

# WELCOME TO "NORDIC NEWS"

**W**hat an incredible start to the ski season! It's only Thanksgiving, and yet there are some skiers with over a month of on-snow training. The Far West Juniors are gearing up hard for this year's upcoming Junior Olympics to be held right here at Auburn Ski Club for the first time since 1971. All the other Far West Nordic programs are going strong as well, in anticipation of a long and enjoyable ski season. We hope you enjoy and learn from this, our annual newsletter.

Far West Nordic would like you to be a member of our organization. WE NEED YOUR MEMBERSHIP TO KEEP OUR PROGRAMS GOING! It doesn't cost much to join and enjoy the many benefits of Far West Nordic, but more importantly, your membership dollars are critical to us. Some of the benefits of membership include:

- **Discounts at participating ski areas**
  - **Regular newsletters throughout the ski season (smaller than this, but still chock-full of important info).**
  - **The ability to attend one of our many clinics, camps and ski trips, both for juniors and adult skiers.**
  - **Eligibility to enter the Sierra Ski Chase, with its great ski races and prizes (sign-up at one of the first four races).**
- **Our constantly-updated, easy to read website, complete with ski information, race results, and more!**

Far West Nordic's mission is to "promote the sport of cross country skiing in our part of the world." Our goal is to provide opportunities for athlete skill development, to provide coaches' education, endorse Junior, Senior and Master regional competition teams, and to promote cross country ski racing. Please join today, either using the form on the previous page, or go to our website at [www.farwestnordic.org](http://www.farwestnordic.org) and join on-line. We'll see you on the trails!

**Mark Nadell,**  
*Far West Nordic News Editor*

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COVER PHOTO: ALEXANDRA O'NEIL AT THE 2003 AUBURN SKI CLUB JUNIOR QUALIFIER SPRINTS. PHOTO BY MARK NADELL

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## SKI AREA DISCOUNTS

Discounts from the following Cross Country Ski Areas and Resorts are available to current Far West members. All that's required is your Far West Nordic Membership card and a sincere "thank you."

### SQUAW CREEK · SPOONER LAKE

#### MT. SHASTA · KIRKWOOD

\$5.<sup>00</sup> Off Full Day Pass · Valid Anytime

#### ROYAL GORGE

Ski Midweek All Day for Afternoon Rate

Valid Midweek & Non-Holiday only

#### TAHOE XC · BEAR VALLEY

All Day Pass for Afternoon Rate

Valid anytime except holiday weekends

#### NORTHSTAR-AT-TAHOE

\$10.<sup>00</sup> Full Day Rate

Valid Sunday-Friday, Non-Holiday only

#### TAHOE DONNER

\$4.<sup>00</sup> Off Full Day Rate

Valid anytime

#### TAMARACK LODGE XC

All Day Pass for Afternoon Rate

Valid anytime

These discounts are provided as a privilege to Far West members, and are subject to the rules and restrictions of the participating areas. Please be courteous.

# THE JUNIOR OLYMPICS ARE COMING TO TOWN!

by Bill Clark & Julie Young

(Containing excerpts from an upcoming article in SIERRA HERITAGE MAGAZINE, reprinted with permission of the author)

**T**he 2005 Cross Country Junior Olympics are coming to the Auburn Ski Club Training Center this winter. Scheduled for March 7th through 12th, 2005, the annual gathering of the very best junior cross country skiers in the nation will be returning to the Auburn Ski Club Training Center this season after a 33 year absence and only the second time in its 77 year history.

The first "JO's" at ASC were held in 1971 and included seven events with 170 competitors. The 2005 national championship will consist of 18 events with over 425 athletes. The wool kickers and wooden Bonna skis of the 1971 JO's may be gone - replaced by high tech gear and sleek racing suits - but the dedication and old fashion hard work the athletes bring to the start line is unchanged. JO's are the premier showcase for junior skiers in the United States.

The Junior Olympics (aka National Championships) are viewed in the U.S. as the pinnacle of achievement for an expected 425 athletes. All must qualify within one of the 10 USSA divisions. For a handful, JO's is a first opportunity to win a national title and begin a journey that will lead to international and Olympic competition. The spirit of competition that will play out on the ASC courses begins years in advance with the desire to excel and the dedication to a goal.

For the 40+ dedicated, hard training juniors that will qualify for our divisional Far West team, competing on the home course should provide a special competitive edge. At last year's JO's in Lake Placid, NY, Far West skiers collected 18 medals (top 10 results), 5 "podiums" (top 3), 6 overall in the coveted "Alaska Cup" for overall competition, and the girls High School National Championship award (Truckee High). Home turf, top-notch coaches, knowledge of local waxing conditions, and cheering families will all add up to an exciting championships for Far West.

What does it take to be a junior Olympian? These are just some of the workouts our athletes have endured: a 3 mile double pole rollerski workout up the Old Hwy 40, from Donner Lake to Donner Pass; a run from the Royal Gorge Cross Country Center down to

the actual "Royal Gorge" on the North Fork of the American River, a 16 mile round-trip with an elevation loss and gain of 4,400' in a swift two hours and forty-five minutes; another rollerski, skating up steep Blackwood Canyon (on the west shore of Lake Tahoe), while throwing in at least 30 minutes of intervals at 80-95 percent of maximum effort. By the time winter comes around, it's too late for training. Now, it's all about racing - juniors compete in at least one and oftentimes two to three races a week from December through March. But what really differentiates these workouts from many junior athletic programs is that there are virtually no "Little League Parents" cracking the whip—these juniors are their own drivers.

The 1971 Junior Olympics gave us Bill Koch, who at 15 years of age won the Combined (jumping and cross country) competition (no longer a JO's' event). Koch went on to lead the 1976 US Olympic team in Seefeld, Austria, where he stunned the Nordic world, claiming the silver medal in the 30 k race. He became an instant sensation, the only American up to that point and to this day to win a cross country medal. Koch went on to win the overall World Cup in 1981, again the only American to do so. An even greater legacy was his early adoption and refinement of the "skate" technique that would revolutionize the sport.

In 1971 the organizers relied on scrappy ingenuity and shovel-handed volunteers. Fast forward to 2004: the spirit of community involvement and volunteerism driving ASC's first JO's continues to fuel the organization today, but the complexity and scale of the competition has escalated - there has been a huge investment of energy to meet the challenge. Since 1971, the Club itself has evolved. The thought-to-be-temporary warming hut (and "everything-else-build-

ing") built in 1971 was finally retired in the early 90's, replaced by a spacious lodge, and the trail system has increased substantially. Recently, ASC Director **Bill Clark** and his crew have hit it hard to assure fair competition, accurate results and the event's success. The improvements have been dramatic, with carefully measured trails, a widened spectator-viewing stadium, and huge boulders removed guaranteeing that even with light snow coverage, the show will go on. For ASC, these improvements will last a lifetime. Hosting JO's is an opportunity to showcase ASC and the outstanding cross country skiing available in the Sierra, and to boost the sport within the community. But most importantly, organizers feel that our region's skiers have developed to a level worthy of hosting the event.

The teams currently consist of 70 athletes. With Far West Nordic and ASC Head Coach **Jeff Schloss** at the wheel, these dedicated juniors train almost year-round. Schloss and his assistant coaches train two teams - Development and Competition. There are workouts almost everyday, depending on which team you belong to. In recent years the team has enjoyed an impressive rise in the regional ranking from 10th to 6th.

One of the keys to the success of the teams has been an arsenal of talented coaches and training camps. Headliner coaches include; **Glenn Jobe**, biathlon Olympian; **Marcus Nash**, multi-national champion and Olympian; **Debbi Waldear**, multi-world masters champion; **Nancy Fiddler**, multi-national champion and Olympian, and Development Team Coach **Ben Grasseschi** of Auburn Ski Club. Coaches not only share their insights, they act as role models and provide perspective - they view training and competition as a way to mold a person, not just an athlete. Schloss says, in comparing his experience

coaching college skiers to juniors, "With juniors you can make an impact; by college, individuals are already established in their skiing technique and as people." The camps are action-packed, from early season on-the-snow at Yellowstone to summer camps in Park City at the U.S. Ski Team training center, Yosemite, June Lake and Marin County and more.

With the exception of some athletes from Mammoth and the Bay Area, the Far West juniors train and race with each other daily, unlike other regions where kids live in remote locations, train individually and meet up on a few occasions for big races. During the 2005 JO's the Far West team will stay together and eat team meals at Ice Lakes Lodge in nearby Serene Lakes. Junior skier Matt Gelso says, "One of the best things about competing at JO's is travel." Far West skiers will experience the best of all worlds, the feel of travel and team bonding, while still retaining that home-field advantage.

Knowing the trail system, having intimate knowledge of Sierra snow and weather conditions, and familiarity with the altitude are all advantages the team will benefit from this year, not to mention all the friends, family and fans loudly lining the course with energizing cheers. One big difference these JO's will have to past locations consist of the location itself. Contrast the mostly sunny Sierra days, deep snows and comparatively balmy winter temperatures to the past three JO's held in McCall, Idaho; Fairbanks, Alaska; Lake Placid, New York. The temperatures were so severe in Fairbanks that the coaches duct taped the skiers' faces to protect from freezing conditions. But in terms of weather, Schloss says, "In winter we will always deal with weather, so I teach the juniors to love the weather because they will get it all."

The juniors competing in the 2005 JO's are certain to succeed, regardless of JO or future race results. These young athletes display work ethic, discipline and commitment in their cross country ski endeavors, matching that of elite athletes. These characteristics carry over to their personal lives where they are accomplished in academics, music and various other sports, and are remarkably articulate, polite and gracious. Their preparation for and experience at Junior Olympics will apply to all other aspects of their life.

Planning for the event started with the bidding process in 2003. Since then competition trails and the stadium have been enhanced and adjusted to meet USSA requirements. Other improvements have included a new PA system, best-line track setting equipment, and timing systems. Key to a successful event will be the volunteers. Beginning in 2003-04 ASC undertook a vol-

unteer recruitment and training effort that now has signed up almost 100 individuals. JO's, however, requires a huge pool of volunteers to perform everything from competition crews to organizing banquets and parking cars. Up to 100 per day are needed. Throughout this season crews and committees will be planning details and training during our usual events. More volunteers are needed and ASC is looking to club members and the Sierra ski community to pitch in. Our goal is to make volunteering as rewarding and memorable as the competitions will be for the athletes. If you have interest in joining the volunteer team give Auburn Ski Club a call at 426-3313 x100, or go to [www.juniorolympics.org](http://www.juniorolympics.org) and click on the volunteer link. Whether as a volunteer, cowbell ringing spectator or an event sponsor, everyone in the community is invited to join them this March!

Bill Clark is the Director of the Auburn Ski Club Training Center. Julie Young writes for Sierra Heritage Magazine and helps coach the Far West Juniors.

## WHAT ARE JO'S?

The United States Ski Association divides the country into 10 divisions, Auburn Ski Club skiers belong to the Far West Nordic Ski Association. Each division is allowed to enter 42 athletes, 21 boys and 21 girls. JO's consists of races for three age groups: J2's are 14-15 year old boys and girls; J1's 16-17 years; OJ's 18-19 years. Each age group competes in four races: sprints, one kilometer (k); freestyle or skate, ranging from 5-15 k; classic 5-10k; classic relays, three member teams with legs ranging from 3-5 k. The competitors' results equate to points, the divisions' total accumulated points determines their national ranking.

# JO 2005: KEEP AN EYE ON...

Schloss says, "The goals of 2005 JO's are to field a big, well-prepared team, enrich the lives of the athletes, and use the event as a springboard to keep kids in endurance sports. That said, I would love to produce the first Far West National Champion."

Ladies and Gentlemen, place your bets.

Skiers in the J1 & OJ divisions include...

**Natalie Joffe**, currently skiing for Williams College in Massachusetts, is one of the most decorated of our local skiers, and was the recipient of the prestigious DAVE QUINN Award at last year's JO's signifying the top junior in the country.

**Kara LaPoint** has been at the top of the local junior roster for as long as many of us can remember. Currently a freshman at Denver University, she already has many top 10 JO finishes to her credit.

**Whitney Prosor**, one of the "unofficial" team leaders, has provided inspiration to fellow teammates in terms of her rapid improvement. Prosor will return from her first year competing at Montana State University aiming to medal in each race, and ideally grab a top three spot.

**Kati Clark's** rise to the top has been meteoric, from a middle-pack skier a couple of years ago to narrowly missing a podium spot in last year's JO's. Now skiing for the University of Alaska (Anchorage), Kati put in the hours of training this summer and fall to make that big step up.

**Maisha Goodpaster** effortlessly glides on her skis. Another rising star with the past two JO results (top three in the classic and sprint races) to back the claim, Maisha is poised to stand atop the podium.

**Dominic Henriques** star has risen rapidly in the past 3 years, to where he is now considered one of the top junior nordic skiers in the entire country. Currently skiing for the prestigious Denver University, Dom could pull off a top result in the Older Junior (OJ) division.

**Phillip Violett** is another university skier, competing for Northern Michigan. A veteran of the US Ski Team Scandinavian Cup, Phillip is poised to crack the podium, as long as he doesn't do so well in college that he ends up competing at the NCAA Championships instead.

**Joaquin Goodpaster** is another Truckee High athlete who has developed into a monster of a skier. His explosive power and smooth technique could lead to a high placement as an OJ. He could also be considered the "vocal" leader of the team.

**Matt Gelso** displays a natural athletic talent, with the potential to excel in any sport. Gelso has seen improved results in each of the past three JO's (thirds in the classic and relay races, just off the podium in the sprint and skate competitions) and logic leads one to believe he is headed for top three finishes in all of his races and potentially a win.

**Garrett Reid** is another one of those amazing juniors from the Bay Area who have committed themselves to becoming great nordic skiers. Originally from Michigan and now living in Palo Alto, Reid intends to parlay his fall cross country running training into JO medal.

In the younger skier division (J2, 14-15 years old), you never know what future star will become a supernova and rise to the occasion.

**Bernie Nelson** was one such skier last year; competing as a mere 13 year old against the older skiers, she managed a medal in her first ever race at JO's in the sprint, and then showed it was no fluke by taking 13th in the classic race.

**Carl Reid** and **Alex Taylor** are a couple of J2 boys who could hurtle up to the top very quickly, and showed great promise at last year's competition.

## JUNIOR OLYMPICS 2005 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, March 4th 9am – 3pm: Training, courses marked, wax testing	10am... <b>Sprint</b> Qualification Rounds 1:30pm... <b>Sprint</b> —Quarterfinal/Semifinal/Finals	Official training, Classic Course, wax testing
Saturday, March 5th 9am – 3pm: Training, Sprint courses marked, wax testing	Tuesday, March 8th 9am – 3pm: Official Training, Freestyle Course, Wax testing	Friday, March 11th 10am: <b>Classic Competition</b>
Sunday, March 6th 9am – 3pm: Sprint Course open for inspection and training 6 pm: Opening Ceremonies—Downtown Truckee	Wednesday, March 9th 10am: <b>Freestyle Competition</b> 7 pm: Awards ceremony & Ice Cream Social	Saturday, March 12th 10am: <b>Relay competition</b> 7pm: Final Awards Banquet and Celebration
Monday, March 7th	Thursday, March 10th 9am – 3pm:	<b>For complete Results, Updates, and Schedules, go to <a href="http://www.juniorolympics2005.org">www.juniorolympics2005.org</a></b>

# GIVING BACK

by Nick Sterling

**Y**ou often hear of people saying how it all comes back around at some time or another, and there's no place where this is more true than in the Nordic community. A relatively small group to start with, it has been built upon people giving back to the community that gave to them, and has supported me extensively in my pursuits. I started trying to repay my debt to our local Nordic community by helping coach this past summer.

A little burnt out on the restaurant service, I decided to help coach the Auburn Ski Club **Development Team**, headed by Ben Grasseschi for the summer. I figured it would be a nice way to make a little money, and it would be outdoors doing things that I enjoy. What I didn't count on was it being so rewarding, because for one of the first times I was on the other end of the ski community. I was the one giving my time and energy to the athletes as opposed to the one who's been receiving it for the past 10-plus years.

I was a part of the original Development team that started out as a handful of athletes, where sometimes there were only one or two athletes at a workout. Now there are over 20 athletes on the Development team, and all in just 4 years. As member of the University of Colorado-Boulder ski team and having been with the ASC teams since the beginning, as well as having received coaching for the last 10 years, I figured that I would have no problem coaching the Development team. Right—it's just a bunch of kids. Easy enough. Going into the first practice I wasn't worried at all; my ego had been too bolstered and inflated by years of racing, and so-called experience, to be worried about coaching. I remember thinking how easy this coaching job was going to be — it would just be dryland training — no worries about kick wax or races. Then, the first practice came and my nice inflated view of things came crashing down. Somehow I hadn't realized what my new job would entail. I'd always thought I was just coaching, but I never really thought about just what coaching was.

So when I got to the first practice, and I realized that I was the one responsible for instructing and telling the athletes what to do. This was new territory for me. Previously, I had always been told what to do, never the other way. My ego, and so called credentials, were rapidly failing me as all the athletes looked at me, waiting for instructions about what to do. My response was to do exactly what my coaches had been doing with me

for some 10 years, and oddly enough, this seemed to work. It actually worked so well, that I pretty much employed this philosophy the whole summer. I just took a bit from all the coaches that I've learned from and tried to use it — kind of like putting together a jigsaw puzzle.

These people that I'm calling coaches aren't just the folks who are there day in and day out, but parents, friends and fellow athletes who gave me some of their time to either help me with technique or lead me in a drill or game, even if it was only once. As I was training on my own between the team practices, I found myself planning out the next practice, and I'd think of what I'd enjoyed while being coached as a Junior racer. I started to remember lots of stuff that I would have otherwise forgotten. This was what has kept me skiing all these years — rope swings, Cookie Relays, even certain jokes that some coaches always use. I tried to incorporate all of these into the practices, some with much better success than others. An example is that instead of having cookie relays, which at best occur every few weeks (far too long a time between cookies), Ben and I hit on a plan so that there were cookies every week. Brilliant! The plan originated when a couple athletes had a little too much energy one day at practice, and so as a sentence they were required to bring cookies the next week. Since then every week one athlete has brought their favorite dessert to practice to share with the whole team.

Some of my other attempts at recreating my previous coaches didn't go over well. Now if you've been associated with Far West Nordic for any length of time you've either heard or seen Glenn Jobe; you know, the tall, skinny guy always laughing and helping the Far West Juniors out. Well, if you haven't already heard it there is a joke about Glenn that goes "he's so skinny that he has to wear his skis in the shower, so that he doesn't go down the drain." This joke is usually met with roaring approval from athletes and parents alike. After some successful practices, I

started to get my confidence back up and get a little bit of a swagger again and I figured it was time to tell the infamous Glenn Jobe joke. So, I decided to try it when one of my coaches was at the practice—what better way to show off my coaching status than by pulling off the "Jobe" joke. I waited until the right moment, and then delivered it to the athletes. No response. The only laughter that could be heard was that of my coach, laughing at me. He said, "you still got a lot to learn," and he couldn't be more right. What I didn't realize was that most of these kids were too young to even know who Glenn was!

What I realized while coaching this summer was how much I'd been given by all of the coaches that have helped me over the years. The more I thought about this the more I realized that the only way I, and many others, have made it to where we are today is because of all the coaching and support we've received. I thought that I'd always had a healthy appreciation for what had been given to me from the coaches, but it wasn't until I started to coach that I discovered how under-appreciated and recognized all the coaches have been. These are the people who were always willing to stay a little longer and work on technique, or were ready with answers to training questions and were always there to help me and many others get going again when we were down on skiing or anything else. Now that I've been a coach myself, I can truly appreciate what being a coach means, and give them the respect that they deserve. It's hard to sometimes see everything that our coaches give us as athletes and parents, but make sure that you let them know that you appreciate what they're giving you. For everyone out there, but especially you athletes, continue to pass on what the coaches have taught you to the next generation of skiers. This way we can continue to keep our sport alive and well.

Nick Sterling is currently a top college racer at Colorado University in Boulder, with aspirations of competing at the NCAA Championships this spring.

# FOOD FOR FITNESS

By Dominic Henriques

U p until I recently read *Food for Fitness, Eat Right to Train Right*, by Lance Armstrong's trainer, Chris Carmichael, I did not know much about nutrition. Food was a giant mystery; something that could either aid my training, slow me down, or make me fat.

Living in an over-weight nation, it is impossible to watch 30 minutes of TV without seeing at least one dieting commercial, or a new "low-carb" product. With all of those commercials and societal pressures to be thin, food has been labeled our enemy. But food is not against us. Food is fuel. Just like you put gas in your car, you need food to fuel your metabolic engine. Here are some things about diet that I wish I had known before I started racing.

First of all, it's important to gain a bit of an understanding of what happens during exercise. Skeletal muscles use both carbohydrate and fat energy to fuel their movements. The percentage of energy coming from carbs and fat varies, depending on the intensity of the workout. When skiing level one, or at about 40% of maximal effort, the energy mixture is about fifty-fifty. As the intensity increases, your body needs energy more quickly, putting a higher demand for carbohydrate energy (since it can be burned much faster). During a level three workout, or just below anaerobic threshold, you expect to be drawing 75% of your energy from carbs, and the remaining 25% from fat. During a 5km or 10 km race, you might expect more than 90% of your fuel to be coming from carbohydrate. The point being, your body needs different food for different workouts.

Over an athlete's twelve month training schedule, the nature of the workouts varies greatly. In the spring and early summer, training is generally less intense to develop the aerobic engine or "build a base" (the *Foundation* period). Training volume and intensity increases in the later summer and fall months (Preparation Period). Then there's race season, when volume goes down but intensity is greatest (Specialization Period). Since an athlete's training schedule (energy output) changes as the year progresses, so must an athlete's diet (energy input). Following this general training plan, the body's demand for fuel steadily increases, specifically carbohydrate fuel. Therefore, just as there are different periods of training, Carmichael developed a periodized nutrition plan.

Calorie intake depends on the training volume for the week and the athlete's weight, but the ratio of carbohydrate to protein to fat is consistent through each period. During the Foundation period the ratio is 65-13-22 and caloric intake for a 165-lb athlete would be between 2,500 to 3,000 Kcal each day depending on the training volume (big weeks may require even more). What surprised me most about this information was the relatively low amount of protein Carmichael recommends (especially since you always hear about athletes drinking raw eggs and taking protein supplements). Athletes do need more protein than sedentary people, but the body can only use so much protein, and once that amount is reached the body just stores it as fat. In fact, most Americans consume more than twice the amount of protein that their bodies need.

In the *Preparation* period, Carmichael suggests the same ratio of carbs to protein to fat, just more of each. A typical training week during this period might have two of three intensity sessions, in addition to the distance and strength (specific) that characterized the Foundation period. The same 165-lb athlete might be consuming between 3,000 and 3,500 Kcal per day. Training volume and intensity will determine where you will be within that large range (again, big/intense weeks may require more).

And then there is the time when all this hard work and training is showcased, the *Specialization* period. It is not uncommon to have two or more races in a week, which are extremely demanding on your glycogen stores. Therefore, during this period the carb to protein to fat ratio changes to 70-14-16; our 165-lb athlete would consume somewhere between 3,700 and 4,200 Kcal per day. Eating this much will keep your fuel tanks topped off so you can race fast, recover fast, and prevent the notorious "bonk".

*Food for Fitness* is now my nutrition bible. It covers the periodized nutrition plan in much more detail, healthy ways to get those necessary foods, good eating habits; prior,

during, and after exercise and also includes recipes. My workouts have been stronger and more effective since I applied this information to my diet, and I would definitely recommend the book to anyone who is serious about racing fast. If it worked for Lance Armstrong, it at least deserves a look.

Raised in Tahoe City, Dom is another of Far West's top junior racers, and is currently skiing for the University of Denver.

# HOW TO SURVIVE IN A VACUOUS ANTI-NORDIC-INCLINED CULTURE

By Andrew Gardner (reprinted courtesy of xcskiworld.com)

**B**egin Early. Cult-like devotion to the sport is important. If possible, be born into a family that has rich Nordic History- barring that, select a birthplace that is heavy with skiing culture: Alaska is good. Norway is better. Avoid places like Hoboken or Texas. Have pictures taken of you in diapers clutching photos of Jackrabbit Johnson or Sixten Jernberg. Show these to your dates in junior high. They'll leave calling you a loser. This is important suffering to serve you later in your race career. Save this.

Try other sports through adolescence. You are competent but you hate them. One day someone will tell you, "You can be a basketball player or you can be a skier," in the hopes of strengthening your attraction to basketball. Never pick up a basketball again.

In your youth, your parents will take you skiing. Lay down in the snow about a half kilometer in on the trail. Refuse to move. They will ski away leaving you no choice but to get up and ski again. Celebrate this when you are older and see the same apathy in the juniors you coach.

Race often in your youth. Keep training logs. Pay attention to the color and consistency of your urine. Keep posters of Erling Jevne. Read all that you can about skiing. Skip school to ski. Live a life dedicated solely, myopically, and sadly dedicated only to skiing.

Race. Race some more. Keep racing.

Leave the racing scene broke, frustrated and disenchanted with skiing.

Try Real Estate. Investment Banking is good. Find a 'normal' life. Go to church on Sundays. Watch football. Try to forget skiing. This will sustain you until the novelty of such a life fades. Usually it will start to -- as Aelin Peterson described of her return to skiing -- "haunt you" in a way. There will be an itch that cannot be scratched anytime white precipitation falls.

Overhear conversations about Lance Armstrong's VO2 max. Your ears will burn when someone says it is the "highest ever

recorded."

"No." You will explain calmly. That would be Bjorn Dahlie.

"Who's Bjorn Dahlie?" Someone will ask with a face as blank as fresh classic tracks.

Mumble "Never mind." Quit your job. Stumble on a Nordic skiing internet site. They are pithy and isolated: little bits of Nordic news in an otherwise void of the sport.

Look them up every day.

You start to be lonely. Name your cats "Fischer" and "Swix." Your appearance starts to fade.

While searching the Nordic websites you come across a listing for a "junior coaching position" in (fill in ideal ski location here). You take it.

On your first days of practice, the students are shocked when you suggest the weekly workouts. Suggest that they:

Keep training logs. Pay attention to the color and consistency of their urine. Keep posters of Erling Jevne. Read all that they can about skiing. Skip school to ski. Live a life dedicated solely, myopically, and sadly dedicated only to skiing.

"Who is Erling Jevne?" They will ask. Smile. This is important patience that will serve you in your coaching career. Schedule more intervals. Buy videos from NCCSEF. Buy overboots. Look for the hidden snippets of Nordic talent hidden within each of your skiers. Laugh when students grow, progress and extol the virtues of the new Extra Blue formula over its forty year old predecessor.

Grow old with the sport. Coach at Junior Nationals. Coach at World Juniors. Bring Coffee to coaches at the Olympics. Become a Technical Delegate. Sit through meetings. When your life flashes before your eyes it will be a haze of ski wax and coaches meetings. Buy a house on the Birkie trail, or in McCall, or better yet in Sweden.

Die penniless and happy, clutching photos of Gunde Svan or Bente Skari.

Andrew Gardner skis for Fischer Skis, Alpina Boots, and Swix Poles. He is the Nordic Program Director for the Colorado Rocky Mountain School in Carbondale.

# AVOIDING SPONTANEOUS WINTER CAMPOUTS

By Mitch Dion

**I**n March of 1889, a poor soul named James Savage, suffering from a severe case of cabin fever, just had to go to town. Savage left his cabin at Incline Camp, an isolated area on the northern edge of Lake Tahoe, and made his way up toward Brockway Summit. His destination was the Town of Truckee and its' cosmopolitan bar scene. As he crested the saddle and started down the trail to Truckee, a winter storm closed in. As reported by the "Territorial Enterprise" the local paper of that era, he was soon hopelessly lost, in the midst of a "black forest without food or the means to kindle a fire."

Savage spent a miserable night in the storm, and then wandered aimlessly the next day through terrain he knew well in normal weather, but the snowstorm "...presented a sameness in aspect which was bewildering." After another night his feet had frozen and he was unable to force them back into his boots. Crawling stocking-footed through the snow, he finally found his way to a logging camp on the outskirts of Truckee and was rescued.

Here, on the spine of the Sierra Nevada, made famous by the Donner Party, lost winter travelers are a regular part of the folklore. And these days it seems to be happening more and more often.

Advances in skis, boots, snowboards, and snowmobile design have allowed relative novices to delve further into the backcountry. Advances in human intelligence aren't keeping pace. We are sliding down a negative trend line. While snowboarders, snowmobile drivers and downhill skiers get most of the glory for doing stupid things, the Nordic skiing community has sent our share of victims out there, too.

Getting lost is not that much fun. I speak from personal experience. Your relatives freak out. It costs a lot of money. Everyone thinks you're a fool. You can even lose your trail pass.

Obviously, the danger is higher in the backcountry. If you travel 'off-piste' in winter, odds are at some point you will look around and say, "Where the heck am I?" And the back-country isn't as far off as we think, especially when traversing the far reaches of Royal Gorge, Tahoe Donner, Northstar, Spooner and some of our other large cross country resorts. Taking 'a little shortcut' to connect trails, or experiencing a relatively minor equipment failure can lead to big problems.

It is clear from the experiences of Mr. Savage that we should consider the weather

and come prepared with extra clothing. What else can we do to help us in a winter survival situation?

Last February (2004), Joel Rosenthal and Johanna Mayer, outdoor enthusiasts from the Bay area, donned their Cross Country gear and headed out for a short, relaxing late afternoon ski trip. "A Three Hour Tour", TV junkies of a certain age might refer to it. The weather was calm, the area familiar. They took off from the back yard of friend's Serene Lakes cabin about 3:30 in the afternoon and descended the 'Cedars' Road below Ice Lakes Lodge. They skied for about an hour, turned around, and were on the way home when something went wrong. They got sucked in by a rogue snowmobile track and unintentionally left the main road. As darkness fell, they were on unfamiliar terrain, not sure where they had gone wrong or how to unravel the mistake. Johanna fell in the icy conditions, and one of her skis slipped off and careened out of sight down a hill. The couple found themselves faced with the unpleasant opportunity for a little 'spontaneous unplanned winter camping.'

They selected a protected area under a tree well and, using their boots and skis as digging tools, were able to carve a snow shelter out of the hard-pack snow. Johanna had some plastic bags that they put over their gloves to keep their hands dry while digging. This process killed several hours and kept them warm at the same time. They lined the shelter with pine boughs. Although they did not have a lot in the way of extra clothing or equipment, they had two small space blankets to wrap themselves in. They were well layered and had warm hats. Even though temperatures slipped into the teens, Rosenthal said it actually got easier once they made the decision to bivouac, and they just "focused on what we needed to do." They kept their wits about them, even dozing off from time to time, waking up for short calisthenic sessions to keep circulation to their extremities.

Fortunately, the couple was vacationing with friends who alerted authorities when they did not return and gave the rescue team a rough idea of where to look. By daylight the next day, Joel and Johanna had located the missing ski, and were up and moving, on their way to a self-rescue, when they skied into a rescue party from the Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue team.

## MAKE A PLAN

Rosenthal and Mayer did a lot correctly. In the rescue business, the three most powerful words are WHO, WHEN and WHERE. The single best thing you can do is to let a family member or friend know where you are going, who you are going with, and when you plan to return. If your plans are last minute, or you are going by yourself, leave a note in your car, or in your house. If you have a cell phone, call someone trustworthy and give them your itinerary.

Be weather aware. Storms can be unforgiving. Even the most experienced outdoorsmen, in their own back yard, CAN get lost in white out conditions. Landmarks disappear. Wind and moisture combine to suck your body heat accelerating the effects of hypothermia.

## GO PREPARED

Leave your 'popsicle pants' at home. Cotton, the fashion fabric of choice for blue jeans and sweatshirts, is one of the worst fabrics for winter warmth. Experienced backcountry travelers will wear layers of synthetic fabrics (also known as pile or polypropylene, or capilene) that provide insulation even when wet. The outside layer will be a waterproof coat or parka. A good ski or mountaineering store can help you out. Head, hands and feet are really important. As much as 60 % of your body heat can be lost through your head, so whether it is your Tibetan Yak's Wool cap or you Elmer Fudd snow hat, make sure your head is covered.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU DO GET LOST

If you get lost, hypothermia, the rapid loss of body heat is the most serious danger. Symptoms of hypothermia include the “mumbles, stumbles and grumbles.” The blood flow to the brain slows down, and victims become irritable, confused and disoriented. You begin to experience loss of judgment. In the final stages of hypothermia, the victim may actually have the sensation of being too hot, having burning skin. Some sufferers of severe hypothermia have actually discarded clothing in the middle of a snowstorm.

Experts agree that the best thing to do is to STOP moving, try to stay warm, and wait

to be rescued. Use your energy to construct a shelter and make a signal. Self-rescue, can be deadly. When someone who is lost tries to hike their way back to civilization, they usually end up getting further away from help.

### MAKE A SHELTER

Use nature's help, if possible. A hollowed out log, and overhanging boulder can be a great starting point. If snow condition permit, construct a snow shelter. Use your skis or snowshoes as digging tools. Make your cave small to preserve body heat. Sit on something dry to provide insulation between yourself and the snow. Space blankets are great. Some backcountry skiers always take a small square of insulated foam. If nothing else, try to sit or lay on some tree branches.

Make a signal for rescuers. Search and Rescue lore is filled with stories of folks hunkered down in a snow cave, with rescuers practically walking over them, and don't know they are down there. Make an X with your skis. Make an X in the snow. Use what you have. Brightly colored plastic. Pine cones. Kool-Aid mix. Anything that stands out against a white background and is obviously man-made. Make your signal in an area that is visible from the air.

It is possible to survive out there with a few simple survival items. Above all, make sure the brain is screwed in, and odds are, you won't ever have to try it.

# WINTER SURVIVAL KITS

by Mitch Dion

It's all about choices. I DON'T believe in overdoing it. Lean and mean. Paiute style, I say. Most winter survival experts disagree with me and would rather err on the side of over-preparedness. Here are some handy items to choose from:

- **Extra food.** Calories are a major weapon against hypothermia. Take dense, high energy foods like trail mix or sports bars.
- **Plastic Bags** (bright colors). Keep those hands dry. Make a waterproof liner between your socks and shoes. Make a signal for rescuers. Sit or lie on and stay dry.
- **Waterproof Matches** or a **Lighter.**
- **Candle.** Both for light and fire starter.
- **Fire Starter.** You can purchase commercially available products or make your own. Drier lint burns like crazy!
- **Space Blanket.** Yes!
- **Maps & Compass.** And the knowledge to use them.
- **Extra clothes**
- **Flashlight** or **Headlamp**

### REPAIR KITS

Putting together a ski repair kit would be a lot easier if you can figure out in advance which portion of your ski system is about to fail. On trips that have involved a high degree of commitment, friends and I have actually brought an entire extra Nordic ski. Mounted with binding. Probably overkill for taking your dog out on Carpenter Valley Road. Here are some possibilities for a repair kit.

- **Duct Tape.** Useful for mending poles, boot and bindings
- **Binding Spare Parts & Screws**
- 'Leatherman' type tool
- **Pole Basket**
- **5-minute Epoxy**

### GADGETS

- **Cell Phones** are great, with a word of caution. Deep down, I know with all my heart that the one time I am really in deep pow-pow, I am going to fire up the phone and all I'm going to see is that little message, “no service.” Don't forget that batteries can fail quicker in cold weather, as well.
- **GPS** units are an incredibly useful navigation tool, and a lot of fun, too. However, maybe I'm just technically challenged, but it took me several practice sessions to learn how to program and use the GPS correctly.

### ABOUT AVALANCHES

If you like to ski in avalanche chutes (and you know who you are) there are a lot more rules and a lot more junk to carry. While you could spend a lifetime studying avalanches, what causes them, and never learn it all, here is a recipe for making an avalanche:

- Take a two foot snowfall
- Add slope (30-45 degrees)
- Add wind, (most avalanches happen on the lee side of the mountains)
- Add yourself or your skiing partners. 90% of avalanches are triggered by the victim.

If you are venturing in to this type of terrain, you should have:

- **Shovels.** My backcountry friends say metal blade shovels. The plastics can break when you need them most.
- **Avalanche Transceiver.** And the knowledge to use it correctly.
- **Probe.** Ditto.
- **First Aid Kit**
- **Major Ski Repair Kit**

There are many books and publications if you want to learn more. One of my favorites is *Allen & Mike's Really Cool Backcountry Ski Book*.

Mitch Dion runs a winter survival school for elementary aged students, and has himself spent a night in December skiing in circles through the mountains of central Colorado with only a baked potato and two zip-lock bags.

# THE UPS AND DOWNS OF ALTITUDE

by Jeff Schloss

**O**ne obvious reality of skiing in the Sierra Nevada is that it happens at high altitude. 6,000 feet seems to be the Mason-Dixon Line of California snowfall. Sure, occasionally we get some cold storms that dump down to 3,000 or 4,000 feet, but if you want to have snow that stays on the ground its mostly going to have to be up where the air is thin.

For those who live in the lowlands this traveling up to altitude to ski can leave a skier gasping for breath after the first Kilometer; while for those who live high in the snow country the breath comes fine but they may find their speed isn't what it could be compared to those who live low. Fortunately for us living here in the Far West, there are several ways to manipulate altitude to help our skiing performance.

If you live low and travel up to the mountains to ski you need to make sure that when you do arrive at altitude that you slow down your pace. Recovery definitely doesn't happen as well up high. I recommend that you do your hard intensity training down at home and concentrate on long easy distance skiing while you are at altitude. Build the VO max at sea level and work on technique while on snow.

If you are traveling up to altitude to race, you have two good options for coping with the thin air. My favorite plan is to arrive at altitude at the last minute. Either drive up to the race the night before or even early the morning of the race. This works because the body doesn't get a chance to become

worn down by the high altitude before the race. It seems counter-intuitive but it works. For each day that you are at altitude you get progressively worse for about 4 days then you start to acclimate. The worst time to travel up to altitude is 3 or 4 days before your race.

The other option is to get to the race altitude a full week before the race. Then your body will have gone through the worst of the wearing down process and be starting to make extra red blood cells to handle the less dense air. After two to three weeks the acclimatization will be 90% of those living high and you will feel pretty good.

What if you live at High elevation? You too can benefit from playing with altitude. Many studies have shown that living high and training low can boost performance. The most important workouts to do down low are the intensity workouts. I recommend driving down to below 2,000 feet every so often to do some hard intervals. Of course these intervals cant be on snow but running, roller skiing, and ski walking will all work well for these intervals. A great plan is to do an "intensity block" if you are down at sea

level for a few days. You can do three or four threshold interval sessions in three days at sea level and then take a few recovery days when you get home.

If you are traveling to another part of the country for a ski race at low elevation I recommend arriving at the race venue only one or two days before the race. Just like for those traveling up to race, its best to arrive at the low elevation as close to race day as possible. This will give you the most advantage from your extra red blood cells acquired from living at high elevation.

One of the great things about the Sierra is that you can hop up and down between sea level and 7,000 feet in just a few hours. By using the lowlands for intensity and the highlands for long easy skiing we can achieve many of the same performance benefits that others try to get from illegal performance enhancing drugs.

Jeff Schloss is the Head Coach for both Far West Nordic and Auburn Ski Club. In his spare time, you'll find him out rock climbing with his "crew" of young athletes.

# SKATING'S SECOND SEASON

## Backcountry Skiing Takes on a Different Twist

By Mark Nadell

**T**here's an interesting occurrence that happens every March or so around these parts. It's called the **Vernal Equinox Migration of the Lycra-Clad Sierra Skate Skier**. It's such a regular phenomenon, you could try to set your watch to it, but the problem is that observers never really know exactly when it's going to occur.

We've seen it happen as early as late February, in years when the snowstorms decide to head north, the temps hit 50 degrees in town, and the ground starts to peek through the white on an altogether too often basis. On the other hand, the migration could occur as late as in the end of March, years when Spring becomes like that recalcitrant child that you just can't drag out of the toy store. Either way, though, it's inevitable that sometime soon after the Great Race, skiers all over California decide enough is enough, snow stinks, it's time for golf, tennis, cycling, or one of those other West Coast pursuits.

Oh, but there are some hardy (and some would say, mentally deranged) souls who refuse to admit that there might be something more interesting than skating around on 2 skinny sticks attached to one's feet. These are folks who actually look forward to the longer days of sunlight, the absence of powder snow, and the ability to travel across the terrain without the benefit of any groomed trails or skating lanes.

### WHAT IS BACKCOUNTRY SKATING?

In a nutshell, backcountry skating can be described as gliding across the snow surface, using Nordic skating technique, without the benefit of grooming equipment. It can be as simple as skating across a frozen lake in mid-winter, or as elaborate as a multi-day spring expedition to the High Sierra. The Sierra Nevada are uniquely suited to be the world headquarters for backcountry skating, because the main ingredients are: 1) sunny (and relatively warm) days; 2) cold, below freezing, nights; and 3) relatively gentle terrain features, preferably above treeline as much as possible. Although there are oftentimes short periods in February and sometimes January when one can backcountry skate, it is most often that March, April, even May, and sometimes June are the months in which the Sierra Nevada backcountry becomes the skaters playground. The benefits to the

technique are obvious – when other skiers are using classic technique, either waxing for grip, using skins, or utilizing waxless skis, skaters can travel much farther, faster, with less gear, and enjoy the downhill aspects of the backcountry to a much greater degree.

While putting on skating skis and touring around the hills of Tahoe Donner can be a simple morning outing, it takes a tricky combination of skill, endurance, timing, and, yes, luck, to pull off a day of skating over 30-plus miles a day in terrain where you end up climbing 6,000 to 8,000 feet of elevation gain, often in less-than-great snow conditions. Waiting for that perfect combination of warm days and cold nights can wear on your patience, and sometimes the snow will be gone from the lower elevations before the quality of the snow up high reaches an acceptable level for skating. But over the years, we've managed to ski, in a single day, many routes that often take "normal" backcountry skiers 3 or more days to accomplish. From our own "backyard," to the Yosemite backcountry, and all the way down to the high country in the southern Sierra, we've experienced unbelievably great skating in some of the most starkly beautiful locations on the planet.

### WHAT EQUIPMENT DO I NEED?

Backcountry skating can be done on just about any gear that can be used for regular, groomed trail skating. We have, however, honed our preferred equipment list to some specific items we feel works best for backcountry terrain.

**SKIS:** For short trips in the "frontcountry," where a broken ski won't be life-threatening, your normal skate skis will work. But you'll want to be careful when the snow turns a little funkier and the terrain gets to the point where it isn't a big reach to imagine snapping those little 2 lb. sticks into pieces of kindling. For more serious excursions, we've fallen in love with skis such as the Fischer Revolution,

a short (147 cm.), stiff, and durable type of ski that was briefly popular in the mid-90's, but has fallen a bit out of favor with the ski manufacturers. Although other ski manufacturers have made models similar to the Revo, we haven't found anything that skis as well in the backcountry. We've also utilized a model from Fischer that is a heavier, wider, and slightly longer, called the Revolution "Adventure" that adds metal edges to the mix. But while the Adventure is great for the really steep, serious trips into the high Sierra backcountry, we have found that the lightweight, faster, non-metal edge model is the preferred tool of traveling for almost all of our trips.

**BOOTS:** Just about any boot made for skating will work for backcountry trips, but you'll want to note that many trips involve some "off-snow" traveling, so your nice, pristine racing models will often come back muddy, sole-chewed up, and definitely not looking as nice when they left. Whether Salomon or NNN, we feel that "light is right" when it comes to the backcountry, so as long as it has a good degree of ankle support and sole stiffness, it should work well. Although we originally shied away from the Salomon Pilot system for the backcountry, recent years have found us using Pilot-compatible boots and bindings more and more, with (so far) good luck. Oftentimes, however, we'll actually take a spare ski (with binding attached) on a serious backcountry endeavor to make sure that we're not left limping out of the wilderness with one ski duct-taped to our boot.

**POLES:** Although aluminum poles are definitely going to be more durable, it's sometimes hard for us to ski all winter on light, stiff carbon models and then switch over to the heavier alu's. But unless you want to be digging into your wallet for a new set of graphite racing poles, it's not recommended you take the super-expensive set into the backcountry. Also, a little shorter pole is recommended for skiing off-piste, somewhere

between your classic pole length and the traditional skating length. Once again, on extended trips you'll find us trapping on a spare pole, just in case.

**GEAR AND TIMING:** When planning for skating in the backcountry, remember the mantra "Light is Right." There is little sense in being confronted with miles of beautiful skating terrain on perfect snow and finding that your 30+ lb. backpack pretty much stalls your forward motion to a crawl. Take enough gear for an emergency, enough food to keep your engine running, and enough smarts in your head to know when to bail out. Making the decision to abort a trip because of poor weather or lousy snow conditions is tough, but it's one we've had to make on numerous occasions. The window of opportunity for good spring skating is extremely narrow, both in terms of the type of day for success, and specifically the hours of the day that afford enjoyable skiing. As said earlier, you need a cold night for a hard freeze in order to travel across the crust of the snow, and on most days, you won't want to be out past noon, or even earlier, because the when the snow starts to get deep, it honestly isn't much fun being out on skating skis. We've broken gear, fallen into shallow ponds, woken up to a cloudy, non-freezing morning on an overnight, and had to use all of our wits and

skills to make sure that our expedition didn't turn into a dangerous epic. Be cautious out there, and be ready to bail if things don't turn out as planned. Even though the areas and conditions we travel aren't usually high with avalanche danger, having some knowledge of avalanche situations is an important safety aspect.

## WHERE CAN I GO?

The best terrain for backcountry or spring skating can be found anywhere there's snowy, open terrain that isn't too terribly steep. The Tahoe area abounds with great areas to skate off-trail. One of our favorites, simply because it's so accessible, is the area near Donner Summit and Tahoe Donner. Castle Peak, the Sugar Bowl to Squaw Crest, Mt. Lola, and even Mt. Rose have been some of our favorite locales. Farther south, the Desolation Wilderness area some of the finest off-piste skating terrain we've ever found, with Lake Aloha a spectacular destination for some great crust cruising.

Farther south, as the spring snow becomes consolidated, the Yosemite backcountry is unequalled for the more serious, committed spring tourer. Tioga Pass is a great destination for skating, with miles upon miles of gentle canyons and slopes to traverse. We've skated into Tuolumne Meadows, up Lyell Canyon,

and into the Virginia Lakes area on numerous occasions, and have rarely had a bad excursion. Farther south, the Mammoth Lakes, Rock Creek, and Bishop areas afford steeper, more difficult terrain for the skate adventurer. These are the areas where we'll often-times pull out the heavier, metal-edged Adventure Revolution skis, and even take along an ice ax for negotiating the steeper sections on our way to enjoying the long, level backcountry canyons in the High Sierra.

Backcountry skating isn't for everybody – it takes a definite level of skill, knowledge, and, yes, craziness to head out into the Sierra wilderness with so little equipment. But the reward of skimming along the snow surface for miles at a time, knowing that that it might take days to hike or tour the same distance, more than makes up for difficulty of starting your backcountry trip by headlamp in order to hit the best snow conditions. And for just cruising around for a couple of hours on a beautiful spring morning, there's nothing like hitting perfect, creamy corn snow for your last descent back to the car.

**Mark has experienced his share of "epics" on backcountry skating trips (usually self-inflicted).**

# FAR WEST NORDIC MASTERS TEAM

**E**ach year a Far West Nordic Masters Team is decided by a highly competitive season of ski racing. Citizen racers age 25 and older are eligible, and the top scoring skier in each five year age division is named to the team for the upcoming race season. The top six race results are scored, at least one of which must be classic style technique. Skiers can choose from among 11 qualifying races. Criteria for scoring follows these rules:

- Skiers must finish at least six races, at least one of which must be a classic style technique race.
- Skiers may race in as many qualifying races as they wish. Their top six (6) races are scored. Races are scored in five-year age categories regardless of how Race Directors score their races.
- Racers who complete a race with less than 35 finishers get a participation score of one point.
- The top five finishers in each five-year age division are scored as follows: 5 points for first place; 4 points for second place; 3 points for third place; 2 points for fourth place; and 1 point for fifth place.

Results are published throughout the season so skiers can track their progress. As an incentive to compete for a place on the

Masters Team, each team member receives a Far West Nordic "uniform" at the beginning of the racing season. Uniforms could include vests, race tops, jackets, hats, tights, ski bags etc and is decided by the Masters Committee with input from team members. To be eligible for the 2006 Masters Team (decided at the end of the 2005 season), you must be a Far West member by February 15, 2005. If two skiers in an age division tie for first place, then both are named to the team. Masters who place at Masters Nationals or Masters World Championships in individual races, and who complete a minimum of four qualifying Masters races, are named to the Masters Team. National team members are not eligible for the Masters Team. For more information, contact *June Lane*, [jlanski@sbcbglobal.net](mailto:jlanski@sbcbglobal.net), or *Molly Zurn*, [mzurn@esri.com](mailto:mzurn@esri.com).

## NORTHSTAR'S TOR BROWN NAMED TO THE P.S.I.A. NORDIC DEMO TEAM

Former Far West junior skier and UNR Nordic Team member Tor Brown has been announced as one of the newest members of the PSIA-AASI National Demonstration Team for 2005. In a gauntlet of examinations and observations called Team Tryouts held this past April in Snowbird, Utah, Brown walked away with the highly coveted title of team member. He now represents the crème de la crème of PSIA's nearly 29,000 certified ski and snowboard teaching professionals. Tor will be one of the professional ambassadors in the snow-sports industry, and will serve as a conduit of information on the international ski teaching scene.

"Demo Team members support the professional development of members to make them more valuable teachers," said John Armstrong, PSIA/AASI president. "They provide the vision and direction of modern skiing and riding."

Tor is currently the Nordic Director at Northstar, and is a Youth Product Development Director for Fischer Skis. He will serve as a Telemark clinician and the Chief Track and Skate Examiner for the PSIA Western Division.

### NewsFlash

The California Gold Rush is now the **USSA National Championship Event** for both Men's and Women's 50 kilometer Distance. It is also a **USSA "SUPERTOUR" Event**, an **FIS North American Marathon Cup Race**, and the final race of the **American Marathon Series**. It is also the second largest fundraiser for Far West Nordic. Come join us for this exciting event!

### MASTERS TEAM QUALIFYING RACES

DECEMBER 5, 2004	KIRKWOOD 10K FREESTYLE	KIRKWOOD XC
DECEMBER 26, 2004	PACO'S FUN RACE 10 K FREESTYLE	AUBURN SKI CLUB
JANUARY 2, 2005	SNOWSHOE THOMPSON CLASSIC 10 K	AUBURN SKI CLUB
JANUARY 9, 2005	ALPENGLOW FREESTYLE 20K	TAHOE CROSS COUNTRY
JANUARY 23, 2005	SAWMILL 15 K FREESTYLE	NORTHSTAR
JANUARY 30, 2005	TAHOE CITY CLASSIC 15 K	TAHOE CROSS COUNTRY
FEBRUARY 6, 2005	ALLAN BARD MEMORIAL 20 K CLASSIC	TAMARACK LAKES XC
FEBRUARY 21, 2005	PRESIDENTS CUP RACE 15 K FREESTYLE	TAHOE DONNER XC
FEBRUARY 27, 2005	GLACIER POINT 36 K FREESTYLE	YOSEMITE/BADGER PASS
MARCH 20, 2005	CALIFORNIA GOLD RUSH 50/30/15 K FREESTYLE	ROYAL GORGE
APRIL 3, 2005	MAMMOTH MARATHON & 1/2 MARATHON	TAMARACK LAKES

# 2004/2005

## SIERRA SKI CHASE

**T**his low key racing series is going into its 14th season. Please acknowledge our sponsors and let them know how much you appreciate their participation in the Sierra Ski Chase. They are the ones who buy the long-sleeve teeshirts, supply us with raffle prizes and so enhance this program and add to our fun.

Everybody is welcome to enter the Sierra Ski Chase. It is free to valid FW members (only \$20 per year), however, we are asking non FW members for a contribution of \$15 to defray the cost of the tee-shirts. All prizes donated by our sponsors will go into the raffle and in that way everyone who completes the series can be a potential winner. The top man & woman will have their names inscribed on the SIERRA SKI CHASE PERPETUAL TROPHY displayed at the Auburn Ski Club.

Ski Chase participants from Mammoth and Bear Valley may have up to 3 races in their own area count as a straight points races to fulfill Sierra Ski Chase Criteria. At the same time, our local racers may have 2 out-of-the-area races count as long as they are in the Far West region. We selected 12 races, however, you only have to complete a minimum of 5 races. Age handicap points will be given to the best 5 races per participant, that means 1 point will be added

per year over age 34. Everybody will receive 10 points for finishing a race plus placing points. After you fulfill your requirement of 5 races, each additional race will be worth 10 points. The Tahoe Donner Relays, the TD classic night race, the Squaw Creek 5km race and all out of the area races will be scored with 10 points, no age or finishing points. Royal Gorge's Gold/Silver/Bronze Rush will be scored with 30/20/10 points depending which distance you enter and again no age or finishing points. Races with 40 participants or less will be scored with 10 points across the board. Any cancelled race due to weather or lack of snow can be made up with a Twilight Squaw Creek Race.

As always, the end of the Ski Chase, the raffle and handing out of teeshirts to successful participants will coincide with the Gold Rush Party at Auburn Ski Club. You MUST sign-up for the Sierra Ski Chase to be eligible. Sign-ups will be taken at the first 4 races. Please see Helga Sable.

### THE TURTLE BRIGADE IS BACK!

This is for all the people who would like to earn a Sierra Ski Chase Shirt, however, they don't want to race with the "serious racers" but enjoy the race course at their own pace. And here is the way:

You may do the shortest distance offered, or do the full race on an "honor system." You time yourself. At race registration let them know that you are part of the "Turtle Brigade" and have them mark your bib. In that way the timing crew won't wait for you.

The rest of the criteria stays the same. You must be a Far West Member and enter the race officially. You must sign up for the Sierra Ski Chase with Helga Sable, and do a minimum of 5 races.

Any questions or suggestions, please contact Helga Sable at (530) 546-3675 or email "sable@thegrid.net."

The Sierra Ski Chase is sponsored by Dr. Wm. Krissoff, Fischer Skis, Native Eyewear, Lowe Alpine, & Richard Bozzio M.P.T., ProCare Physical Therapy

### SIERRA SKI CHASE POINTS SYSTEM

WOMEN	MEN
TOP 20..... 5 POINTS	TOP 40.....10 POINTS
TOP 15 .....10 POINTS	TOP 30 .....20 POINTS
TOP 10 .....25 POINTS	TOP 20 .....30 POINTS
TOP 5 .....35 POINTS	TOP 15 .....35 POINTS
TOP 2 .....40 POINTS	TOP 10 .....40 POINTS
	TOP 3 .....45 POINTS

### SIERRA SKI CHASE RACES

DECEMBER 5, 2004.....	KIRKWOOD 10K.....	KIRKWOOD XC.....	10 KILOMETERS FREESTYLE
DECEMBER 26, 2004.....	PACO'S FUN RACE.....	AUBURN SKI CLUB.....	10 KILOMETERS FREESTYLE
JANUARY 2, 2005.....	SNOWSHOE THOMPSON CLASSIC...AUBURN SKI CLUB.....		10 KILOMETERS CLASSIC
JANUARY 5, 2005.....	TAHOE DONNER NIGHT RACE.....	TAHOE DONNER XC.....	5 KILOMETERS CLASSIC
JANUARY 9, 2005.....	ALPENGLOW FREESTYLE 20K.....	TAHOE CROSS COUNTRY.....	20 KILOMETERS FREESTYLE
JANUARY 17, 2005.....	SIERRA SKOGSLOPPET.....	TAHOE DONNER XC.....	15 KILOMETERS FREESTYLE
JANUARY 23, 2005.....	SAWMILL 15 K.....	NORTHSTAR.....	15 KILOMETERS FREESTYLE
JANUARY 30, 2005.....	TAHOE CITY CLASSIC.....	TAHOE CROSS COUNTRY.....	15 KILOMETERS CLASSIC
FEBRUARY 8, 2005.....	SQUAW CREEK RACE SERIES.....	SQUAW CREEK NORDIC.....	5 KILOMETERS FREESTYLE
FEBRUARY 21, 2005.....	PRESIDENTS CUP RACE.....	TAHOE DONNER XC.....	15 KILOMETERS FREESTYLE
FEBRUARY 27, 2005.....	TDXC RELAYS.....	TAHOE DONNER XC.....	3 PERSON RELAY (1 LEG CLASSIC)
MARCH 20, 2005.....	CALIFORNIA GOLD RUSH.....	ROYAL GORGE.....	50/30/15 KILOMETERS FREESTYLE