

RACE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2016 Chama Chile Ski Classic & Winter Fiesta

January 16-18, 2016

The New Mexico and Colorado rivalry continued at the Chama Chile Ski Classic races over the Martin Luther King Jr. weekend, where top winners from both New Mexico and Colorado, competed in cross-country ski, snowshoe and fat tire snow bike races. Top Colorado winners of the races hailed from Durango, Crestone and Pagosa Springs while New Mexico winners came from Albuquerque and Los Alamos. Most racers came from New Mexico and Colorado, but a few came from Utah, Arizona, California and Texas.

Racers completed 214 races in 9 races over the 3-day Chama Chile Ski Classic & Winter Fiesta weekend. Racers ranged in age from 3 to 80 years old. The event took place in the South San Juan Mountains 12 miles north of Chama, NM, on the Rio Grande National Forest.

In addition to the races, there were many other events over the weekend which drew in skiers and snowshoers from the region. New this year, was the Backcountry Film Festival put on by the Winter Wildlands Alliance and the Chama Valley Outdoor Club. The Backcountry film festival was shown at The Brew House and featured films about ice climbing, sailing and skiing in Greenland and Iceland, skiing in Mexico and more.

In addition to the film festival, racers and non-racers enjoyed a snowshoe tour at the Sargent's area, a ski tour in the Spruce Hole area, and beginner to advanced ski clinics.

The Chama Chile Ski Classic & Winter Fiesta is an event of the Rotary Club of Chama Valley in Chama, NM, a non-profit organization, with proceeds going to community and youth projects, and the Chama Chile Ski Classic event. Event and Gold sponsors for the event included Lowe's Supermarket, the Village of Chama and Rio Arriba County Lodgers, High Country Restaurant and Saloon. Silver sponsors for the CCSC included Chama Station Inn, Elkhorn Lodge, Enchanted Forest Cross Country Ski Area, Fishtail Ranch, The Brew House, and Washington Federal Bank. Additional sponsors and donors that also supported the event are listed at the end of this report.

Freestyle Nordic Races:

Freestyle (Skate) skiers started the weekend, competing in both an 18 kilometer race and a 6 kilometer race. The top winner of the 18K race crossed the finished line well ahead of his closest contender. Clay Moseley (age 45) from Los Alamos, NM (time 1:09:33) came in first with Greg Lewis (36 yrs) from Durango, CO, almost 3 minutes behind (time 1:12:25). Debra Sussex (age 54) from Durango was the top female finisher with a time of 1:15:21, followed by second place finisher Sanna Sevanto (age 41) from Los Alamos, NM with a time of (1:19:29).

Steve Ilg from Durango, CO with a time of 26:42 and Peter May from Crestone, CO with a time of 31:35, placed first and second overall in the 6K Freestyle races. First and second

female winners, were Jennifer Martin from Pagosa Springs (time 35:02) and Suzanne Devore from Mosca, CO (time 36:35).

Classic Nordic Races:

Colorado and New Mexico classic style Nordic racers battled it out on Sunday in both the Classic 12 kilometer and 6 kilometer races. The 12 K Classic Ski race had 38 racers competing while the 6K Classic Ski race had 61 competitors.

Top male finisher in the 12K race, and winner of his second race for the weekend, was Clay Moseley (50:20) from Los Alamos, NM. Trailing behind him, just a minute and 20 seconds, was Steve Ilg (age 53) from Durango, CO with a time of 51:41. Top female finishers were both from New Mexico, with Elizabeth Quinley (age 28) from Albuquerque, NM placing as the top female (third overall) with a time of 53:06 while Sanna Sevanto(57:55) from Los Alamos, NM placed second.

Pete May (age 51) from Crestone, CO placed first in the 6K Classic Race with a time of 33:21 and also won the wooden ski category. Eric Biederman (age36) from Albuquerque, NM won second place with a time of 38:45. Following closely behind was the 6K Female top finisher, Robi Mulford (age 57, over 20 years older than the second place male!) from Los Alamos, NM with an impressive time of 39:22! Way to go Robi! Local skier, Gayle Jones (age 54) from Tierra Amarilla won the silver medal with her time of 45:55.

Wooden Ski Category: It is possible to buy wooden skis new, but the majority of the wooden skis out there are from back in the day. Skiers using wooden skis are carrying on an old Nordic tradition. Some prefer wooden skis over the modern ski.

Peter May from Crestone, Colorado placed first in the Wooden Ski Category with a time of 33:21 and Barry Ritchie, (age 58) placed second with a time of 39:56.

Snowshoe and Combined Races:

Amber Dagal (Albuquerque, NM) placed first overall and first female in the snowshoe race with a time of 38:32 (over 5 minutes better from her time in 2015 at 43:44). Eric Biederman from Albuquerque, NM placed second overall and first male winner with a time of 40:03. Matt Desmond placed 3rd overall and second male with a time of 41:03, while Kristi Hunt from Santa Fe, NM was the second place female finisher with a time of 44:25.

There were 12 combined racers, who raced in both a classic ski race and the snowshoe race. Earning the title of **King and Queen of the Mountain**, both Amber and Daryl Dagal, a couple from Albuquerque, NM won the 12K Ski/6K Snowshoe Combined race. Amber placed first overall with a combined time of 1:38:30 while, her husband, Daryl placed second with a combined time of 1:39:58.

The title of **Prince and Princess of the Mountain** went to Eric Biederman from Albuquerque, NM and Annie Sewell from Pagosa Springs, CO for their winning times in the 6K Ski/6K Snowshoe Combined race. Eric's combined time was 1:18:48 and Annie's time was 1:34:03. Congratulations to these super powered athletes for taking on the challenge of the combined races!

Fat Tire Snow Bike Race:

The second annual Fat Tire Snow Bike race drew 10 people to the Race Course to try out this unique form of snow play! Racers chose to participate in a 6K race or an 18 K race.

Racers in the 18K race found the course to be challenging and a “great workout” according to overall winner and first place male Mathew Wolford (age 32), from Pagosa Springs, CO, finishing with a time of 1:02:03. Second place male finisher, Paul Foley, finished with a time of 1:12:45, more than ten minutes after Mathew.

Lauren Wolford (age 25) placed first female in the 18K race with a time of 1:16:55. Lauren posed with her husband Mathew, with their ristra prizes for a photograph of the winning couple.

6K finishers, Patrick Sewell, from Pagosa Springs, CO placed first (30:02) while Andrea Carrillo from Chama, NM placed first female (51:38). Fred Afflerbach from Texas, placed 2nd overall and 2nd place male with a time of 47:05.

Rookie Race: “If you had fun, you won!”

Twenty-four adults and kids participated in the Rookie Races with all receiving participant ribbons. A 1K race, a 2K race and a 3K race were conducted for both skiers and snowshoers, adults and kids. Winners of the 1K race were skiers and youth, Eli Micander and Anna Simakov, and the winning 1K snowshoer was Monte Faulkner. Vannessa Barela was the winner of the 2K Adult snowshoe race.

Top placing youth skiers in the 3K race were Mila Moseley and Axyl Nikelson. Adult 3K skiers, Norma Pawley and Chris Michel from Los Alamos, won first place. Adult snowshoe racers Betsy Cotton from Pagosa Springs, CO and George Koinis from Placitas, New Mexico won first place.

Placing first, Brody Milander, 8 years old, from Santa Fe, NM was the only youth in the 3K Snowshoe division.

Costume Contest:

This year’s costume theme was bugs, and racers came out as bees, flies, butterflies, and even a tick and black widow spider were seen on the course! There were three categories for the contest: Best Adult, Best Youth and Best Group costumes.

The Best Adult Costume went to “SuperFly” Mark Thacker. Elaine Regan received an Honorable Mention for her Bumble Bee outfit. The Best Youth Costume went to Anna & Alexandra Simakov for their Dragonfly and Butterfly outfits, with an honorable mention for the entomologists Helen & Raylee.

Finally, the Best Group Costume went to Steve and Julia Janecky for their “Love Bugs” outfits.

Special Awards:

Mary Ruth Middleton Award: This award is in memory of Mary Ruth Middleton, who was the oldest snowshoe finisher in the Ski Classic Snowshoe Races for a couple of years. She was an inspiration to her friends and family. This award went to Max Light, age 77, from Los Alamos, NM and to Carol Rankin, age 69, from Trinidad, Colorado. Come to think about it, they both received this award last year!

Clif Palmer Average Jane and Average Joe Awards: These awards are in honor of Clif Palmer, one of the original organizers of the Chama Chile Ski Classic back in the 1970's, who died in April 2014. He always had a joke for everyone! The award is given to the male and female racer in the 6K Classic Ski race that is in the "middle of the pack" (statistically not the "average")

The Average Jane Award went to Jan Hester from Pagosa Springs, CO with her time of 1:01:46 and the Average Joe Award went to Cory Milander from Santa Fe, NM with his time of 52:25.

Congratulations Jan and Cory, because being average is pretty awesome too!

Unofficial, but worth it! Racer Completes Grand Slam!

Steve Ilg with Wholistic Fitness, from Durango, Colorado, and the Ski Classic's former King of the Mountain, raced in all event styles over the 3 day weekend. He completed the 6K Freestyle race on Saturday, the 12K Classic/6K Snowshoe combined on Sunday and the 18K SnowBike race on Monday. Amazing!

Congratulations to ALL the racers in the Chama Chile Ski Classic! We'll see you again next year!

Mary Ann DeBoer, Race Director
Rotary Club of Chama Valley

Sponsors and Donors

Our list of sponsors and donors continues to grow each year. We want to thank all our sponsors and donors for helping make the Chama Chile Ski Classic possible. Most of the funds from the sponsors go towards the weekend event and to marketing the event.

Any proceeds from the Ski Classic are used by the Rotary Club to support community and youth projects in the Chama Valley area. We want to thank all of our sponsors for their generous support of the Chama Chile Ski Classic & Winter Fiesta. In the last couple of years, the Rotary has used some of the Ski Classic funds to provide computers for the local library, and provide freezers for the Food Bank.

Event Sponsors:

**Lowe's Supermarket
Village of Chama Lodger's**

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**Rio Arriba County Lodger's
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Community Sponsor:

**Chama Valley Dental Care
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Chama Title Company**

We also want to thank all our large and small donors, who give us schwag for the awards ceremonies and for the racer goodie bags, and for our raffle and silent auction. They are listed on our website.

Without the community support, the Chama Chile Ski Classic could not happen. THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!!!!!

Organizations and Individuals involved with CCSC:

We also couldn't do the races without the support of several organizations, individuals and all our volunteers! We want to thank Clay Moseley and the **Southwest Nordic Club** from Los Alamos, NM for their work on grooming the course and promoting the races. They are one of our most important partners in putting on the race.

We want to thank the following groups and individuals:

Jolene Jessie – for her wonderful Tshirt designs!

San Juan Nordic Club from the San Luis Valley in Colorado –for helping with grooming and promoting the CCSC

Santa Fe Striders – for timing 7 out of 9 of our races. They keep our race times honest and professional.

Steve Roholt – for teaching our freestyle cross-country ski clinic

Chama Valley Outdoor Club – for leading our tours in the Sargent’s and Spruce Hole area

Che Johnston – for his continued support of the Ski Classic as a sponsor, and for the awesome castle he built at the race course!!! The kids will never forget this amazing structure!

Sanna Sevanto – for teaching our Advanced Classic Skiing Techniques Clinic

Patrick Hogan – for being our photographer, year after year, and taking some of the most amazing photographs of the races, skiers, volunteers and the beautiful course.

Clay Moseley – for stepping in and becoming the beginner skiing clinic instructor, when our beginner cross-country skiing instructor called in sick.

Pagosa Mountain Sports – for coming to the Ski Classic and providing Snow Bike, snowshoe and ski rentals.

Rob Gonzales – for hosting the BackCountry Film Festival at the Brew House, and for being our newest silver sponsor.

Steve Ilg – for teaching our “Yoga for Racers” session and calling in our freestyle racers as they came down the course and through the finish line.

Peter May – for teaching our ski wax clinic.

Conejos County Hospital Emergency Services

La Clinica del Pueblo de Rio Arriba Emergency Services

Colorado Department of Transportation

Rio Grande National Forest

Chama Valley Chamber of Commerce

John Beaver, Justin & Ramon Vigil, and Esteban Rendon for the first round of grooming the course

Finally.....a big hug and thank you to ALL our volunteers involved with the Ski Classic. There are so many people involved in everything from marketing, events planning, registration, race course monitoring, timing, and more. We couldn't do the race without you!!