Western Region Alpine Competition Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday, April 16, 2025
Time: 8:30 – 12:30 Pacific Time
Hybrid Meeting: In Person Alpenglow Room Village at Palisades and Zoom

MINUTES

1. Welcome and call to order – Dan Henry, Chair
2. Roll call and review of committee membership – Lucy Conklin, Secretary
   Members: Dan Henry, Devin Gill, Troy Price, Lucy Conklin, Tim Hinderman, Beat Hupfer, Mike Ginsberg, Bridger Call, Kristin Waddle, Roger Bay, Jeremy Ueland, Justin Rackley, Karl Wardrop, Roger Root, Hilary Lindh, Brennan Rubie
   Staff: Bill Gunesch, Jeff Pickering, Brad Saxe, Ali Hollum, Tasha Foster, Kayla Wieczorek, Carma Burnett, Erin Renna, Claudia Yamamoto
   Guests: John Cashman, Mats Boehnke, Jim Hudson, Lester Keller, Calixte Laurent, Catherine Harnden, Will Brandenburg, Will Courtney, Anika Angriman, Todd Brickson, Branka Zagar, Perry Schaffner, Julie-Pierre LeClerc, Matilda Sola, Ben Roberts, Bill Brooks, Keeler Johnston, Becca Sanghvi, Nate Schwing, Kevin Chaffee, Josh Transue, Lindsay Dowd
3. Review and approval of agenda and/or additions
   a. Addition of three proposals under new business:
      i. Apex
      ii. Start Limitations for U18s
      iii. Out or Region Quotas
      M/S/A – Karl Wardrop/Devin Gill/Unanimous
   b. Approval of agenda with additions
      M/S/A Beat Hupfer/Mike Ginsberg/Unanimous
4. Review and approval of minutes from October 8, 2024
   M/S/A Justin Rackley/Devin Gill/Unanimous
5. U.S. Ski and Snowboard Staff Updates –
   a. Alpine Development Director - Chip Knight/Anouk Patty
      Chip previously stated he was unable to attend, and Anouk cancelled via email the morning of the WR ACC meeting.
      i. Alpine Development Program (Feb 25.2025 email from Chip)
         Development Plan PPT was shared to the screen for viewing.
      ii. Questions and Comments brought forth for discussion from WR
         *How is the hiring process going?
         *Will the West have input on hiring of Regional Coach?

*What is the hiring timeline?
*Requesting further explanation on how the plan goes to the Regions.
*There is a 7 year span for one coach to manage athlete needs, how will this be managed?
*We did this once prior and it failed at that time, why are we doing this again? The NGB does not stick with anyone model for longer than 2 to 3 years. This current proposal from the NGB depends on buy in.
*Making comparisons to Austria and Switzerland where ski racing is the National Sport, America does not have the same level or participation with it not being The National Sport.
*Worth it for the Regional ACC to have a strategy in place as to whether or not the Region wants Regional coaches in place as an extra layer to the development model. Discussion that the Region will continue to have their Regional Coaches in place. WR Staff is planning and ready to go for the 25-26 season.
*National Criteria application by points where WR athletes are well represented on the U.S. Ski Team.

b. Competition Services – report by Margo and Jeff at Congress

6. Western Region Program Updates
   a. Western Region Director – Bill Gunesch
      Thank you for taking time to be on the call. Regional staff reports will be at Congress. We will start having regular, in person, coaches' forums during the Elite Series races during the 2026 season.
      Full WR ACC welcome to Ali Holum. She will also be joining us at Congress meetings.
      i. 2025 Calendar highlight: 10 WR events- 4 Devo, 3 Elite, 2 Speed and 1 Champs = 44 starts, plus 3 FISU events. Lost 1 GS per gender and 4 SG's which was 50% of SGs on the Calendar.
         11 resorts hosted FIS events this season and were thanked for their work, plus the U14 and U16 championships.
      ii. Automatic Quotas – starting the season with too many automatics. Will be addressing this with the WR ACC, would like to bring down to 30
      iii. Calendar 2026 – ad hoc committee has only been able to meet once will have one or two more prior to Congress. Do we have an appropriate number of starts tech vs speed. Site Selection Committee is the group that works through actual locations of events. The prep period calendar should be ready by Congress, and the regional competition calendar does drag on through the summer, framework after Congress.

iv. Like to keep the 2-tiered system alive as the advancement process encourages head-to-head competition.

v. Development notes –There were seven U16 Projects, two U14 projects. Only Soldier Mountain was lost due to the weather. Exciting notes – U16 National Team was strong. Half of the Whistler Cup Team is made up of WR athletes, only. Results highlights: Taryn Moe 1st in GS, 3rd in SL, Cree Gillmore and Dom Ditullio with top 10 results. Pick lead the Whistler Cup project for the Nation.

vi. FIS RTG West:
Four projects: 1st speed in Chile with three WC athletes and their servicemen. 2nd project in Chile - 26 athletes, included five U16's.
Europe trip in mid-winter – Brad on tech and Randy on Speed side.
February speed project on WCF DH track.
Started with the new PG team – started great in prep period and challenging during competition period as it's difficult to cover men and women with speed and tech. Duties will be divided up differently to help cover all the athletes.

vii. U14 Whistler Cup Troy Price reported – incredible staff: Troy Price, Hilary Lindh and Jim Hudson. Walked away with the U14 Nations Cup. Victory for Colter from Flathead Valley, Women's GS 2nd, 3rd and 4th. The team won the overall Nations Cup. Great introduction to the regional pathway.

b. Western Region Youth Development Coach – Jeff Pickering
Periodization of calendar this season was challenging especially during champs' times. Requesting input, priority will be early season athletes getting together for head-to-head development. Thank you to all for the help with the projects.

c. Western Region Head Coach – Brad Saxe
Situation where we lack depth in terms of talent and results, looking at Nor Am standings we have individual highlights but working to bolster the depth of athletes from the Region. Clubs are doing the right things, need to see some more critical mass in the top 30 at Nor Ams. 08 YOB will be helping go in the right direction.

d. Western Region Elite FIS Coach – Randy Pelkey report at Congress

e. Western Region Manager – Ali Holum
Report at Congress. Thank you to Bill and rest of Regional Staff for getting her up and running starting late November. Looking forward to meeting everyone at Congress.

7. Western Region Committee Reports and Proposals
    a. Executive Committee Report – Dan Henry
    has not met during the 2025 winter
    Dan Henry's Personal Comments:
    From the WR Coaches Forum Unanimous: Vote of no confidence in the National Development Program
    No written proposals, yet feedback needs to get to National.
    b. Treasurer Report – Troy Price
    Overall financial stability of the Region is good, not great. Decrease in balances due to the amount of support we provide to our Regional Staff for Salaries.
    Checking this time last year at $92,000; today is $32,000.
    Savings is stable at $154,000, nothing transferred out.
    Investment account transferred $111, 000 into it back in July, small decrease to $108, 000 and considering the market that's not too bad.
    Balance due to USSS is paid in full
    Head tax from events still coming in, some revenue still to come in.
    Full report at Congress in May.
        i. Regional Coach Funding – Dan Henry's comments
        We need to maintain continued funding to our Regional Staff. Once NGB controls salaries they control where athletes go.

    Question from Bill Brooks – would like to know where National HT is going regarding supporting coach funding. Troy has asked previously about it and information has not been provided by the NGB.
    Dan Henry comments – meeting with Chip and Anouk last summer, would be shocked if they would provide such information and there is a ton of inequity between the West vs Rocky and East. WR subsidized the least compared to the rest of the Nation. Dan asked Troy and Bill if this is true? Troy not aware of this.
    Bill Gunesch reported that travel budgets for Regions are the same; Eastern coach (1) and Rocky coach (1) are currently funded by the NGB. 2024#' s 44,500 FIS starts and 28,500 scored starts across the Nation.
    Bill Brooks would like to see the numbers of population vs head tax coming back in.
    Jeremy Ueland Question: Have the Regions communicated with each other to pull numbers directly, as each Region does their own bookkeeping.
    Dan's comments: had conversations with the East and would be shocked if we get information out of Rocky.

c. Site Selection Committee – Bill Gunesch
   Current membership is -
   AK Conor McDonald
   ND Jeremy Ueland
   PNW Jamie Landwehr
   IMD Troy Price
   FW Mike Ginsberg
d. Development Committee – Devin Gill
   i. ASC operating procedures update
      small group met October to beginning of April to address the questions/concerns to the Operating Procedures after the Fall Call. Showed changes of the ASC operating procedures put together by Bill Brooks. New structure shown.
      Action item: Forward via email document "Major Changes from 2015 to 2026 ASC operating procedures."
      ASC meeting on May 2nd via zoom, this ASC operating procedures will be presented upon during the final ASC meeting May (Date goes here). Much of it was language clean ups, and consolidation of the Sub Committees.
   ii. U16 same playing ground, getting the top U16's together throughout the year
   iii. FIS calendaring discussion previously covered by Bill Gunesch
   iv. Looking to have a U16/U14 development and FIS development committee, separated for discussion.
e. Divisional Managers Reports
   i. PNW – Great season. Held all races as scheduled and only lost one GS. Hosted more FIS races in Division than many previous years. 9 athletes went to U16 Nationals, most in the past ten years: Henry Roberts podiumed 3rd in SG. U14 Regionals, PNW took first in every event. Three U14's went to Whistler Cup. Divisional Bnet program continues to thrive (approx. $250K of Divisional Bnet), clubs own their own net for training. Board developed a Cell Phone policy. Thank you to all the WR Managers as they are a joy to work with.
   ii. IMD – successful year, coaches and clubs continue to work well together. financially strong: support for championship events, TD stipend reimbursement, speed venue subsidies.
      IMD Licenses steady, U12 down 3%, U14 up 6%, U16 down 2%, U18 up 3%, U21 up 16%.

U14 series is very overcrowded and looking to see how to restructure going forward next season. U16 races are pretty light.
Ran speed camp and Soldier Mountain and quite successful approx. 110 1st year U14's in attendance.
WCF at Sun Valley super exciting, lots of families and clubs traveled to watch. Shout out to Sun Valley Co and SVSEF.
May 21st and 22nd Spring Meeting.
Thank Bridger Call and Kristen Waddle as reps as ACC Chair and Vice Chair, and reps to WR.
Thank you to WR Managers for their collaborative spirit.
Congratulate Todd Brickson on his retirement: thanked for 23vyears of leadership to IMD.

iii. FW – great season, just wrapped up in Mammoth on Monday. Busy March and April in FW. The snow is incredible, race crews across the division thanked.
Fall officials and coaches' education was incredible approx. 200 officials through the system this year.
Completed all but one qualifier for U14's and U16's. Three U14 girls qualified for the Whistler Cup. Membership is held steadily across all the groups. Ready to move into camp season. Thank you to the Managers, treat to work with everyone. Looking forward to seeing everyone in Park City.

iv. ND – thank you to all the managers, welcome to Ali and fun to meet her in Mammoth. Awesome season. Pulled off all races, minus one GS. Thank you to IMD and Sun Valley for allowing Northern to run their qualifier within the Laura Flood. New board members this year and working to reorganize admin side. Numbers are down a little, mostly at U16 and FIS levels, YSL and U14's are up. Biggest challenges are on the AO front – looking for more RA and TnC side. Great results this year, had a number of athletes qualify for National and Whistler Cup projects. Looking ahead to the next season.

v. AK – different season from the rest of the lower 48. Alot of rain this season, 12 races scheduled, 2 cancelled, 6 rescheduled and only 4 ran as planned. Qualifiers were difficult this season, restructured the qualifying process in season. Threw approx. 5k lbs of salt for the FISU's. Alyeska brought Silvertip SG venue back on board. Membership numbers went down a bit: 69 U12, 45 U14, 59 U16, 10 FIS and 92 coaches, majority are volunteer coaches and excellent support from the racing community. 43

in the officials' clinics in the Fall. Hosted one level 100 and one level 200 coaches' education; Jenn Danza thanked. Managers thanked for helping Tasha through the year in her first year as the AK Manager.

8. National Committee Reports –
    a. Collegiate Report – Sparky Anderson no report
    b. U16 and Older Working Group – Todd Brickson
    Has not met since last May. Joe Paul is the new chair and looking forward to upcoming discussions and meetings.
    c. U14 and Younger Working Group – Jeremy Ueland
    Have not met since last May. One item of discussion during the winter: Kombi event language missed regarding min/max delays in the ACR, appeared to be an oversight. East proposed setting some guidelines and U14 WG Exec plus ASC approved the language as a test during the 2025 season.
    Jeremy discussed that the WG has four seats terming out, Western Region reps three terming out for sure: Jeremy, Dan, Parker (out) and Beau (tent).
    d. Coaches Education Working Group –Ben Roberts
    requesting from the WG what the Coaches Ed Working Group roll as lack of activity during the past two cycles is problematic.
    e. Quotas and Selections – Beat Hupfer
    Rogan Connell took over as chair during the 2025 Congress. Radio silence since Congress, no further report.
    f. Regional Subcommittee – Bill Brooks
    Operating procedures is the only item on the current RSC plate at this time.
    g. Officials Update – Roger Root
    Couple of new AO chairs during the 2025 season and they will represent the Region on the AOEWG.
    AK – Julie Pierre LeClerc
    IMD – Gil Dennis
    ND - LaRue Seitz
    PNW – Roger Root
    Chair of AOEWG Lucy Conklin
    Reports for the WG and the Region
    h. US TD Working Group – Brian Hartman, no report and not in attendance
9. Old business
    a. Performance Task Force – Devin Gill, no report
10. New business
    a. Flex Pole Proposal – see attached finalized version
    M/S/A: Devin Gill/Jeremy Ueland
    Amended Proposal M/S/A: Devin Gill/Jeremy Ueland/Passed Unanimously

Discussion: appreciate new language, provides flexibility. This provides clarity. Whistler Cup runs a 72" gate.

b. Coaches Education tracking proposal
M/S/A: Lucy Conklin/Mike Ginsberg/Unanimous
Discussion: what is the proposed solution to tracking? Not 100% sure but looking for cooperation of combined tracking, possibly into membership, so that OC's do not have an added item to their tracking list.

c. Quotas to Canada and US Proposal
M/S/A: Lucy Conklin/Devin Gill/Unanimous
Discussion: the previous policy of 30 and 30 had not been a problem in the past. This would need to be agreed upon by USA and CAN in order for it to be returned to the 30 and 30. Does this strengthen or weaken events in the WR? Western Canada is very interested in having a strong relationship with the WR. Pointed out that it will not detract from numbers in other WR FIS races as travel does become a hinderance for some divisions/athletes, and the development level can be more appropriate during some of the WR Elite races.

d. Out of Region Quotas – submitted from WR Coaches Forum
M/S/A: Brennan Rubie/Justin Rackley/Unanimous
Discussion: when field sizes allows for expansion it would be beneficial for athletes to be able to race in head-to-head opportunities.

e. Geographic Affiliation Designation
M/S/A: Justin Rackley/Mike Ginsberg/Unanimous
Discussion: this motion it to bring light to the issue of European based, such as APEX, athletes' affiliation. Motion may not completely solve the problem yet needs to be discussed. Is there a need for a European based Region?
Items to solve:
-Randomness of attendance
-failure of coaches to confirm or pull for series
-access to National Development Quota

f. U18 Start Limitation
M/S/A: Brennan Rubie/Devin Gill
Amended motion M/S/A: Brennan Rubie/Devin Gill/Unanimous

g. Beat Hupfer: Request the Region to review AdminSkiRacing vs other online registration system as there were many problems during the 2025 season with ASR.
Discussion: will the athlete portal become active again? Will not become active again. Is ASR willing to create the updates needed? The short answer is that they have created more problems instead of fixing requests. They have not been

available as support for problems with reg for RA's, families or coaches.
Action Item for Lucy to set up task force: two RA's from each Division, plus the Divisional Managers to meet over the next few weeks and provide a report to the WR ACC at the May meeting.

11. Motion to adjourn: Troy Price/Devin Gill 11:30 Pacific Time
12. Next meeting: Monday, May 12, 2025, Bison Room 5