

FAR WEST NEWS

Far West Nordic Ski Education Association
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Issue #50 • Late Winter, 2002



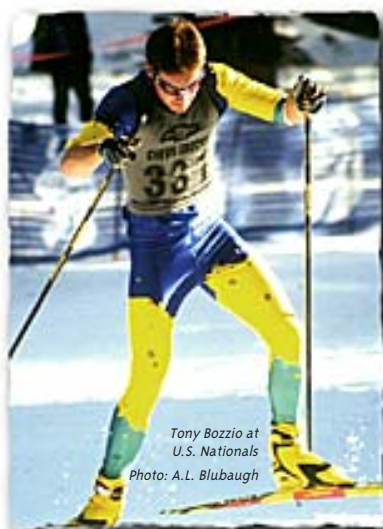
FAR WEST OFF TO JO'S!

Junior Olympic Team Heading for Idaho

The hot days of summer running, biking, and roller skiing are long over, and now the long hours of skiing on the local tracks are finally paying off. All have been training hard all throughout the year, and some have been performing this regimen season after season. They are the local Far West Nordic athletes, ready to head to Idaho next week for the Junior Olympic Cross Country Ski Championships in McCall.

The Junior Olympics, or JO's, are held every March to allow the fastest juniors from across the nation to race head to head. This year the Championships will be held in McCall, Idaho March 4-10. The events will consist of a 1.5 kilometer sprint race, a long classic race, a long skate race and

Continued on Page 2



Tony Bozzio at
U.S. Nationals
Photo: A.L. Blubaugh

“LIGHTING THE FIRE”

Team Olympic Inspiration for all Ages from Subaru Factory Team Member Pete Vordenberg

The idea, maybe the whole idea, of the Olympic games is to inspire. The 2002 Winter Olympic motto, “*Light the Fire Within,*” is almost embarrassingly corny, but it is absolutely true to the idea of the games. Everything I have ever wanted to be came first from watching someone else do it extraordinarily well.

Continued on Page 2

2002 SUBARU MASTERS NATIONALS AND GOLD RUSH WEEKEND • MARCH 12-17, 2002

The 2002 Subaru National Masters Championships are right here in California at Tahoe Cross Country and Royal Gorge this March 12-17. Races and events for the week at Tahoe XC include a 15 km Classic race, a Gourmet Ski Tour, and a 5 km. Classic/Freestyle Pursuit race and the Sprint Relays, while the weekend events switch over to Royal Gorge for the Silver & Bronze Rush distances championships.

Far West Nordic's second largest fund-raiser is at the California Gold Rush, March 16 & 17. Events include Saturday's spectator-friendly Junior races in either the low-key Gold Nuggets Kids' Race or the "jumps & bumps" Fischer SuperCross event.

Sunday's events are the highlight of the weekend, with either the 50K Gold Rush, the 30K. Silver Rush, 15K Bronze Rush, or the 6K Junior Rush for racers 15 and under.

Come and cheer, or help volunteer. Call or write the Far West office for more info.

ANNUAL FAR WEST BOARD MEETING

April 8th • Auburn Ski Club • 7 pm

All Members are highly encouraged to attend this Annual Meeting, which includes Board of Directors elections, Board Officer elections, and lots of important future planning. **BE THERE!**

LOG ON FOR THE LATEST NEWS...

WWW.FARWESTNORDIC.ORG

You can even download this newsletter in living color in Acrobat format! Save a Tree!

2002 FAR WEST AUCTION/RAFFLE A HUGE SUCCESS!

The Far West Nordic Ski Association held one of it's most successful (and the most fun!) annual Auction/Raffle/Party on January 19. We would like to sincerely thank all of the individuals, resorts, retailers, and companies who donated the tremendous amounts of great equipment and services. Thanks to them, Far West Nordic was able to raise over \$11,000 to help continue its Junior XC Ski Programs. Prizes included a Royal Gorge Wilderness Lodge Trip for 2, skis from Fischer, boots from Salomon, Alpenglow Sports Gift certificates, and much more. Thanks also to our food and beverage sponsors, including Trader Joe's, Earthly Delights, Stohlgren Bros., Lake Tahoe Brewing Co., Truckee River Winery, Mondavi Winery, Duarte Nursery, and more. And finally, kudos to all of the individuals who worked so hard for this event, especially Pati Johnson, Jody & Bill Sterling, Mike McElravey, and MacBeth Graphics of Truckee. And finally, thanks to all of you who came, bid, bought, and had such a rousing great time. Thanks again for making this event such a great success!

JUNIOR OLYMPICS, CONTINUED...

finally a 3 person relay which determines which division has the most depth. Racers compete for age group medals in the J2 (14-15 yrs old,) J1 (16-17,) and the OJ (18-19) categories.

Far West will be sending one of the largest teams in recent years to compete at the event. 24 athletes from across the region have qualified to represent us this year, a big increase from the 16 athletes who qualified last year. Athletes have been racing throughout the season to determine which skiers get the coveted points that allow them to attend the Junior Olympics. Far West Nordic and Auburn Ski Club Coach Jeff Schloss says "Junior programs from all across the Sierra Nevada and foothills have really stepped up the quality of their ski programs, and so we are seeing many more motivated and talented athletes from our region who can compete with the best at a National level."

The level of competition is extremely high at the Junior Olympics, with over 200 athletes from 9 different divisions skiing for top honors. Coach Schloss hopes to exceed last years results where Far West brought home 2 individual medals, but stresses that it is not all about the medals. "My goal is for each athlete to go to Idaho and ski their best, to really push themselves, and to enjoy the whole process of skiing at a national level — to me

that is success. I feel that this is one of the strongest teams Far West has ever put together and am very excited to see what we can do in McCall."

2002 Far West Junior Olympic Team:

OJ Boys: Tony Bozzio; Scott Hill; Dana Mosman; Nick Grimmer

OJ Girls: Jessica Ford

J1 Boys: Nick Sterling; Andrew Van Blarigan; Phillip Violet

J1 Girls: Lindsay Collin; Jenna Harlow; Kayla Evans; Whitney Prosor;

J2 Boys: Dominic Henriques; Joaquin Goodpaster; Garrett Reid

J2 Girls: Natalie Joffe; Kara LaPoint; Jennifer Myers; Cindy Apodaca; Sarah Armstrong; Katie Clark; Steffi Christiana

J3 Boys: Matt Gelso

J3 Girls: Maisha Goodpaster

(*Zach Violet (OJ Boys) and Betsy Van Blarigan (J1 Girls) qualified but are not travelling to McCall)

Far West JO Coaches:

Jeff Schloss; Nancy Fiddler; Anna Sterner; Bill Sterling; Dan Hill; Larry Ford; Lynn Harriman

LIGHT THE FIRE WITHIN, CONTINUED...

It's amazing how emotional momentum works. Ever since elementary school I have been on sports teams, from baseball and soccer to junior ski clubs, college ski teams, to Olympic and U.S. Ski Teams. My experience is that the performance of a team as a whole is absolutely dependent upon the attitude of the coaches and team members. One good result can turn into many. Preparation is most important, but good preparation can be destroyed by a negative environment. Andrew Johnson's stellar finish in the Men's 30km on the first day of the Olympics helped put some momentum into the overwhelmingly positive attitude that fills the US men's team at these games.

Then there is Beckie Scott. These days, everyone claims to know Beckie Scott; and the cool thing is, most of them do. This is one of the most friendly and approachable humans to ever bow her head so as to have an Olympic medal slipped around her neck. The point is, Beckie Scott, this knowable, likable, drug-free and always grinning person's person, took Olympic bronze (*ed. note: and should have been Gold if the cheaters had been thrown out*) and all of North American cross country skiing could suddenly see themselves in a whole new light as contenders at the highest level.

When John Bauer left the stadium after the start of the Olympic relay in dead last place all the crowd around me sagged, and even I thought, "Oh no." But John moved up in the field and interest in the race started to pick up, and then in full view of the whole huge crowd lining the trails and filling the bleachers at Soldier Hollow, John fired himself past the field into second place and the crowd around me stood up two feet taller and let loose an animal roar. I don't know what it was like for Kris Freeman, who was to take over the baton from John, to see his teammate in second place, among the top group and drop-

ping many of the world's best, but I imagine it was like throwing the toaster into the tub. I bet Kris thought if John could do it, so would he. And he did do it, and so did third leg Justin Wadsworth, and last leg Carl Swenson who sprinted in a few feet behind Austria's Christian Hoffman for fifth—our best place ever.

As John Downing told me, the coolest thing about it was that afterward, all they could talk about was how next time they can do even better.

I'm not embarrassed to tell you that after watching the men's relay and seeing Beckie Scott take third in the pursuit, I left the Olympic venue with my fire within burning hot.

Inspiration is transferable. A bunch of athletes trying and succeeding on skis is inspiration to the skier and the student, and the cop and the kitchen staff. The idea of the Olympics is that they make you want to do what ever you do, as well as it can be done.

SkiPost is a cross-country skiing informational, educational and motivational service, brought to you through a partnership with the Subaru Factory Team, www.dreamofit.com, the Fischer-Salomon Athlete Force and the Fischer-Salomon-Swix-Subaru Event Force. To subscribe, visit www.skipost.com or email weanswer@skipost.com.



The author at the 2000 Lexus Sprints at Royal Gorge

U.S. XC NATIONALS 2002 REPORT

Far West Juniors Shine at Senior Nationals in Bozeman, Montana

Story and Photos By A.L. "Bill" Blubaugh

It was 24° F, snowing lightly and windy on arrival in Bozeman. The snow was welcome since there had been an absence of snow in November and December. The team consisted of Kara LaPoint, Natalie Joffe, Tony Bozzio, Scott Hill, Eric Ford, Dana Mosman, Nick Sterling, Phil Violett and Zach Violett. The coaches were Glenn Jobe and Jeff Schloss. Don Mosman, Paul Violett, Gary York and Michele Violett, who planned and prepared meals, made up the staff.

Friday was an off day. The Sprint races were held on Saturday. The temperature seemed to be a constant 24° F. It was snowing lightly and was windy. I understood why the Bohart Ranch had the nickname Blowhart Ranch. The Bridger Ski Foundation Nordic/Biathlon did an excellent job of organizing and running the championships. The volunteers were numerous, courteous and helpful. The only fly in the ointment was the timing, which had been sub-contracted. Nick and seven others finished within one second of each other. Nick observed that if he had skied five seconds faster he would have moved up 28 places in the overall standings.

Monday, the day of the women's 15 km and men's 30 km freestyle individual start race, the temperature was 42° F and the sun was shining. However, the snow was cold and predictable. Don observed one of the women from the 15 km race, which was run before the men's 30 km race, checking the skis of some of the women who beat her. She had consistently beaten them all year, but not today. Their skis were structured and hers were not. Glenn killed the Far West Skis including Zach's, and also the other UAA men's skis. It was the beginning of greater cooperation between the two teams. During the race Far West feed stations served UAA skiers and vice versa.

Tuesday was a day off. The temperature got up to 52° F. There were large bare spots in the snow around the Inn. Although Zach was on the UAA traveling ski team he was listed as skiing for the Auburn Ski Club in the sprints and the 30 km. He was staying with the UAA team, but getting his support from Far West. He was confused and in some mental anguish. Typical of the things troubling him were having to go to a race three hours before time and having to wear the team jacket while racing on a hot day. He met with Far West coaches and staff. Glenn and particularly Jeff, because he had been a college coach, were able to help him. Jeff explained some of the limitations a college coach has. They do not have enough staff or vehicles to drive the men and women's teams separately. College rules dictate such things as having to wear the team jacket while racing. You are more on your own in college. Zach left in good spirits. I gained a better first hand appreciation for the support Far West provides — such as the everyday, morning to night activities that Glenn and Jeff were doing for the team, the support being provided by people like Don, Paul and Gary, the

hard work of Michele Violett, and in the past of Edith Jobe, and Bill and Jody Sterling among others, to say nothing of the indirect support of families and others who got the team here. As an indication of what Far West is up against, every member of the US Junior team had their passport and had traveled



Kara LaPoint at U.S. Nationals

outside the United States. Far West deserves a pat on the back. Glenn put in his customary 16-hour days. Michelle and I had been charged by Edith to make sure that Glenn ate. It was our toughest job. We did not always succeed.

Wednesday, the day of the 5 km women's and 10 km men's classic individual start races, the temperature was 32° F. The race course was ice and it was starting to snow. The conditions on the course varied so much from place to place there was no perfect wax. The skis would get dirty. The course was rerouted to eliminate the sharp S-curves because of the icy base. To make things even more unpredictable an Intermountain J2 qualifier race was held between the women and men's races. By the time the men's race ended we had three inches of new snow. Hitting the wax was a coach's nightmare.

Thursday, the day of the women's 5 km and men's 10 km freestyle pursuit, dawned cold (20 F) and clear. Glenn said he could hit the wax from the parking lot. The snow from the day before was sufficient to allow the S-curves to be put back in. It was a great day for racing.

Overall, Far West had some great results for the week, including Nick Sterling taking 7th J1 Boy in the Sprint race, Phil Violett capturing 6th J1 boy in the Classic Race, Natalie Joffe finishing in the top half of the J1 field (as a J2 skier) in the Sprint and Skate race, & Kara LaPoint doing the same in the Classic race. Also, Dana Mosman was one of the top juniors in the 30km skate race. And as Glenn Jobe said at the Far West Nordic Auction/Raffle, there were two firsts for Far West: Zach Violett made the US Junior team and Phil Violett was 2nd alternate on the Junior Scandinavian Cup Team. Far West has come a long way.

A.L. "Bill" Blubaugh is an avid supporter of Far West Nordic, and also happens to be Zach, Phillip, and Sara Violett's grandfather.



FAR WEST RACING CUP UPDATES

Sierra Ski Chase & Fischer Cup Highlight the List for Season-Long Racing

Interest in Far West's series of races has never been greater! Both the Sierra Ski Chase and the Fischer Cup are creating lots of excitement and participation on the Far West Nordic race schedule. Our thanks to Helga Sable for all the incredible work that she does organizing the Sierra Ski Chase, and thanks also to Dan Hill for sponsoring the 5 race Fischer Cup series. Following is a mid-season update on how these two events are shaping up.

SIERRA SKI CHASE

With most of the races completed, this year's Chase is rounding into shape. In the lead for the women is **Maggie Fillmore**, with 330 points, followed closely by **Debbie Hakansson** with 325 points. In third place is last year's winner, **June Lane** (310). Rounding out the top ten are: **Karen Radebold** (290), **Louise Wholey** (285), **Laura Stern** (270), **Helga Sable** (260), **Debbie Baker** (225), **Brandy Stewart** (180) and **Julie Bradley** (180).

For the men, **Phillippe Mollard** is showing that last year's win was no fluke. Phillippe is comfortably placed in the top spot with 340 points. **John Cobourn** is in the runner-up spot with 320 points. Third place is a dog fight with **Terry Daley**, **Stan Eriksson**, and **Mark Nadell** all tied with 310 points each. Rounding out the top ten are **Pete Kirchner** (295), **Tom Regan** (290), **Ralph Johnson** (285), **J.C. LeGras** (280) and **Art Sable** (275).

The remaining races for the Sierra Ski Chase include the Masters Nationals races at Tahoe Cross Country March 12 - 15 (these races count for participation points of 10 points each), and the final race of the SSC season is at the California Gold/Silver Rush on March 17.

FISCHER CUP

With 3 out of the six Fischer Cup events have been completed, the Fischer Cup placings are crystallizing! The FC uses no age handicaps, scoring points only for the top 30 finishers in each of the 6 races.

For the men, **Tim Hill** is comfortably in the lead with 103 points. Second place is turning out to be a battle between **Dave Stover** with 84 points, followed closely by **Mark Nadell**, 3 slim points behind with 81. Rounding out the rest of the top 10 are **Terry Daley** (62), **Nick Grimmer** (61), **Duane Butcher** (57), **Steve Wallace** (53), **Tony Bozzio** (48), **Andrew Van Blarigan** (47), and **Dan Mainka** (46).

On the women's side, **Debbie Hakansson** is looking for a repeat of last year's win, in first with 96 points. Close behind is **Juliane Lilienfein** (88), and **Karen Radebold** (73). **Maggie Fillmore** (71), **Mary Kay Aufrance** (62), **Julie Bradley** (55), **Laura Stern** (53), **Debbie Thomas** (53), **Susan Reynolds** (52), and **Debbie Baker** (48).

Full results for both the **Sierra Ski Chase** and the **Fischer Cup** can be found on the web at www.farwestnordic.org.

"Far West News" is a production of the Far West Nordic Ski Education Association, and is published on a regular basis throughout the year. Design & typesetting is courtesy of **MACBETH GRAPHICS** of Truckee. Any submissions, questions, or corrections, please contact us at:

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