

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING  
OF  
USSA MASTERS NATIONAL WORKING GROUP  
Wednesday, March 20, 2013  
Huntley Lodge  
Big Sky Resort, Montana**

**1. Introduction**

- A. The meeting was called to order at 3:30 PM.
- B. Approval of March 2012 National Annual Working Group Minutes.

Steve Slivinski called the meeting to order. It was moved by Steve Slivinski and seconded by Bill McCollom that the minutes of the 2011 USSA Masters National Working Group be approved. MOTION PASSED.

**2. Working Group Members and Others in Attendance**

Steve Slivinski, National Chairman  
Bill Skinner, USSA Coordinator  
Bob Sarchett, Site Selection  
Ann Ozuna, Pacific Northwest  
Ryan Fuller, Central  
Bill McCollom, Eastern  
Mike Braun, Far West  
Wayne Henderson, Alaska  
Graham Smith, Rocky Mountain  
Thunder Jalili standing in for Amy Lanzel, Intermountain  
Toby Chapman, Northern

Other participants in attendance:

Nancy Auseklis, Intermountain serving as recording secretary  
Lisa Densmore, Northern  
Rauli Karjalainen, Intermountain  
Keith Thompson, Intermountain  
Pierre Jeangirard, Far West  
Pepi Neubauer, Eastern – New York  
Deb Lewis, Far West  
Don Smith, Far West  
Lauren MacMath, Rocky Mountain

**3. Reports**

**A. Division Chair Reports**

Alaska

Wayne Henderson reported that Alaska had normal number of races with a participation rate close to average.

### Pacific Northwest

Ann Ozuna reported that their race entries remained level at 55 to 60 per race. They are now using SkiRaceReg.com for online entries, which is working well with the exception of races held at Bachelor Mountain. She brought up the question of people using Competitor licenses vs Masters licenses. Bill Skinner remarked that there were 50 masters racers who either mistakenly pushed the wrong button while registering, and chose Competitor rather than Master, or who meant to have a dual license. This can be corrected, if noticed early in the season.

### Northern

Toby Chapman reported that he has been unable to generate any additional memberships, but not for lack of trying. He has encouraged people to travel with him to Lost Trail ski area, where he can set gates for free. But few Missoula racers are willing to travel. Lisa Densmore said that she has 23 people training with her in her program at Red Lodge. She is hopeful that they will soon feel confident enough to begin entering races.

### Far West

Mike Braun reported that the season went well, with only one race lost due to weather.

### Central

Ryan Fuller reported that membership held steady at 146. Their race starts were down, however, mostly due to injuries, or people getting older. The good news is that there were a lot of new racers joining up – the first year they have had enough new racers to make up for older racer attrition. Financially the division broke even.

### Rocky Mountain

Graham Smith reported that their numbers were down this year. They have had a problem scheduling Slalom races, since areas only want GS races, where the entry numbers are higher. Slalom races typically only generate 40 – 60 entries. Bottom line: areas want larger fields before committing to putting on a race. Vail will no longer schedule Masters races. The focus in Rocky Mountain is on Junior races, where they can have fields of 100 – 200 racers. They lost the Aspen SG & DH races because of weather, and had to pay \$7,500 to Beaver Creek in order to host 3 days of racing. The division scheduled 29 races over the season, which may be too many. They are competing with the Beer Leagues for hill space and competitors. Graham gave a big thanks to Bob and Dave Tengdin who sponsor a 3 day race at the end of March, The DJ Tengdin Memorial.

### Intermountain

Thunder Jalili reported that the Sun Valley and Park City races were both well attended, with about 100 racers. Other races have between 45-60 entries, which represent the core group of racers who travel. This year Intermountain had more Slaloms than usual because of weather. They have picked up some new members, which is good news. Bill Skinner said that he requires every participant who trains with the Park City program get a Masters membership. That way there is one less impediment to a new racer actually taking the step to enter a race for the first time. Thunder praised Amy Lanzel for her excellent job of obtaining sponsorships for the races.

## **B: Development Committee Reports**

Background: During the 2012 Annual Meeting of Masters Working Group, a committee was formed to develop a suggested plan for upcoming changes for submission to USSA. The committee was made up of the following people:

Ryan Fuller, Central  
Nadine Price, Eastern  
Thunder Jalili, Intermountain  
Bill McCollum, Eastern  
Lisa Densmore, Northern (added to Committee after annual meeting)

The Sub-Committee presented their report to USSA on May 3, 2012. (see attached document titled “Masters Working Committee Report to USSA dated May 3, 2012”) The following discussion was generated after reports were submitted by Bill McCollum and Ryan Fuller on the results of the implementation of some of the development ideas within their divisions of Eastern and Central. Bill and Ryan passed out copies of their reports, which are attached. (see attached documents titled “2013 Working Group Report – East” and “2013 Working Group Report – Central”)

The discussion over these ideas went as follows:

Posters:

Bill McCollum felt that it was “overkill” with too many posters distributed. Ryan said that they used to be mailed to each member, but that could cost up to \$8,000. The consensus was that the posters are a good idea if we can find a sponsor, and get them distributed at no cost.

Brochures:

Consensus was that the brochures are effective. Eastern division had a customized insert, and they printed 1,000 copies. They were given out at ski shows, races, clinics. Central and Intermountain also used the brochure. Bill Skinner mentioned that the template is available for divisions to access and customize.

**CONCLUSION: KEEP THE BROCHURE. HAVE DIVISIONS ADD INFORMATION ON TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THEIR DIVISION.**

Temporary Memberships:

Most divisions felt that they were a very important stimulus. Without a temporary membership, many people would not have raced at all. It was felt that the temporary membership program is vital to maintain race starts. Central reported that they used all of their funded temporary memberships, plus additional ones transferred from other divisions. Central has also experimented with a tiered pricing structure (\$15 for 1 day, \$28 for week/weekend, and \$54 for a month). They keep track of the paperwork, and make sure all proper forms for temporary or full membership are turned in to USSA. Bill Skinner said that USSA gave out 100 funded temporary memberships to the divisions, and almost all were used by some division or another. Lisa Densmore said that she feels the temps will be a bonus in the next few years. Those who used them this year may take a few years to become full members, but they have had a taste of racing and may get hooked. She suggested adding all the temporary members to our email list.

**CONCLUSION: TEMPORARY MEMBERSHIPS ARE VALUABLE, AND WE HOPE THEY CONTINUE.**

At this point Bill Skinner clarified a few rules re: international and Canadian competitors. Any foreigner can race in our National Championships with a full or temporary license. Canada can win medals, other countries cannot. Bill also clarified the new rule about health insurance. Anyone who races in a USSA race must have health insurance coverage.

### Clinics:

Lisa Densmore gave a report on her very successful “Give it a Try” race clinic at Wachusett Mountain. She feels that these clinics are very important, because lack of training opportunities is often a barrier to racing. She also mentioned that travel to races is a problem, and suggested we be more creative in our scheduling by holding races near larger populations where there are established “Beer Leagues”, such as Massachusetts and New Jersey. Having a motivated person at each area to get something going, is really the key to increased participation. Celebrity coaches are also a big draw (see Ryan Fuller’s report on Buck Hill Clinic with Kristina Koznick). Graham Smith reported that Rocky Mountain has speed camps with downhill training opportunities. Ryan Fuller suggested we look at trying to turn one of the Beer League races into a Masters Race. Rocky has tried to mix with the airline races. They also tried selling reduced entry fees by purchasing a 5 pack. Season pass for entry fees didn’t work very well.

CONCLUSION: “GIVE IT A TRY” RACE CLINICS WERE VERY SUCCESSFUL AND MAY PRODUCE NEW MEMBERS GLEANED FROM NON-MASTERS RACERS IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

### Scheduling/Location/Incentives:

Consensus was that dates are important in scheduling races. No races over Martin Luther King weekend. Online race registration has simplified signing up for races, but has also made it easy to cancel. After some discussion, it was agreed that each division should have its’ own policy on penalties for late entries or cancelations. Marketing is very important, and prizes and raffles at events help create energy. Course setting was discussed, with the agreement that they should be masters friendly but challenging and fun to ski.

East is considering non USSA Regional Champs in 2014. If so any Division member may win Region vests in at Region Championships as support is from total Masters membership.

At this point there was a discussion on race licenses. There was a strong agreement that any idea which combines Masters, Juniors, and Competitor licenses would not be popular. If the masters license were to be eliminated, masters racing would disappear.

CONCLUSION: WE SHOULD NOT HAVE A NATIONAL POLICY WHICH MIXES JUNIOR AND MASTERS RACERS, BUT RATHER EACH DIVISION OR AREA SHOULD DECIDE IF THEY WANT TO INCLUDE JUNIORS IN THEIR LOCAL RACES, OR ALLOW MASTERS TO RACE WITH JUNIORS.

### **C: Time Line**

Bill Skinner notified the committee of due dates for 2013 – 2014. They are as follows:

April 1, 2013	Spring Newsletter input deadline
July 15, 2013	Revised text to Bill Skinner for inclusion in 2014 Comp Guide
Aug. 15, 2013	Division Race Schedule deadline
Sept 7, 2013	Competition Guide on-line
Oct. 15, 2013	Fall Newsletter input deadline
TBA	Eastern Regional Championships (unless Nationals held in East)
Feb. 6-9, 2014	FIS Masters Cup, Park City, UT SG/SG/SL/SL
TBA	National Championships (Target date 3 <sup>rd</sup> week in March)

**D: 2014 National Championship site selection:**

Discussion was held on possible locations based on bids received to date. Squaw Valley had been approached to have Masters Nationals in conjunction with National Championships. Original idea was to have our Masters Nationals before the regular Nationals. However, the area now wants to have Masters after regular Nationals, and they are unsure of dates. After some discussion, the Squaw Valley location was taken off the table.

Winter Park submitted a preliminary bid to hold events the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of March, which is our preferred date. They can hold Super Comb, SG, GS & SL for all groups. The Winter Park site was kept in consideration.

Sunday River has not had enough time to submit a proposal, but would like to be considered. They can hold the same 4 events. Bill McCollum requested that Eastern be given more time to submit bids, which might also include Okemo or Whiteface.

Motion was made and seconded that we wait 10 days to give Eastern enough time to submit a bid for 2014 Masters National Championships, with a March 30, 2013 deadline. Motion passed. It was decided that site selection will be made by email vote among the selection committee which consists of: Bob Sarchett – Intermountain, Rees Palermo – Far West, and Pepi Neubauer – Eastern/NY.

Steve Slivinski adjourned the meeting at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Nancy Auseklis  
Acting Recording Secretary

Attest:

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Steve Slivinski  
Alpine Masters National Chairman