

Greetings!

If you were a University of Wyoming ski team member, coach, friend, or other acquaintance, please read on about some modest developments for the sport of Alpine Ski Racing at UW.

The short story is that last fall I worked with two Laramie HS grads attending UW, had done well in Wyoming HS racing, and were interested in firing up an alpine ski team. We are now in the second year and the time has come to get serious about fund raising.

I encourage you to also read the letter from Ari Sanroma. She is new to UW and is the Vice President of the RSO (Recognized Student Organization) that is the Wyoming Alpine Ski Team (WAST). This effort is all for and about the kids; I'm providing a bit of guidance and coaching, but it is truly a grass roots effort. No Asto Turf here.

Last year we had a total of 7 different athletes go out of the starting gate in at least one sanctioned race, with the largest number at any one of the races being 3. Needless to say it was a humble beginning, although with Megan Moss going to all races and a couple of girls doing fairly well, our Women's team qualified for Regionals. We did not go, as we were far from prepared to head to Bend, Oregon and operate at that level but this year we feel ready.

For 2018 we have a few more kids: there are 4 girls and 3 boys coming out to dryland on a regular basis, and a couple more are on the fence who have come out once or twice, and we hope to get them on board soon.

The situation at UW is somewhat challenging. Not only is there absolutely zero financial support, we are not able to achieve Club Sport status, and we cannot even use the name 'University of Wyoming' which is why the current organization is called the Wyoming Alpine Ski Team. As an RSO you can find us on the UW website if you dig really hard! WAST President Megan Moss and Vice President Ari Sanroma went to a meeting with the Club Sports office and learned a few things, but we expect to be an RSO for the next year or two.

We will be on-snow at the Snowy Range Ski Area soon and the new owners have been supportive in providing discounted lift passes, training opportunities, and last year donated \$500 to our cause. We work closely with the Snowy Range Ski Club and in fact some of the athletes work as coaches for the younger kids on the weekends when they don't have races.

As far as competition goes, we participate in the United States Collegiate Ski and Snowboard Association (USCSA) which is a great organization. We are in the Rocky Mountain Conference with schools like CSU, Air Force Academy, Colorado School of Mines, Western State, Colorado Mesa University, and the club teams from CU, DU, and Utah.

There are 4 conference races, beginning the second week of January. See the schedule listed at the end of this letter.

Now for the tough part – funding. A certain alumni donated a set of 50 new gates and paid the USCSA fees last year, and the drills and radios we use are property of the Snowy Range Ski Club. But required team association fees this year add up to \$895. Additionally, the burden of individual fees on the kids is \$35 each, and each racing weekend is approximately \$170 per athlete. Thus, to fund a team of 5 boys

and 5 girls for the 4 conference races costs about \$8000. That does not include any travel expenses, training expenses, not to mention added costs if the team goes to Regionals or Nationals.

At present, the athletes assume they are responsible for their racing and training costs, and when I attended the annual conference meeting I surveyed the programs to find out what other schools' situations are and they are all over the board, with students paying anywhere from zero to \$1000. The schools are giving from \$1,000 to \$10,000 (Air Force! Gotta love it!).

In this one-step-at-a-time effort what I am hoping is to raise funds for the team association fees - \$895. If we can do better, then we will put additional funds toward race entries and tickets to help offset the athletes' costs. Also, I am pretty sure our Women's team will qualify for Regionals – which are in Jackson on February 23-25, 2018.

The target athlete at this stage is someone with a High School racing background, or perhaps someone who raced USSA and/or FIS when they were younger and gave it up a couple of years ago for whatever reason and now has an opportunity to have some fun in the sport. Most of our current kids fit that profile exactly. A grass-roots, participation oriented team is key: if there aren't enough student-athletes who just want to do it for the fun of it then it is not going to happen.

Some of you are surely aware that the UW Nordic Club Team has existed and done quite well for a long time and we hope to gradually get to where they are. It would be great to attend USCSA Nationals in the near future, with representatives from UW in more events! Unfortunately there is no combined trophy but perhaps someday there will be but again, fun, enjoyment, and participation are the primary focus. NCAA skiing still exists and is strong, although several of our old competitors have come frighteningly close to ending their programs. Alaska and New Mexico survived for this season but face serious challenges in the near future; Nevada Reno and Western State have been out for a while.

In closing, please consider supporting the Wyoming Alpine Ski Team (WAST) in any way possible. Any amount would be appreciated and I assure you that 100% of donations will go directly to the aforementioned expenses. The WAST-RSO is working on getting their own UW affiliated bank account but unfortunately it cannot be linked to a PayPal account or any other means of accepting credit cards, so the Snowy Range Ski Club (SRSC) has offered to provide that role.

If you wish to mail a check there is information on the website for where to send it and to whom to make it out to. If you wish to use a bank or credit card, please use the PayPal-Donate button on the website. SRSC has been kind enough to make their account available to us for this purpose. Your donation is tax deductible, as SRSC is a 501c(3) non-profit.

For additional information there is a Facebook page under Wyoming Alpine Ski Team, and a website can be found at <http://www.rfnsports.com>.

Happy Skiing and let's have a reunion soon!

Sincerely,

John Marno, UW Alpine 84-86

The USCSA-RMC race schedule for the 2018 season is:

January 13-14 – Winter Park, CO – GS/SL

January 20-21 – Ski Cooper, CO – SL/SL

January 27-28 – Telluride, CO – GS/GS

February 10-11 – Powderhorn, CO – GS/SL

Regionals: February 23-25 – Snow King, Jackson, WY – GS/SL/Dual

40th Annual USCSA Nationals: March 4-10 – Lake Placid, NY – GS/SL/Dual

2017-2018 Wyoming Alpine Ski Team Roster

Women

Megan Moss, Laramie, WY, Jr (RSO President)

Ari Sanroma, Alpharetta, GA, Soph (RSO Vice President)

Ryleigh Sutcliffe, Granby, CO, Fr (Fund-raising chair)

Kelsey Olson, Bend, OR, Soph (RSO Secretary)

Men

Stephen Holt, Bend, OR, Soph (RSO Treasurer)

Kirk Anderson, Pinedale, WY, Fr

Sage Lehmitz, St. George, UT, Grad Student