



February 2016

LOVE YOUR SKI CLUB MONTH



Photo Credit: Bob Eastaugh

Arianna Hall (U19) and Conner Lane (U16) launch from the start at the Alyeska Cup and Coca Cola Classic races.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



MIGHTY MITES

Let's start with some fun facts: The last two years **total annual snowfall** at Alyeska was 476" and 478" respectively, and so far **this year** we have **464"**, only 1 foot less than the last two years, and its just mid-season! So although the bottom is challenging, the top of the mountain is skiing incredible! Another fun fact: The month of

January 2016 saw new snow up top every day except 6 days, pretty darn good! My point is the kids are getting TONS of great skiing up top - skiing all types of challenging terrain, mixed with drills and carving on groomed trails. Combined with gate training on the lower mountain, we are seeing some great improvements in many of the athletes!

Our AWESOME coaches (please thank them when you see them) continue to focus on athletic stance, feet shoulder width apart to allow the skis to tip up on edge and carve (not steering), which also allows the knees and ankles to flex and angulate to allow the ski to carve through forward pressure. Additionally, we are working on pole plant drills, which is a critical skill that keeps the athlete balanced, centered on the skis and looking down the hill (fall line). We have been talking a lot about "charging" the fall line on the steeper pitches, which means making turns going straight down the fall line, not across the fall line (e.g. North Face & South Face), where its critical to keep your upper body facing down hill while your legs turn/move independently underneath your upper torso. We have been focusing on Slalom (SL) gates this month, as our first race was a SL, and the kids have all been getting plenty of runs in on the courses, where we are continuing to talk to them about downhill ski pressure, quick turns getting on and off their edges quickly, and dynamic up/down motion between turns which helps with pressuring the ski properly. I challenge you to talk with your kids about these topics and have them explain their interpretation of these terms and what they feel and see happening with their skiing.

Check out these two links that will further explain some of these terms / theories and will give you something to try working on while out skiing with your kids.

<http://www.skinet.com/ski/galleries/25-tips-carve-ski>

<http://www.skinet.com/ski/article/how-ski-powder>

Thanks for coming out every weekend and cheering your kids on during the race! All of the Mighty Mite coaches continue to have a blast skiing with your kids, so THANKS! Hope to see you out on the hill soon!

Coaching news:

Coach Tracy should be returning soon after a broken wrist suffered a month ago while skiing.

Coach Suzie is doing well recovering from a broken shoulder suffered a few weeks ago while skiing.

Congratulations to Coach Mike welcoming his second son to our MM community last week!

Cheers all, and be safe out there, and most importantly have fun, life's too short not to!

Lumpy

Mighty Mites Head Coach



DEVOS

As we reach the halfway point of our season, I have been blown away by how many coaches have told me about DEVO skiers making great progress in their skiing. We have some blessed powder days and most skiers have skied into new areas at Alyeska that they had never been too, or had forgotten from prior ski seasons. The North face has been conquered anew by many. I haven't personally skied rag-doll gate all season (call me chicken, if you please), but I know

several DEVOs groups that have ventured into the double black steeps.

We have two new DEVOs coaches that have added depth to our staff - SJ Klein & Michael Smith. SJ coached me when I was of DEVOs age for SPYDER and I always loved his enthusiasm. He has brought great stoke and a wealth of skiing knowledge to his group and the program. We stole Michael Smith from other skiing ventures and he has been a great addition with his ski patrol & mountain experience. Michael is the older brother of the legendary Kevlar (whom we all wish to ski with at some point in our Alyeska lives, whether we know this or not...)

Cheers to the returning daylight upon our mountain and a glorious February!

Ari Stiassny
DEVOs Program Director



Thank you to Alyeska Resort management and staff for their commitment, physical resources and technical services in support of our organization, athletes and members. For nearly 50 years Alyeska Resort has been a dedicated supporter of our mission to promote alpine sports opportunities for all Alaskans.



FREESKIING

Our attendance numbers remain strong with 14 kids in the program. Usually around 10 kids show up to training each Saturday.

We had two athletes compete at the National and Regional comps at Snowbird in SLC Utah.

Leif Mumma skied an aggressive line day one of the National event, but was unable to land a massive 30 foot cliff and suffered a crash. He was able to redeem himself in the two-day Regional comp the next week at Snowbird, placing 1st on day one and 7th on day two.

Hunter Keffalos competed very well in the National event, qualifying 21st after his day one run. The finals were held

on a rather famous venue called Silver Fox directly beneath the Snowbird Tram. This venue has been utilized in the Freeride World Tour before. I have personally competed on the same venue 4 times. Hunter was able to crush his line and move up to 13th place. In the Regional event Hunter placed 11th on day one and 9th on day two.

Our next comp series will be a team trip to Alpine Meadows in Lake Tahoe, California from February 25-28. It is a National Event and we have four athletes attending.

I can't thank the snow gods enough this season for continuing to call in the snow storms. And I have to thank the Alyeska Ski Patrol and Snow Safety staff for working hard to open all the out of bounds terrain which is essential for the ASC Freeride Team training sessions.

Alex Else
Freeski Coach IFSA



JUNIORS

The the prior month, we concluded the **Alaska's Best Water Tech Series**, Christmas Camp and **Coca-Cola Classic** races. Juniors had three (3) travel trips in January with 1) U14 athletes participating in U14 IMD Qualifiers at Snowking Resort, 2) U16 athletes racing at Snowbasin U16 Qualifiers and 3) U19/21 FIS athletes racing at Sugarbowl NJR FIS Races. As a program, Juniors targets these outside races to expose our athletes to higher levels of competition and incredible depth of field. It is important for Alaskan athletes to step outside and experience this level of racing if they want to progress and compete as an Alpine Ski Racer at a competitive level - be it statewide, regionally or nationally.

To say Ski Racing is a 'fast sport' is an understatement. It is a sport that demands execution, strong technique, physical strength, all with the demands of full commitment and complete faith in what you're about to do. You're about to throw yourself down the Mountain at speed and it takes a certain amount of letting go and knowing that you have done everything to prepare for this moment and you are ready. You have to want to go fast to ski fast. When an athlete carves their skis they are faster than when they do not. This is a fact. I like to tell the athletes to imagine they are in a Moto-Cross Start with 10 other riders. The Start gate is critical and athletes need to explode out of the gate! It takes a lot for young athletes to overcome their natural tendencies and time for them to step outside of their comfort zones. It is scary to ski fast but exhilarating and for elite athletes 'time slows down'. Athletes have to accept that when they push their limits they may fall but they will bounce back and try and try again. If they're not falling then they are not pushing their boundaries.

As a club we have identified that we must do a better job of developing athletes that carve their skis, who are active skiers and use turn shape to control their speed. Alyeska Resort is a steep mountain, one of the steepest in North America, and the Juniors staff preaches Turn Shape as the method to control speed. Athletes who do not turn well have breakdowns in their technique or "braking mechanisms" e.g. pivoting or sliding their skis at the top or bottom of their turns which ultimately limits their speed and thus their performance. A Juniors staff goal is that every athlete become a better skier. And as ASC has transitioned to one club we are beginning to broaden athletic development focuses for the entire club. Better developing our athletes and producing stronger skiers is the #1 reason why I am excited that ASC is now one club.

As February begins, it is the midpoint of the competition season and athletes begin qualification races at this week's **Alyeska Cup - the Alaska State Alpine Championships**. State Titles will be crowned for Super G, GS, and Slalom! Good

luck to all competitors.

For the Athletes - Remember to leave it on-the-hill every day; knowing you tried your best and have a short memory for tomorrow if today doesn't go your way (DNF and DQs are a part of ski racing). It means you were pushing your limits and pushing your limits means you were going fast. Challenge yourself to progress each day, set goals, #1 to be on time for training. Have quality inspections. Rest. Mentally prepare. Remember to say thank you to your sponsors (aka your parents). Be respectful and express thanks to the liftees, patrol, and Mountain personnel. Pick-up your trash!, and have good sportsmanship.

Aaron Stiasny
Alpine Director



MASTERS

We are off to a better start than last season, but could really use some more snow. Master's held their first ever ski camp outside Alaska this year. Thirteen Masters joined two coaches in Breckenridge CO during the first week of December. The camp was very successful. Through 5 days of camp we got a lot of mileage, over 100,000 vertical feet of skiing, early season exercises emphasizing the athletic stance, and balance and carving drills. The snow and venues at Breckenridge and Keystone were outstanding. There appears to be a lot of interest in having a camp again next year. Many of the Masters that attended have sent their kids to ski camps, but have never participated in one. I think the adults had more fun.

We managed, just barely, to pull off our first race of the year on January 9th. A slushy GS on Race Trail. We also had our first SL of the year on January 23. Again, very slushy.

People ask what Master's is all about. The best way to explain it is we are essentially a Mighty Mite program for adults. Only we don't take attendance and races are optional. Also, when the weather gets tough, the tough head for the Sitz.

For those ASC members, adults and parents, that have never tried Masters, come try us out. The first session is free! Contact Coach Carl at carl@davisconstructors.com for more information.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



Love our Supporters

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of the gangsters, flappers and mob bosses from the roaring twenties that came out to celebrate **The End of Snowhibition** and support the ski club at our **Annual Dinner and Auction** on January 23. Whether you were one of our invaluable volunteers, donated an item, provided a sponsorship or purchased a ticket, your presence and participation helped make this event a huge success! A special thank you to our auction chairs - **Roberta Carney and Kristy Hartman** - for the countless hours of planning that went into this very fun event! We couldn't have done it without their efforts coordinating all the moving parts and organizing a very capable army of volunteers.

Show the LOVE, Share the LOVE

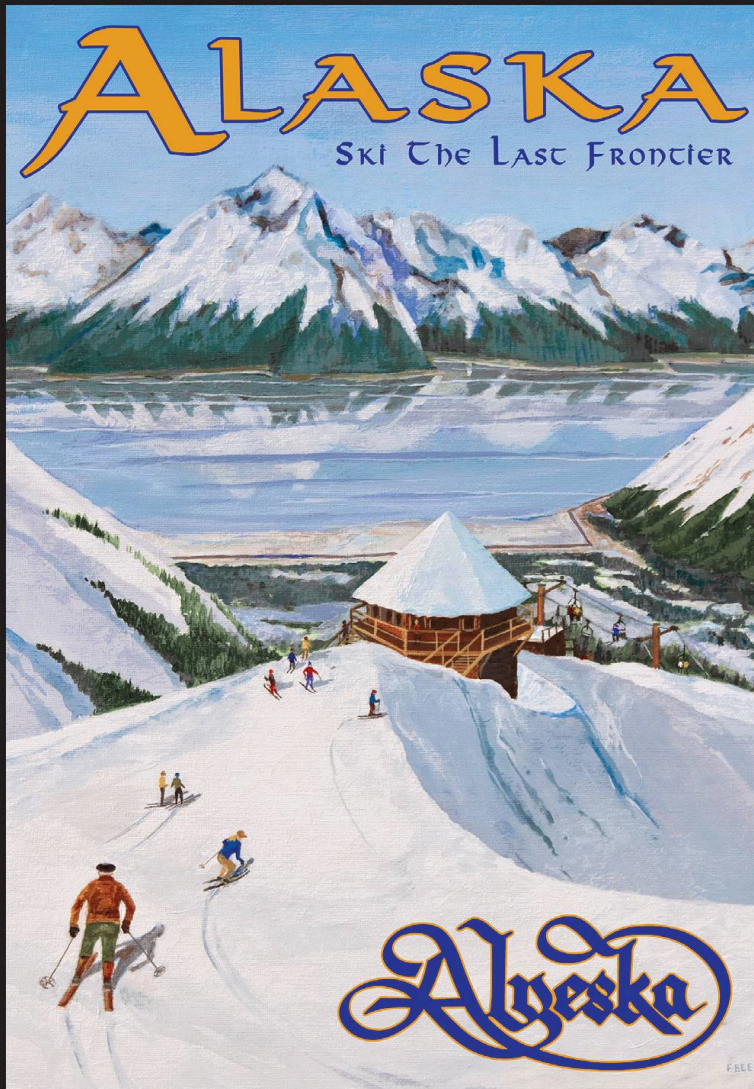
Love our Community

Masters athlete, **Caroline Ahrens**, has once again organized the second annual **Love for Girdwood food drive** this month at the RTC. Please drop off your canned and dry goods in the bins on the main level of the RTC. This food drive supports the local folks of Girdwood that make our weekend of fun possible. Thank you for your love and support of our Girdwood community!

Love our History

Our club is nearly 50 years old! If you didn't get a chance to join us at the auction or you would like the opportunity to socialize with your ski club family again, please join us on **Valentine's Day, Sunday, February 14** at the **Sitzmark Bar and Grill** for our first annual alumni and membership social. **One Club One Love** is in celebration of all of you - our members past and present! The band *Item #9* featuring ASC alumni will be playing and we'll be auctioning two chairs from our beloved Tanaka Lift!

Doors open at 7:30p, tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at <http://thesitzmark.com/> or by visiting our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/alyeskaskiclub>.



one club one love

Alyeska Ski Club Alumni & Member Social

Sitzmark Bar & Grill, February 14, 2016
Doors open at 7:30 pm

Music and dancing with some of your favorite
ASC alumni in the band Item #9

\$20 tickets available at the Sitzmark Bar &
Grill, at the door, and online: thesitzmark.com

Two Tanaka Chairs will be auctioned
Posters available at the event and at Alyeska Resort gift shops



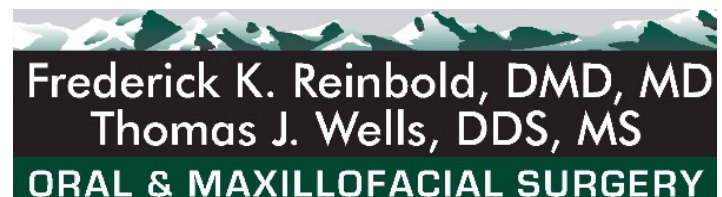
Correction to ASC's December Newsletter: We inadvertently wrote that the Alyeska Ski Club raised funds for the installation of the Tanaka Lift. In reality and as we all know, we could not have done it without the financial support of the Tanaka Foundation. Thank you to the Tanaka family and board members for providing a lift that served our ski club needs for the past 30 years!

Tanaka Sweatshirts memorializing our beloved chair are available for purchase, \$45. We have a handful of small, medium and large sizes remaining. Please email or text Lara.



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