

We all want to develop ski racers to be the best they can be and to have fun with the experience. Let's put more thought into the qualification and scheduling plan to encourage development and appropriate competition. These proposals are based on the fundamental thought that we want to be competing with purpose and not just competing as a participation requirement.

Proposal 1: U16 West Region Qualification:

Adopt FW procedure, Best 5 qualifying race results scored by WC points in any combination. 9 races: 3 SL, 3 GS, 3 SG. WC Points are assigned to ND U16 that have completed ND documents only at start of race. Others will be purged before assigning WC points. That will decide the team. Seed order of that team at Championships by USSA points. Use list valid for Championship race. Tie breaker by best WC point result then 2<sup>nd</sup> best....

Proposal 2: Scheduling:

3 qualifier series at current U16+ level. 2 mixed tech series and 1 SG series. Effort should be made to spread the 3 as evenly as possible over the period Jan 1-Mar 1 to maximize opportunity for development. Optimally one of the 3 series early January, One late January/early Feb and one late Feb. Example: Jan 13-15 2 GS& 1 SL, Feb3-5 2SL, 1GS, Feb 23-25 3 SG.

Proposal 3: West Regional Qualification:

U19/U21: Adopt IMD procedure. Selection by USSA point selection method. No participation requirement.

Proposal 4: Automatics to West Regionals:

Any athlete who competes at National Performance Series is an automatic to age group regional competition.

Reasons:

Proposal 1: It was obvious to me that the same group of U16 that had been very competitive as U14 on West Regionals/Tri Divisionals for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year U16 slipped in general compared to the field. You have to ask yourself, "How can we improve what we do"? Looking at race starts and qualifying requirements showed a clear difference. ND had 15 qualifying starts 2016-17. IMD, FW and PNSA have 9. AK has 8. With a small quota the choice of skipping a race or a series has severe effects, particularly when championship seeding is part of the standings verses USSA point for seeding order as IMD does. We should have more time to develop these kids rather than simply race them in a condensed time frame.

For U16 I chose the Far West selection process. I also like the IMD selection process, best 2 per discipline similar to how we do it. PNSA uses a double board added USSA points to the selection process. Either of those is preferred over what we did last year. The reason I chose the FW system is that it significantly eases the concern about having a "Bum Weekend" and throwing away your chances. All of these

eliminate the need to have participation language in all disciplines because the selection process takes care of it.

#### Proposal 2:

We should discontinue 4 day series that begin on Thursday. Considering every program trains Sat & Sun and likely to take Monday off, travel Wednesday, when do they train Tuesday? There are not enough days for a process towards a completed product. 3 day series starting on Saturday give the best opportunity for training. We tried, we learned, let's improve.

#### Proposal 3:

U19 is a smaller group than U16. We are losing them fast. We need to try something different. We have 2 groups of U19. Those who race FIS and those that do not. Both are important. Those set on improving their FIS profile shouldn't have that goal diminished by participation requirements in races that their skis are different than the field. Why are we sacrificing the U16's to appease a few FIS kids that really don't want to be there in the first place? U16 GS distances are anything from 22M to 27M at championship races, why don't our U16 ever see those except in training. Those U19/U21's that do not race FIS have skis which are compatible with U16. Competing at Western Regionals, a FIS series, should not be a goal. Having fun ski racing should be there goal. Let them do that in similar fashion to how we approach u16 at YSL.

#### Proposal 4:

An individual that earns that invitation should not be additionally challenged to compete to guarantee a spot. The invitation to that level competition is an earned situation. We should be encouraging our athletes to reach their highest levels, not discouraging them.

#### References:

<http://fwskiing.us/content/far-west-skiing-alpine-competition-policies-and-procedures-2016-2017> .  
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[http://www.ussa-imd.org/alpine/handbook/2016-17 IMD Handbook.pdf](http://www.ussa-imd.org/alpine/handbook/2016-17%20IMD%20Handbook.pdf)

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