle of the Beer Leagues!" Watch for more information on this event and start recruiting.

The final race before the Eastern Regionals will be the Hochgebirge Challenge Cup. This is the longest-running ski race in the country, sponsored by the oldest ski club in the country, and features perhaps the oldest party tradition in at least New England Masters history! Don't miss this race. And don't miss the sumptuous feast at the Club's nearby headquarters, where the walls are literally covered with skiing and ski racing history.

The 2016 Eastern Championships will once again be jointly hosted by Okemo Mountain, host to last season's exceptional

Easterns and the outstanding 2014 USSA Masters National Championships, and Suicide 6, one of the great SL venues anywhere. The SL at Suicide on Saturday will be sandwiched between speed and a GS at Okemo. The speed will include a DH, two SG's and, of course, training. After the SL, it will be back to Okemo for the GS and naming of the Eastern team on



Franz Fuchsberger and Bob Skinner at Sun Valley

Our visit to Stratton will once again include two SG races the day before the Janeway Cup and, as an added bonus, the day before the SG's will be a day of training. The last weekend of January will take us to Maine for the brand new "Lobstah" Cup. This will be held at Shawnee Peak and will include a SL and a GS. Those who did the SL at Shawnee last season insist it is one of the best SL's in New England and definitely not to be missed. And this year, with the addition of the GS, it promises to be a banner weekend.

February will start with a two-race event at the wildly popular Ragged Mountain, where we will be doing both an SL and a GS. This is one of the most accessible and user-friendly venues on our entire circuit, so it will be a great opportunity for



Masters legend Bob Sarchett

Division News

Sunday.

The Sise Cup Finals will be returning to Waterville this year Mar. 4-5. The GS on Friday has been designated this season's Legends Cup, a handicapped race in honor of those we have lost. Saturday's events include a SL and a gala banquet and awards celebration. Both races will be counting toward season long standings. And in case you were wondering, or needed any more reason to attend, we will be skiing on the same trail that has hosted numerous World Cup races!

With only about 60 days before the first race, it's time to get serious! Get your skis out of the hot box, where you no doubt kept them waxed and warm all summer; and if you didn't, go file the rust off them. Pull out all your training tools and toys. And get to work. See you in December!

As always, our series is made possible and enhanced by our sponsors. We wish to thank Rockport Mortgage Corporation most sincerely for their support of our GS series. Our enduring gratitude goes to Artech, for its generous and continued support. And we thank Uvex, KHS Booster Strap, SkiChair.com, Denby, Reliable Racing Supply, and Liftopia for their continued support. When you have need or use for any of the products or services our sponsors provide, we hope you will visit them first.



Chris Katzenberger and Amy Lanzel kick back at Sun Valley.

ule for the coming year with 23 races. We kick out of the starting gate at Mammoth on Dec. 5-6 with a weekend of GS, then on the shorter skis at Alpine Meadows for a weekend of SL on Dec. 19-20. Other highlights for the season include the addition of two GS's at Heavenly Valley following our traditional two-SL Viva Italia Cup, a return to Sugar Bowl in January for a weekend of SL's, plus the always-popular speed events at Mammoth in February. We also have events scheduled at Squaw Valley, Northstar and Mt. Rose. The full schedule is at www.farwestmasters.org. We welcome racers from other divisions at all of our events. Pack the skis and take advantage of some of California's and Nevada's great mountains!



Southern Masters

By Horst Locher
www.sararacing.org

In the mid-Atlantic region, we Masters racers enjoyed a nice summer, always aiming to stay fit. Ski areas in North Carolina, West Virginia and Virginia added downhill biking as a new summer activity, which was welcomed by the young racers. They have the youthful gifts to balance the downhill bikes through steep pitches, even while encountering features that test their agility and willpower.

We, the Masters racers who are in the latter half of our century, stayed in shape with conventional mountain biking or other exercises. Actually, with the USSA as the new promoter of NASTAR competition, our USSA Olympic skiers will generate more interest for the NASTAR racers to improve their racing skills and step up to the next level of racing. There is no question that the USSA competition will add more camaraderie, fun and enjoyment to ski racing. It will engage the youth and generate the adrenaline that is unique to ski racing. This is an opportunity for newcomers to be guided by fellow USSA racers into the beautiful sport of racing.

The Southern Alpine Ski Association will kick off the first USSA SL Dec. 21 at Bryce Resort, in Virginia. During the Christmas holidays, Sugar Mountain, in North Carolina, will follow with a GS and SL. Our senior racers are more than happy to introduce any NASTAR racers to the higher level of racing. For more information, please contact the individual race organizer at the Southern Alpine Race Association.



Far West

By Dan Simmons
www.FarWestMasters.org

In the Far West, we are all looking at the lighter trade winds at the equator that are allowing the 30 cm. bulge of warm water in the Western Pacific to move east, bringing wet weather to the west coast—El Niño. We hope it means lots of snow and not just a bunch of warm rain.

Weather or not, we have great sched-



Kevin Vaughan, Intermountain

Division News



Central

Ryan Fuller
www.midwestmasters.org

We're back at it again this season, with a great schedule—including a return to

Mt. La Crosse in Wisconsin, our season opener at Afton Alps, and our Central Regional Championships at Granite Peak and Spirit Mountain. We're also running our annual Cyr Cup races at Buck Hill once more, as a special team event. New this season, we've added the Rocky Mountain Ski Cooper speed races to our list of races and will be working to get more Central folks on speed skis. We're also holding our 4th annual Koznick camp this year at Copper Mountain.

Our direction as a program has not changed, and we will continue to focus on increasing participation at our races by promoting them as special events, which are all unique in character. We continue to use social media, online advertising, and online marketing tools to aggressively reach out to our membership and potential members. We also are continuing to use SkiRaceReg.com and our ability-class scoring system, and this year, for the first time, we plan to experiment with a "full flip" second run order, where we will flip the entire field below Class 8, with the fastest racer from the first run coming down last, just like on the World Cup.

Looking forward, we are very excited the new NASTAR partnership. We hope that under this new relationship, we can find ways to extend Masters-style racing to a much larger community, while also incorporating much of the great concepts already proven by the NASTAR model. Central has two members attending the National Pacesetter trials at Copper Moun-

tain on Nov. 6; we look forward to racing alongside midwest native Kaylin Richardson. We plan to dual score ALL races that we run this season, as both Masters and NASTAR, so for all you NASTAR racers out there, come race with us and see where your handicap stands against the Central Masters crowd and at least one of the two national pacesetters designated for the Central Division!

We are also happy to see that USSA has formally adopted daily memberships. This is a concept that Midwest Masters in the Central Division has prototyped for several years now, proving that it increases revenue as well as convenience for those adult racers that don't have the time to commit to a full season of Masters racing.

And finally, we're excited about Nationals at Big Sky once again! We'll be bringing another great squad of Central racers in March!

If there are any questions about Midwest Masters, send an email to us at program.director@midwestmasters.org and we will get back to you.

We'll see you on the hill!



Intermountain Masters

By Stew Marsh
www.IntermountainMasters.org

Here it is: October, 2015. Snow has already made its way to

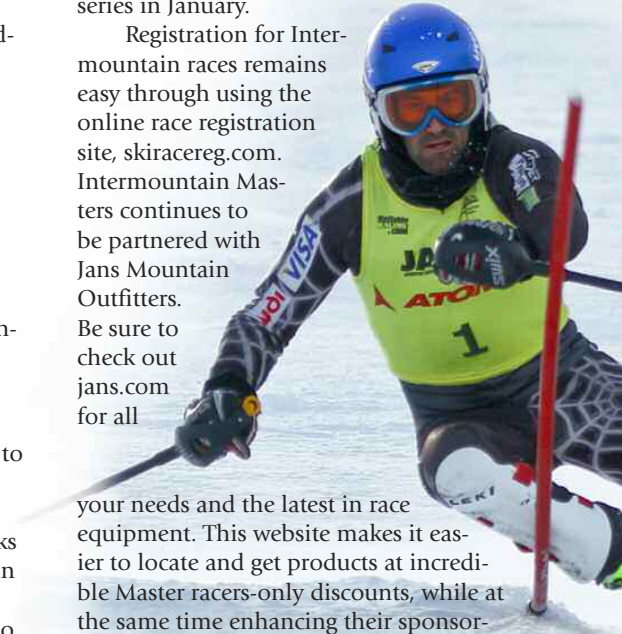
the Utah mountains. It seems like every year we have that so-called "September tickler." We are now officially seven weeks away from multiple ski resorts opening in Utah! As the new chairman of the Intermountain board, I am looking forward to a great race season. I would like to thank Amy Lanzel for her dedication and hard

work while chairman. She was a great fundraiser and had bounds of energy that carried over in everything she did for the organization. My intentions for the upcoming year are to continue to follow her lead. As always, all divisions are looking for ways to increase the number of participants at races. If any of you have suggestions, I am open to any and all of them as we move forward this season and those to come.

Meri Stratton and Bill Skinner again have teamed up to make this winter's races exciting and fun. Where else in the country can you get that? Please check our Intermountain Masters website for schedules closer to the race date for any changes. Again we will have the Sun Valley Skoch Cup SG, GS and SL on Warm Springs! Park City Mountain Resort will be hosting the super-popular Loritz Cup three-day race series in January.

Registration for Intermountain races remains easy through using the online race registration site, skiracereg.com. Intermountain Masters continues to be partnered with Jans Mountain Outfitters. Be sure to check out jans.com for all

your needs and the latest in race equipment. This website makes it easier to locate and get products at incredible Master racers-only discounts, while at the same time enhancing their sponsorship with Intermountain Masters with a small monetary give-back of all items sold



Central Masters, class of last year.

Division News

online.

We welcome back our long-time race sponsors: team orthopedic surgeon and Masters racer Dr. Phil Davidson, Team Healthcare, Dr. Don Cofer, Tom Reinerth of Dominator wax, Brent Amsbury at Park City Ski Boot and Sun Valley's Formula Sports for their support of the Sun Valley Skoch Cup races. Race sponsors are a funny thing—without them, we simply would not be. Whenever you visit any of our sponsors, please be sure to let them know you shop their store because of their support to Intermountain Masters.

Remember to reflect back on those friends who may have decided a few years back to not race anymore. Tell them it is still fun and that they can get a one-day short-term membership to race. It would be great to see those faces again among our ranks. The Intermountain board is looking forward to another exciting, competitive racing, party-filled season. Get your boards out and sharpen the edges...*Its game time!*

Northern Division Masters

By Fran Noel
northernussa.org

I just got my job back. I chaired back in the 1980s, and just took over for Lisa Densmore Ballard,

Craig Norton



who is now our National Masters president. And speaking of Lisa, she will be running a "get-the-rust-off" Masters training camp Dec. 2-5 at Red Lodge Mountain, followed by two USSA-sanctioned Masters GS races on Dec. 6. For more info, contact her at densmore1@aol.com, or register at SkiRaceReg.com.

Our Masters race schedule for the coming season will again be in conjunction with Intermountain and PNSA. See page 3 of this newsletter for the complete schedule. Last year's season races began in early January at Bridger Bowl, where we raced with the U16, U18 and U21 racers. We Masters got to go first, but I have to say that, because the NCAA men and women from the Montana State University Ski Team were competing, those GS and SL courses were the longest I had ever run in my life! But we all survived and enjoyed the challenge. Then we raced in the rain at Snow King, and next in great conditions at Sun Valley. I took some time off in early February to volunteer for ten days at the FIS World Championships at Beaver Creek. The races at Schweitzer were reduced to a single GS due to poor snow conditions. Then we all headed to Sun Valley for the Masters National Championships March 15-20. Top Northern podium finishers were: Lisa Ballard, Class 6, first place in SC, GS, SL and Overall Combined; Melissa Dettmer, Class 3, second place in SG and GS; Fran Noel, Class 11, third place in SL and Overall Combined; Brad Leonard, class 12, third place in SL and Overall Combined; and Ryan Molde, Class 3, second place in GS and SL, and third in Overall Combined.

Although we have a large number of skiers participating in training programs at

Bridger Bowl, Big Sky, Lookout, Red Lodge and Whitefish, most of them do not participate in USSA-sanctioned races. Recent division chair phone meetings have spawned some ideas on how to encourage those skiers to become more serious Masters racers. Anyway, with this season's National Master Championships scheduled for our own Big Sky Resort March 14-19, we think that our Northern participation will increase quite a bit over last year's. So, with new snow already falling high in Montana's mountains, we look forward to seeing all of you there in March! Many thanks to Phillips 66, Big Sky Resort and all of our other sponsors for helping out with the Nationals.



Rocky Mountain

Lauren McMath Beckos
www.rmmskiracing.org

And just like that... a new ski season is upon us! As usual, our division members have been spotted throughout the summer hiking, biking, kayaking, sailing, water skiing, and dryland training! It's nearly time to roll that kick-butt attitude back into ski racing! Fresh off the 2015 Division Cup win in Sun Valley, ID, the Rocky division is planning to bring it again in the 2015-2016 season!

Our race schedule is coming together! See our website (above) or skiracereg.com for the latest information as we lock in dates with the remaining venues. We will kick off the season on Nov. 21 with our Annual Fall Awards party at the American Mountaineering Center in Golden (americanmountaineeringcenter.org). We will wrap up again with the Tengdin Tri-Combi Mar. 26 and at Breckenridge, April 2-3. In

Rocky Mountain claimed the 2015 Division Cup at Sun Valley.



Division News

between, there will be plenty of options at Ski Cooper, Echo, Copper, Winter Park, Aspen, and Loveland to get in the gates whether you prefer DH, SG, GS, SL, or love them all! We are excited again to host the FIS Masters Cup/Western Championships in Aspen Feb. 4-9. It was great seeing so

Huff and family, the Older Gentlemen's Group, Jeanette Saylor, The Minnesota Connection (Bob Benson, Charlie Hauser, Lilla Gildow, Winfried Raabe, Tom Patterson and Jerry Sorenson), The Tengdin Family, Jim Reinig, and A Racers Edge. Thank you to all the Rocky Division

two SG's to test all abilities! The great news is the Masters Eastern Regional Championships are at Okemo, VT again this year. The Okemo race crew did a great job at the 2014 Masters Nationals & 2015 Eastern Championships. This year's event will include DH, SG, GS and SL.

We will begin the season with a pre-season race at Holiday Valley, on either Dec. 12 or 19. This will be a joint race with our good friends, the Ontario Canada Masters. This will be a non-points event, with a pair of two-run GS races that day. Last year's event was a great day of racing, followed by an après race party, with food & beverages. This will be a good warmup for the season.

We are still in the process of setting the 2016 schedule & confirming race dates. The first points race will be at Swain on Jan. 3, GS/SL. Swain is always a great hill to get the season going. We are also planning an Ellicottville weekend, with a night SL at Kissing Bridge and a GS/GS at Holimont. February will have a Central NY weekend, with Song Mtn. GS/SL and Greek Peak, Rockett Prentice and Joan Skiff Memorial GS/GS. The Hunt Hollow GS/GS is scheduled for Feb. 13. Hunt Hollow is always a fun and challenging GS race. The end of February will be the Eastern Championships at Okemo, Feb. 24-28. The SG, GS and SL will count for NY Masters points. We will finish the season at Swain for GS/SL NY Masters Finals.

Please note that some of the dates and events are subject to change. So make sure you check nymasters.org or our Facebook page for any updates.

As always, the NY Masters have a great day of racing, getting in two-run races by 2:00. This leaves time for free skiing, as well as fun après race parties. The NY Masters welcomes all adult racers of any abilities, whether you are a seasoned U21 racer, Nastar racer or an adult beer league racer. This year we are hoping to increase our race attendance, we would like to have some new racers join us.

Check out our website for the 2016 schedule, contacts, and registration information. We have also added a NY Masters Facebook page for everyone to access, as well. We also ask that you please visit the links to our many sponsors that help make our series great.

See you at the Start!



Mike Robbins, Canada, and Don Sears, Intermountain, waiting for Skinner to join the class.

many out-of-division racers mid-season and we hope to see you all again this year!

There are plenty of season pass options here in Colorado, and several great training programs. Check out the training page on our website for all the local options.

The board has been hard at work over the summer, and we look forward to introducing our new ideas and plans for recruitment and marketing. We are focused on spreading the word about our organization, as well as making it easier for our membership to increase involvement and increase the fun. As always, we owe a big THANK YOU to our sponsors and volunteers that are truly what makes this all possible! A BIG thank you to those that participated in our Sponsor-A-Race Program last year: Pedro Pacheco, Tanya Muller and David Garner (a.k.a. Red Rocket), Hans Oberlohr, Lori Hamilton and Jonathan Wolf, Alpine Orthopaedics, Phillips 66, Bob Benson, Bob and Loretta

racers for making last year so much fun. I look forward to seeing you all back out there this year. Only *you* get to decide what to do with your second childhood, and the Rocky Division is glad to be part of that fun!



New York State Snow Masters Series

By Jack Eisenschmid
www.nymasters.org

Welcome to the 2016 season!

With winter fast approaching, it won't be long before we get back on our skis and do what we all like to do best... race! This will be the 44th season for the NY State Masters and we once again will have a great race schedule. This year we will have a total of 18 races and nine race days. We also have a very nice blend of races consisting of 11 GS's, five SL's, and

Odds and Ends

Helmet Update

Your last year's helmet is good for the coming season. But you will need to upgrade for the 2016–17 season with an FIS-stickered helmet. USSA Masters will follow FIS Masters in 2016–17, when the stickered helmet will be required. This exemption is for sanctioned Masters races. If a Masters racer competes in a non-Masters-specific



This is what you'll find on the newest helmets.

with both rules—the “new” alpine helmets rules adopted in November 2015 for all FIS competitions as well as the “old” alpine helmets as defined by the previous rules.

event either scored or non-scored, they must follow the helmet requirements of that event.

For FIS Masters Cup races, this is the rule:

For the season 2015–2016, Masters athletes can compete wearing helmets conforming

Lead From the Front

Children learn by example. So it's fair to ask coaches who work with junior or adult racers: When was the last time a starter said to you, “Racer ready...three, two, one, GO!” When was the last time you showed your love of our sport and the enjoyment of competition? How often is your only view of the race hill from the sidelines?

We need to show that it's not just about winning; it's a lifelong pleasure. You can be an international champion at almost any age. Ultimately, you hope to install in your students a love of skiing that lasts a lifetime. What could be more gratifying than seeing a middle-aged skier on the race course that you used to coach?

Where have all our racers gone? It's sad to see kids walk away from the sport, to give up competition because they didn't make the National Team. But what kind of example is set by those adults in a position to influence them?

The 2000 National Coaches Academy at Mammoth was an incredible gathering of coaches, trainers, physiologists and tech reps sharing their knowledge. Norbert Geissler, a top Austrian clinician, was teaching. He was asked what the Austrian

coaches were doing that we were not. “The classroom stuff is very similar,” he said. Then he bluntly added, “But you guys don't ski very good. The hardest part of the Austrian coaching exam is the on-hill skiing. It is very important to *show* our kids what to do. How many of you teach on race skis?”

Of 11 coaches listening, only three raised their hands. “How can you teach new technique if you cannot show it? And what are those?” Geissler asked, pointing to soft, Vibram-soled boots on one coach. “Those are for gate keeping, not coaching.”

I encourage all coaches to ski on the equipment their racers use and be able to teach how to use it. There is no better way to keep up with changes than doing them.

Another way we can practice what we preach, set a good example, and get coach's recertification credit, is to race in a Masters race. Being involved keeps your love of the sport alive—and communicated to your athletes. You'll also enjoy the camaraderie! Check out the masters section at ussa.org for schedules and information. Try a race. Put your ego on the line. You have so much more to gain than lose.

By Bill Skinner: a version of this article ran in Ski Racing Magazine in December, 2000.

Phillips 66 Masters National Speed Series

2015 OVERALL CHAMPIONS

Group A/B (men age 20–59)

	Pts
1 Erik Klemme (M07, RM)	208
2 Richard Slabinski (M07, IM)	84
3 Don Johnson (M07, RM)	79
4 Thomas Scheeler (M01, EA)	75
5 Franz Fuchsberger (M07, RM)	63

Group D (men age 60–90+)

	Pts
1 Pepi Neubauer (M09, EA)	100
2 Hans Truckenbrod (M08, EA)	85
3 Knut Olberg (M10, PN)	65
4 Michael Adams (M08, IM)	57
5 Tim Stewart (M08, FW)	52

Group C (women)

	Pts
1 Lauren Beckos (W01, RM)	105
2 Jennifer Kaufman (W04, RM)	100
3 Jacqueline Levy (W01, EA)	90
4 Marien, Lisa (W02, EA)	60
5 Tanya Muller (W04, RM)	52



Erik, Lauren and Pepi display their trophies as Speed Series overall champions.

2016 National Speed Series Schedule

When	Where	What
Jan. 14–17	Ski Cooper, CO	DH/SG
Jan. 23	Stratton, VT	SG/SG
Jan. 29	Park City, UT	SG/SG
Feb. 7–9	Aspen, CO	SG/SG/DH
Feb. 15–17	Soldier, ID	DH/DH
Feb. 19–21	49degrees N, WA	SG/SG
Feb. 22–24	Soldier, ID	DH/DH
Feb. 25–26	Schweitzer, ID	SG/SG
Feb. 24–27	Okemo, VT	DH/SG
Mar. 14–17	Big Sky, MT (Nat'l)	DH/SG

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The VISION of the USSA Alpine Masters is to provide adult skiers with a lifelong opportunity to enjoy the challenges and rewards of alpine ski racing.

The MISSION of the USSA Alpine Masters is to make this vision a reality by developing, promoting, organizing and coordinating the highest level of alpine ski racing throughout snow country in the United States and internationally, and to fulfill our passion for and love of nature, the outdoors, mountains, freedom, self-challenge and accomplishment.

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2016 Major Events

**Phillips 66
Masters National Championships**
Big Sky, MT, Mar. 14-19
DH/SG/GS/SL

**Phillips 66 FIS
Masters Cup/Western Championships**
Aspen, CO, Feb. 4-7
SL/GS/GS/SG

Eastern Championships
Okemo/Suicide Six, VT, Feb. 24-28
DH/SG/SL/GS

NASTAR Major Events

Eastern Championships	Midwest Championships	National Championships
Okemo, VT Jan. 30-31	Welch Village, MN Feb. 26-27	Steamboat, CO Mar. 24-27