



# CONGRESS 2023

## Freeski Sport Committee

Time: Tuesday, May 16, 2023 10:45 AM Mountain Time (US and Canada)

Location: USANA Center of Excellence, 2nd Floor Tiered Conference Room

Virtual Option:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://usskiandsnowboard-org.zoom.us/j/85626800988?pwd=U2Qra3R4cEhrRUk4SDJnVFZlamRDdz09>

Meeting ID: 856 2680 0988

Passcode: 432585

### Committee Composition

Meeting Chair: Tom Yaps

Position	Name	Email	Term	Anniversary	Present
Chairperson	Tom Yaps	tom@emllc.com	4 yr.	2024	X
Far West Representative	Ben Ryerson	bryerson@mammothresorts.com	2 yr.	2024	X
PNSA Representative	Mike Hanley	mike.hanley@weeastacademy.com	2 yr.	2023	X
Intermountain Representative	Chris Haslock	hatch@parkcityss.org	2 yr.	2024	X
Rocky Representative	Greg Ruppel	gruppel@teamavsc.org	2 yr.	2023	
Central Representative	Martin Sundquist*	martin@nybora.com	2 yr.	2024	
Eastern Representative	John Kimble	kimblej@gouldacademy.org	2 yr.	2024	X
Northern Representative			2 yr.		
Athlete Representative - SS (BOD)	Tom Wallisch	twallisch@gmail.com	4 yr.	2024	X
Athlete Representative HP	Brita Sigourney	<a href="mailto:britasig@gmail.com">britasig@gmail.com</a>	2 yr.	2024	X
Athlete Representative - BA	Willie Borm	willie@willieborm.com	2 yr.	2023	
Athlete Representative - SX	Whitney Gardner	whitneykgardner@gmail.com	2 yr.	2023	X
Athlete Representative - At-large	Maggie Voisin	skimagg123@gmail.com	2 yr.	2023	X
Coaches Representative	Keith Shipman	kshipman@parkcityss.org	2 yr.	2023	X
Freeski Sport Development Manager/ FIS	Ashley Deibold	Ashley.deibold@usskiandsnowboard.org	-		X
USASA Rep	Mike Mallon	mike@usasa.org	-		X
At- Large Rep	Dan Shuffleton	dshuffleton@wvbts.org	2 yr.	2024	X
Ski Cross SC Chair	Gillian Esson				

Athlete rep -at large	Grace Henderson	gracehenderson10@gmail.com		2024	X
Athlete rep -at large	Rep needed			2024	

**Also in attendance:**

Leah Stroud, Matt Crowe, Dave Euler, Skogen Sprang, Erin McNeely, Ryan Wyble, Mike Kirchner, Mike Riddle, Loon Freestyle, Justin Schmaelze, Jason Stinsemen, Tristan Feinberg, Sarah Emery, Nick Alexakos, Eric Webster, Erin Doyle, Cath Jett, Kim Raymer, Jason Arens.

**1. Chairman Calls the Meeting to Order**

- a. Tom yaps called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m.

**2. Roll call and Establishment of Quorum**

- a. Tom Yaps made a roll call and noted that a quorum was present.

**3. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes**

- a. **Motion** by Chris Haslock to approve the 2021 minutes; **Second** Dan Shuffleton; **Motion carried** unanimously.

**4. Committee Appointments**

- Maggie voisin reelected - 2 year term
- Brita reelected - 2 year term
- Whitney reelected - 2 year term
- Naming Grace Henderson and Tristan Feinberg as Athlete Rep At Large - 2 year term
- Willie Borm term is up and nominating Mac Forehand
- Names have been submitted to AAC and will be approved shortly
- Mike Hanley would like to run again. Unanimous reelection
- Rocky Mountain rep will be offline - Greg not present
- Keith voted to be reelected for coaches representative

**5. Freeski Department Update - Skogen Sprang, Mike Riddle, Dave Euler**

- a. Skogen Sprang, Freeski Sport Director
  - i. Skogen stepped into the Freeski Sport Director role in November.
  - ii. Venues are coming together well for the Olympics—a bit behind schedule.
  - iii. In the process of hiring for a new Freeski Slopestyle Rookie coach position.
  - iv. Project Gold is back in person and we’re excited to focus on development moving forward.
  - v. The UOP airbag is on schedule to be ready to go later in the summer, which will help develop our pipeline.
  - vi. Another big focus is to find world-class venues and help develop them by contributing financially because we know it is tough for resorts to invest.
  - vii. Hosting COE camps this summer and trying to make these camps uniform for all the athletes across all teams. Goal is to make use of our resources here at the COE, work with coaches to have an outline for the season, and do the important prep work for the season.
  - viii. High Performance team has been doing a lot of useful data collection and testing. They’re currently working on a project using Archgenesis, which is a force measuring device.
- b. Mike Riddle, Freeski Halfpipe Head Coach
  - i. Team is strong as a nation.
  - ii. Have good depth on the men’s side and are trying to find ways to increase women’s depth and participation. Brita hosted Ladies Laps, and we would like to get more of those events going.
  - iii. Hanna Faulhaber won WCH in Georgia, Birk Irving won Crystal Globe, Ferreira Bronze at WCH, David won X Games, Svea podiumed at X, P&P won Nations’ Cup.

- iv. Incorporating our Strength and Conditioning coach Matt Voss more has been invaluable.
- v. Matt Margetts joined the team this year as assistant head coach and has been a great addition, especially on the technical side.
- vi. Rookies are poised to make a leap to Pro Team in next couple years. Ryan Carey is doing great with that team.
- vii. Working together well as One Team, with having the Pro and Rookie athletes and coaches integrated. Pros have been great at mentoring Rookies.
- viii. Focusing on good team communication and clear athlete development plans.
- ix. One challenge is access to good venues. Need to work with resorts on pipe access and access at a lower cost. Laax, Mammoth, and New Zealand are great venues.
- x. Limited events on the pipe side. Lost one World Cup in next season. May need to begin looking at an 18 ft pipe event.
- xi. Upcoming summer camps are integral to training in the summer—Mammoth, Kitz, New Zealand
- xii. Would love to utilize Woodward PC more, especially if the pipe can get going earlier in the season.
- c. Dave Euler, Freeski Slopestyle Head Coach
  - i. Mr. Euler discussed Slopestyle news and updates.

#### **6. Athlete Report - Tom Wallisch**

- a. Happy to take any feedback and bring it to the council.
- b. Working to keep athlete involvement in the Sport Committees (33%).
- c. Team funding continues to be a big focus.
- d. Placing emphasis on athlete barometer and making sure athletes are not only successful but feeling supported.
- e. Thinking of ways that we can reach different parts of the country and give Freeskiing a broader audience and improve fan base and participation.
- f. Looking for athlete involvement in a variety of committees at USSS and would be great to have more Freeski representation.

#### **7. U.S. Ski & Snowboard Events Update - Nick Alexakos, Sarah Emery**

- a. Toyota U.S. Grand Prix & Visa Big Air
  - i. 2022-23:
    - Copper Mountain (HP & Big Air): Dec 11-17, 2022
    - Mammoth Mountain (HP & Slopestyle): Jan 29-Feb 4, 2023
  - ii. 2023-24:
    - Copper Mountain (HP & Big Air): Dec 10-16, 2023
    - Mammoth Mountain (HP & Slopestyle): Jan 28-Feb 3, 2024
  - iii. Media:
    - 8+ hours on NBC channels
    - 50+ hours on Outside (included qualification and finals)
    - Over 25 international broadcast markets with InFront
- b. Revolution Tour
  - i. 2022-23:
    - Copper Mountain: Jan 25, 29, 2023 (HP & Slopestyle) and March 27-29, 2023 (HP)
    - Aspen (HP & Slopestyle): Feb 8-12, 2023
    - Mammoth Mountain (HP, Slopestyle & Big Air): March 16-21, 2023
      - a. Canceled Big Air and Slopestyle, rescheduled HP
  - ii. 2023-24 (expected):
    - Mammoth Mountain: Feb 6-11, 2024
    - Aspen: Feb 21-25, 2024
    - Copper Mountain: TBD

- iii. Will continue to have video judging for Slopestyle at the Copper Rev.
- iv. Looking at bringing in builder to adjust X Games course at Aspen to better suit the field
- v. Live Heats is our new scoring system.
- vi. Calendar dates may shift. Working with the World Cup events and Canada for dates.
- vii. Community liked having an early Rev Tour stop in the schedule, like in January. Challenging for resorts to get the builds ready early in the season, but we will continue to work with resorts.

#### **8. Membership Report - Sheryl Barnes**

- a. Ms. Barnes reviewed the membership summary with the committee, including member account updates, important membership dates, membership requirements and reminders, SafeSport training, background screening, and club registration process.
- b. Clubs are no longer allowed to link all athletes and purchase their memberships for them because it is not in compliance with child protection laws.

#### **9. Judges Report - Jason Arens**

- a. Big goal of last year and continuing through this year is education.
- b. Working to bring as many judges into the sport as possible and making sure the judges we have are participating in contests and clinics.
- c. Have a new crop of younger judges who are under 25 years old, which is great.
- d. Still doing online education system so anyone has access to see what the judging criteria is and how judges are being taught (FIS-edu.com).
- e. Continuing judges clinics, which is the only way you're able to officially judge contests.
  - i. Tentative clinic planned for Oct 27-20 in Park City.
- f. Highly recommend coaches and anyone who is interested to attend. Great to get coach feedback and bridge the gap between coaches and judges.
- g. Have clearance from FIS to standardize national-level judging, which will help streamline process for becoming a judge and provide consistent information.
- h. Working a lot of new judges into the mix on Futures and Rev level
- i. We will have a U.S. judge at Junior Worlds and World Champs
- j. FIS has been given funding to educate judges on section by section judging.
  - i. SBS clinic in Italy for judges, tv production, athletes, etc. to workshop SBS judging—how is it being used, is there a way to manipulate it to make it work better for freeskiing.
- k. Athlete Reps feel that there is inconsistency with SBS judging and prefer OI.
- l. Hard to use SBS because it requires 10 judges.
- m. Need to use a consistent system between qualifiers and finals.
- n. OI takes really good judges every single time. Becomes harder and harder to use OI as the sport progresses. With SBS you limit judges to one section of the run, which limits exposure and prevents people from being overwhelmed.
- o. Judges have limited exposure to SBS because not all events are using it.
- p. Survey from last year had 60% of athletes preferring SBS versus 40% wanting to go back to OI.
- q. SBS provides more accurate detailing on each feature, but FK judging is a ranking system and SBS can throw a wrench in that
- r. SBS could still work if it was ranking based in each section instead of points based but then you have limited opinions on each section.
- s. Judges want to represent the athletes and work with coaches, so all stakeholders (athletes, coaches, etc) are strongly encouraged to zoom into European clinics or attend in person U.S. clinics.

#### **10. USASA Report - Mike Mallon**

- a. Mr. Mallon discussed the USASA Summary which included a 22/23 review, regional membership updates, fundraising updates, education updates, USASA events, the Futures Tour, national championships, marketing and partnerships, a content recap, communications (newsletters, team app), and DEI.

- b. Mr. Mallon also discussed USASA's strategic plan: 1) What got us here won't get us there; 2) Innovate to evolve; 3) Strengthen our brand; 4) Leverage our brand for opportunity; and 5) Elevate the experience.

#### 11. Development Update/Coaches Education Update - Ashley Deibold

- a. Ms. Deibold discussed pipeline updates (Futures Tour, Rev Tour, Holeshot Tour, Live Heats, and Event Admin Clinics), development camps (Project Gold and Progression Sessions), FIS (Fluoro Ban, Premium NorAm Events and Freeride World Tour), and Education (Level 200 and Level 300).
- b. Futures Tour Updates
  - i. More details surrounding the new format of Futures will be released shortly.
  - ii. Rev Tour athletes would not be pre-qualified to Futures Events.
  - iii. Limited by venues for the amount of Futures and Rev events we can host.
- c. Premium Park & Pipe NorAms will not double cup points like the Europa Cups do/used to do.
- d. U.S. and Canada can host a max of three slopestyle events.
- e. Rail Jam is an official FIS event.
- f. Poles are now required for World Cup events.

#### 12. Old Business

#### 13. New Business

- a. Proposal to move Ski Cross Subcommittee to Alpine
  - i. FIS had made a move to move SX to Alpine because most of those athletes come from an Alpine background. That hasn't made much progress. We need to figure out where SX lives in our organization for development. USSS leadership has asked us to move SX under Alpine.
  - ii. **Motion** by Ashley Deibold to move Ski Cross Subcommittee to under Alpine; **Second** Maggie Voisin; **Motion carried** unanimously.

#### 14. Floor Open for Comments/Questions

- a. FIS Rail Jams
  - i. Goal is to develop FIS nations who don't have strong ski/snowboard programs and allow them to get involved in skiing and snowboarding with lower barriers to entry. Trying to make park more accessible to urban areas, etc.
- b. Growing Halfpipe
  - i. Hard for resorts to build pipes, but they are integral to the progression and growth of the sport.
  - ii. Aspen just bought a new 13-foot machine.
  - iii. Pushing for Futures to utilize 18 ft pipes.
  - iv. Steamboat built a 22 ft pipe this spring.
  - v. USSS is looking to do more coach education and grassroots activation where there are halfpipes.
    - Similar events to Brita's Ladies Laps to introduce women to park and pipe.
  - vi. Conversations are happening with NSAA about pipes.
  - vii. Conversations are happening with USSS leadership about the importance of air bags and pipes and how we can help support pipe builds at resorts.
  - viii. Not having specs of slopestyle courses allowed more to be built and more events to be hosted. Being more lenient on pipe specs could produce the same resorts.
  - ix. Hosting pipe jams after halfpipe events. Easy to implement and is more inclusive and less intimidating for those who want to try.
- c. There will be a transition feature in the 2026 Olympic Slopestyle course.

- 15. **Motion** by Ashley Deibold to adjourn the meeting; **Second** Mike Mallon; **Motion carried** unanimously.