



2023/2024 President’s Report

PRESEASON

PARA extended the Spring Meeting decisions over the summer/fall particularly in the areas of coaching, post-season, and funding. It allowed more time to think through alternatives and producing better projected expenditures in these areas.

Continued a working relationship with Jeff Lifgren, Vail Vice President, and PA Ski Area Association Chair, on stabilizing lift ticket pricing for PARA events. Continued discussion need to occur for the 2024/2025 season to get more traction in this area.

MEMBERSHIP

The overall PARA Membership level saw a slight increase from the 2022/23 season. It appears the COVID carry-over (U16/U18/U21) is normalizing back to previous levels.

| 2015/16 | 2016/2017 | 2017/2018 | 2018/2019 | 2019/2020 | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 | 2022/2023 | 2023/2024 |
|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1345 | 1378 | 1444 | 1514 | 1531 | 1458 | 1695 | 1671 | 1680 |

- Alpine Youth (U14 and younger): 5.6% increase
- Alpine Competitor (U16+): 2.1% decrease primarily with the U16 settling back to pre-COVID levels (-32%).
- Alpine Officials: 3.4% decrease

ALPINE OFFICIALS

PARA CALENDARED twelve (12) Alpine Officials workshops & exams to update A.O.s on Alpine rule changes and new/revised procedures and offered a general refresher of the Alpine ski racing rules. The workshops were delivered using a virtual and in-person meeting format to present ALL this year's workshop educational updates. PARA ALPINE OFFICIALS CLINICS TRAINED 143 OFFICIALS FOR THE SEASON.

COACHES

USSS has deferred the requirement that all coaches attending USSS-sanctioned events be Level 100 Certified. Deferral timeline has not been mandated yet. From a PARA perspective, the Coaches Committee should pursue creating in-state opportunities for coaches workshops.

There are discussions going on at National Congress regarding the coach’s certification levels. PARA proposes that the Level 100 Certification be geared to part-time (weekend) coaches. This could be a tailored to coaching based on PSIA type structure and expectation. Possibly requires a redefinition of the USSS Coach’s Level 100.

The Coaches Committee – Bruce Newman, Rudi Riet, and Dan Chayes – were instrumental in keeping the post-season coaches expenses aligned with the proposed budgeted amounts.



SEASON

PA areas were delayed in getting terrain opened in the early season causing events to be postponed and cancelled. Consecutive weeks of warm weather caused many areas to struggle with complete area coverage and specifically challenges in coverage on race hill venues.

However, with ROCs flexibility, we were able to maintain a full U18 Cup Series and shortened the U16 Cup by one race.

Events

Each PARA region scheduled races throughout the season. Early season events are problematic due to weather uncertainty and terrain availability.

PARA U18/U21 Cup Series were run statewide with events at Seven Springs (changed to Tussey), Blue Mountain, and Elk Mountain. The Series averaged approximately 127 participants.

PARA continued the U16 Cup Series running statewide events at Tussey (cancelled), Elk Mountain (picked up 1 race from Tussey), and Blue Mountain. The Series averaged approximately 134 participants (76% of age membership level).

Championship Events were held towards the end of February/early March

- U12 was hosted by Ski Roundtop;
- U14 was hosted by Seven Springs;
- U16 Cup Finals were hosted by Blue;
- U18 Cup Finals were hosted by Elk.

Thank you to the Championship ROCs for the open and ongoing communication leading up to the events. It helped everyone in the state understand the plans.

Some COVID procedural restrictions instituted in 2020/2021 continue to be carried forward into this season:

- Pre-event online coaches meeting; allowing for more coaching time on race day.
- Team coach registration/bib distribution; alleviating race day chaos in racer registration.
- Electronic/Online/SMS communications between ROC, Official, and Coaches; better and more efficient communication before, during, between, and post runs.

Speed Committee

At the 2023 PARA Spring Meeting, the Board of Directors reapproved a Speed Committee for continuation in promoting speed education for PARA athletes. Kurt Zwally, Matt Dembinski, and Ben Shirk were the committee and with the logistical help of Matt Superczynski, organized a very well received U16/U18 camp and subsequent U14/younger at Okemo. This camp was staffed by World Cup/Olympic athletes/coaches (American Downhillers) as well as a contingent of PARA coaches who benefitted from this valuable educational experience.

Eastern Projects

- No U12 projects were established.
- U14 - No Projects.
- U16 – One Project - Eastern U16 SL project that was held at Stratton

COMMUNICATIONS/SOCIAL MEDIA

The Instagram account (@pa_alpineracing) continue to be used to help with both inward and outward promotion of PARA athletes and events.



The www.paracing.org website continues to be the primary vehicle for general news, announcements, and updates associated with the organization. We need to focus this off-season on moving to a more suitable platform per the Web Committees recommendations. The website continues to be maintained via our webmaster Carrie Scheetz. Thanks, Carrie for keeping all the information up to date.

LOOKING FORWARD

Competitor Focuses

- Proposals for U16+ events and progressions (out of state events, FIS events) – Establish a “premiere” athlete plan. What can we do as PARA to help promote our premiere athletes in competing in out of state/FIS events?
- Speed proposals for U16+ - continuation.
- Speed proposals for U14 and younger – continuation.
- U16 Open Events and Championships
- U14 and U12 “Open” Championships
- U14 post season event coverage
- Proposals for U12 and younger events;
 - Change the focus from qualifying for U12 Championships towards Carnival-type events?
 - what should we do for Post season events? – Piches’?

Number of Events and the Cost of Events

PARA must help clubs find ways to lower the costs of events. Push for consistency in event registration pricing as well as lift ticket pricing.

We need to consider starting the events later in the season and reduce the number particularly for the younger age classifications. Our starting dates are getting pushed out while we are also being constrained on the backend of the season by earlier post-season events. **We can no longer plan based on “Next season will be better”.**

Continue work and discussions with PSAA on joint PA skiing opportunities.

Educational and Official Opportunities

PARA must continue to look at promoting and providing educational needs of its membership. PARA and its clubs should continue the need to fulfill the Coaches Level 100 Certification (based on “revised” definition?) for those coaches still requiring compliance; even though USSS has delayed the mandate timeframe.

Investigate focused training per season. Example – T&C, RA, Chief of Race, etc.

TD replenishment due to retirements, etc. TD candidate recommendations needed via Regions.

#BeLikeSam

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Bond'.

David Bond
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