



# 2017/2018 President’s Report

## PRESEASON

USSA rebranded to US Ski & Snowboard Association as the organization attempts be viewed as one team representing seven unique sports. PARA received approval for updated logos per US Ski & Snowboard approval guidelines.

US Ski & Snowboard Association recognized that there are multiple segments in the competitive community primarily surrounding equipment specifications. The segments allow for stricter FIS-level adherence primarily at the U16 and older Age Categories and a National-level adherence which is more relaxed specification allowing for a less stringent need to change equipment unless for those athletes wishing to compete in FIS events. The primary change is the minimum length requirement for Slalom and the removal of the Giant Slalom length requirement.

US Ski & Snowboard again changed position on race timing software. In addition to primarily recommending Vola once again, US Ski & Snowboard Association renegotiated with SplitSecond as a viable alpine timing package.

US Ski & Snowboard Association implemented new Alpine Official certification requirements primarily increasing the level expertise/certifications for operating a sanctioned competition. The following changes were implemented

- a. Referee, Assistant Referee and Course Setter must be certified Referees to officiate in the respective capacities at all U.S. Ski & Snowboard-sanctioned events.
- b. Chief of Timing & Calculations and Race Administrator must be appropriately certified in the respective categories at all U.S. Ski & Snowboard-sanctioned events.
- c. *Chief-of-Course must be a certified Chief-of-Course, Chief- of-Race, Referee or Technical Delegate.*
- d. *Jury Advisor (Start/Finish Referee) must be a certified Jury Advisor, a certified Referee or a certified Chief of Race.*
- e. All the above officials must have attended a Continuing Education Clinic (Update) within the last two (2) seasons to serve in any of the above capacities.

Four preseason PARA Alpine Official updates were provided across the state covering East/NorthEast, Central (2), and Western. These valuable sessions provide up-to-date information covering USSA 2016/2017 updates. Additionally, a number of clubs provided updates to their contingents.

## MEMBERSHIP

In 2015/2016, USSA implemented new USSA Membership categories with lower price structure. This was particularly beneficial to the younger racers. The addition of a General Member and Club Volunteer raised both USSA and PARA membership levels in 2017/2018.

2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018
1215	1183	1197	1218	1345	1378	1444

- Alpine General shows significant growth. ***With the increased demand for more competition certifications, PARA and the clubs need to provide educational opportunities to the AG group as a progression towards AO.***
- 70% of our competitors are in the U14 and younger categories. The U16+ Age Categories appear to have stabilized from a competitor field-size perspective. The actions PARA has taken over the past few years to provide additional competitive opportunities for U16s are taking hold allowing for better points. One of PARA’s primary focuses



should continue to be on U16+ competitions, **however it is time to align PARA's focus on U14 and younger. U10 continues to grow and PARA should investigate the best balance between training and competing for this group.**

## ALPINE OFFICIALS

During the 2017-18 season, there were 337 Alpine Officials in PARA. This is the same number of Alpine Officials in PARA from the 2016-17 year. At least 209 had attained at least one AO certification; up from 14 in 2016-2017. fourteen alpine officials have all nine specialty certifications. This a reduction of 8 AOs from the previous year. There are 13 active certified Technical Delegates in PARA. Of the 13 certified Technical Delegates, 11 TD's (the same number as last year) officiated the PARA's race calendar as Technical Delegates. **Based on the number of PARA events, it is imperative that PARA accelerate an increase in the TD population.**

## SEASON

### Killington World Cup

The Killington World Cup event invited other Eastern Athletes (not just VARA) to participate in the "Parade of Ski Clubs" before the start of Sunday's competition. Representatives from NY, Tri-State, SARA, and PARA all participated. PARA had approximately 25 athletes/chaperones attend. PARA had a banner made which was carried by members. It is hopeful that the invitation to other regions continues and that PARA athletes can partake in the ceremony.

### Events

The weather was terrific at the beginning of this season. The training started on-schedule for the clubs. Of the 41 sanctioned events, four race days and two training days were canceled. Three race days were rescheduled.

The weather in mid-late Feb/early March caused all kinds of havoc on our PARA Championship events. This forced extraordinary efforts by all the ROCs in getting the State Championships pulled off. The competitors and family members should also be acknowledged for the flexibility they showed during this already stressful lead-up.

**PARA will be implementing a Championship Kick-off Call at 2 weeks and 1 week prior to the events so that the ROC, Age Chair, Derby Chair, and Executive Board have a consensus statement concerning the events. This allows for clear communication to the PARA population as to any last-minute updates or changes associated with the event.**

Some of the best snow days in PA were in March. Too bad many of our programs were already completed for the season. Skiing in March was excellent as many areas stayed open last into March and early April.

Again, my compliments to the crews and areas for committing the resources to host these crucial statewide events.

Our racers enjoyed success at the Post Season event they attended, and we had some outstanding results. Our programs are gaining respect from around the region and the efforts of our clubs to improve training and increase the skill of our racers seem to be paying off.

**PARA does have an issue with athletes attending Post Season Events. We were able to fill quota spots with alternate athletes but the scheduling, spring break, and time commitments to school and other sports' training is causing PARA some issues. Recognizing our PARA athletes at post season events continues to be something that we should be supporting and have not addressed. Providing access to a "TEAM" garment would be a nice addition for the athletes at any post season event. It is the one thing that most post season athletes would like to have and have repeatedly asked for. A proposal should be put together and presented.**



## Civility and Respect

Why do we all do this? It should be for the benefit of all our PARA athletes. All officials and coaches need internal reflection on your actions over the last season. Did your actions and decisions reflect a non-biased and fair representation? Were your communications non-judgmental and non-confrontational towards other coaches, officials, and athletes? We all need to look for ways to act with additional respect and civility towards each other.

## Competitor Focuses

As previously indicated, ***PARA and its member clubs need to find innovative ways to make U12 and younger athlete population focus more on making the process important vs making the actual competition the focus.*** How does PARA encourage more continued participation at the younger levels? What can PARA provide which helps the clubs provide a fundamental change in the way the younger age groups are addressed? How do we make competitions fun and hold the attention? Coaches education; Divisional visit by the Eastern Youth Team; Team events/Dual-events; Events with other affiliated states? I had a call with Schone Malliet (NWAC) and Laura Sullivan (Tri-State) in early April to initiate a conversation on membership retention and broaden the membership base. These calls will continue over the next months.

Finally, the issue surrounding what constitutes athlete qualifications for consideration towards quotas for post-season events needs to be clarified. These qualifications should reflect the numbers of athletes committed in participating in most season events. ***Some percentage of athletes still do NOT compete in any PARA event prior to the quotas being finalized.***

## COMMUNICATIONS/SOCIAL MEDIA

The [www.paracing.org](http://www.paracing.org) website continues to be the primary vehicle for general news, announcements, and updates associated with the organization. As an organization, we should be providing short event articles with pictures stating the key accomplishments and results from all the Cup and Regional events. Promotion of our accomplishments continues to be worked. We need ROCs or club to provide a few pictures and a summary write-up of the event/awards so that we can continue feeding the promotional machine. By using our website, we should be marketing our racers' results within state and post-season.

The website continues to be maintained via our webmaster Carrie Scheetz. Thanks Carrie for keeping all the information up-to-date. There will be continued efforts over the next months to clean-up older information (FAQ) and provide more relevant information and links.

A PARA Facebook page (pennsylvaniaalpinerracing ) and group were established to push an additional communication path. There have been some good questions generated via this mechanism and PARA will continue to use it as a communication vehicle. A twitter account (@pa\_alpinerracing) and Instagram account (@pa\_alpinerracing) were also established to help with both inward and outward promotion of PARA athletes and events.



## LOOKING FORWARD

PARA must continue to look at promoting and providing educational needs of its membership

- We need encourage more officials to have the required certifications for course setting. **Getting Better over 2017**
- We need to encourage more officials into the Technical Delegate realm to build up the available expertise – **CRITICAL – How do we create incentives towards the TD path?**
- We need to look at the Club Volunteer members (our largest increase) and determine an educational path progressing these members into competition official classification. **With the increase US Ski & Snowboard demands on the certification requirements for a sanctioned event, it is imperative that PARA create an educational path assisting membership in acquiring the required official certifications.**
- We need to establish more coaches' educational opportunities within our regions. We've been doing a respectable job keeping officials informed and need to institute a similar model for coaches' education and training. **CRITICAL**

PARA Promotion –

As an organization, we need to continue to provide promotion both internally and externally. **It is requested that all Championship events use the updated PARA logo as part of the swag/wear provided by the Championship event.** I would request that more banners will be ordered for each Championship event venues as part of the PARA identification. We may want to widen this to a couple in each region for the regional events.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Bond". The signature is fluid and cursive.

David Bond  
President - PARA