

Notes From Campus XV

This holiday edition of Notes is packed with lots of results, both on the athletic and academic fronts, as the last week or so have seen a flurry of action all over the place. It is clear that the long fall has been very productive, and everyone has scampered out of here for a much-deserved break. The skiing remains great here in the Valley, so we are looking at a great jump into the new year!

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College News

The seniors have begun hearing from colleges in the past couple of weeks, and here is how things have turned out for several of the 23 members of the Class of 2011:

Sarah: St. Lawrence University

Tomek: Penn State University

Katie: Bates College

Elena: Williams College

Anna: Dartmouth College

Sara: Dartmouth College

Jack: Dartmouth College

Jackson: Montana State University

George: Drexel University

Ryley: Montana State University

Alpine Results

The FIS and USSA schedules were full this week, and we start with the Eastern Cups held at Sugarloaf, where many of our boys had some stellar

results. In the opening GS, junior Brian McLaughlin jumped from 33rd place to 7th, behind Middlebury's Andrew McNealus '08 who grabbed 3rd place. Senior Sandy Vietze cut his start number in half to finish 13th as well. In the second race, Vietze was the story, jumping 26 spots to take second place, with PG Tucker Marshall hot on his heels in 3rd. The alumni were well represented by Dartmouth's Evan Diamond '09 (9th) and Middlebury's Christian Woolson '08 (9th), while Brian McLaughlin had another solid race, taking 14th.

The slalom saw GMVS skiers wrap up 6th place: McNealus in the first race, Vietze in the second. Diamond and Marshall took 8th and 9th in the first race, with McNealus taking 12th in the second slalom.

The story of the event, though, was the performance of the J2 boys. The crew of Danny Duffy '12, Kendall Pasteris '12, Drew Duffy '13, AJ Ginnis '11 and Jack Schibli '14 accounted for the J2 podium in each race, and in some cases moved up more than 50-70(!) spots. A great start for this group of young guys!

The rest of the eastern FIS schedule had races at Attitash and Sunday River. On the slopes of Bear Peak in NH, senior Tomek Dobrzanski had a nice series, taking 7th in the first slalom and 12th in the second race. For the ladies at Sunday River, UNH racer Laura Rozinowicz '09 finished 5th in the second GS and found the podium on day 2 of the slalom, finishing 3rd.

In Quebec, the GS skis got a workout at Mont Tremblant, where UVM's Val Kechian got a jump on the college circuit with a 13th and an 11th-place finish, while for the guys, Simon Manella '08 bagged a 6th place, with Simon-Claude Toutant '10 taking 11th.

The guys' slaloms were held at nearby Mont Blanc, and Manella grabbed an 11th place, followed by 9th. At Mont Gabriel, the ladies' slaloms were highlighted by Kechian's 5th place.

The USSA schedule brought a crew of skiers to Whiteface for a pair of GS events. In the opening race, senior Jon Gonin grabbed 10th place, with Gabe Rosen '14 not far back in 12th. In the second race, sophomore Henry Anderson took 9th, with Gonin in 11th place. Freshman Nick Kaufmann took 12th, just ahead of Rosen in 13th.

Nordic News

The TD Eastern Cup series opened for the Nordic skiers as well, as the skinny skiers took to the trails of Craftsbury, VT. The big news of the weekend was the dramatic win by sophomore Heidi Halvorsen in the 6k mass start classic race. She was even with her closest rival coming into the final sprint, and she held her off to win by just over one second!

The other big story was the Class of 2004's Tim Reynolds, as the Middlebury College alumnus took wins in both the 1.3k free sprint and the 12k classic. He was pursued by Middlebury's Doug DeBold '08 PG, who was 5th in the sprint and 8th in the 12k, as well as UVM's Dylan Grald '09 PG, who was 14th in the 12k.

Motocross Without the Noise

A pair of GMVS alumni will be competing in the World Cup of Skiercross this year. Daron Rahlves '91 and Pat Duran '03 are braving the bruising world of skiercross this winter, and their next big event comes on the 22nd in the Red Bull Hüttenrallye, a wild event in which the racers jump over and swing around the various farm sheds and houses along the St. Anton mountainside. For complete details, visit

http://www.redbull.at/cs/Satellite/de_AT/Red-Bull-H%C3%BCttenrallye/001242897564619

A Team Member Reaches Out

We came upon this terrific article about a couple of great guys in the ski racing world:

http://skiing.teamusa.org/news/2010/12/16/nyman-big-man-big-heart/40060?ngb_id=3

Nyman: big man, big heart

Aimee Berg December 16, 2010



Photo: Aimee Berg :Steven Nyman and Thomas Walsh reconnect at the World Cup super-G in Beaver Creek, Colo., on Dec. 4, 2010.

(Beaver Creek, Colo.) – It is hard to miss Steven Nyman. The 6-foot-4 downhill ski racer with the sly grin, deep voice, and beaming blue eyes radiates confidence in a movie-star way.

The 28-year-old Utah native has also been known to make wives melt and college girls swoon so it was refreshing, this month, to overhear two teenage boys looking for his name on the World Cup start list while riding a town bus to the super-G finish area in Beaver Creek, Colorado.

“Nyman’s not on here,” one said as he flipped over the 69-man roster.

“No, he’s number 57,” the other replied. (It was an unusually high bib number for the two-time Olympic skier who had won one of the hairiest downhill on the World Cup circuit at Val Gardena, Italy, in 2006.)

“What’s your connection to Nyman?” an older man asked.

“One of our friends had cancer and he helped him out,” one boy said matter-of-factly.

The man asked the friend’s name, and with that, the conversation ended – but not the intrigue.

Nyman tends to be photographed more than he is publicized, so he is commonly referred to as the guy who grew up skiing at Robert Redford’s Sundance resort or Julia Mancuso’s former boyfriend. The boys on the bus offered a clue to another dimension.

The shuttle emptied and, for the next few hours, there was little for the home crowd to cheer as five of the nine Americans skied off course.

Nyman was one of the exceptions.

He placed 25th and told reporters afterwards, “I’m stoked. I had a pretty wild ride, but I stuck with my initial plan.” As for the rest of the team, he said, “Everyone is actually skiing really well. Give us a couple more races and we’ll be back.”

As the last few racers finished, the media zone emptied and the public address system stopped blaring. Nyman was alone within earshot.

“Steve, do you have time for one more question?”

He approached the mesh netting.

“Who is Todd Walsh?” I asked.

“*Thomas* Walsh,” he corrected, and began to reveal a jewel of a story about a jewel of a boy and a relationship that he otherwise kept private because – contrary to Nyman’s towering physique – he is a subtle and gentle soul.

Walsh was a local kid who grew up racing for Ski Club Vail and won a national triathlon title at age 6 (in the boys’ under-10 division).

In the summer of 2008, Walsh experienced hip pain that he couldn’t shake, and in May 2009, six months after his first doctor’s visit, he was diagnosed with Ewing’s sarcoma at age 14.

According to 1999 data from the American Cancer Society, 150 children in the US are diagnosed with this particular bone tumor every year, usually between the ages of 10 and 20.

Walsh also had metastasis to his lungs which meant that, according to the published data, his five-year survival rate was less than 30 percent.

Nyman was told Walsh’s chance of surviving was in the single digits when a mutual acquaintance introduced the two in Colorado in 2009.

“He was so frail, so tiny,” Nyman remembered. “I was at a down point that year, too. I had problems with my knees, my back was hurting; I had double knee surgery. I thought, ‘I can’t complain, man. Look at this guy.’ They said he’d never ski again. He’s such a fighter.”

They began texting, and last season when Nyman returned to the World Cup circuit, he wore a sticker on the back of his helmet with Walsh’s name on it. He also encouraged his US teammates to email Walsh, an only child, as he endured 14 rounds of chemo, 10 days of radiation, and 14 anesthesia surgeries – first at Denver’s Children’s Hospital, then at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston – accompanied only by his mother, Kathleen, a ski instructor.

Walsh received his final radiation treatment in June 2010 and, despite the odds, not only returned to skiing but is now a sophomore at Green Mountain Valley School in Vermont (a renowned ski academy whose alumni include Olympians Daron Rahlves and AJ Kitt) and was a member of the race crew for the World Cup super-G in Beaver Creek.

“I saw him today before I ran,” Nyman said.

“I gave him a ‘shaka’ [the Hawaiian hand signal that indicates everything’s cool] and I went,” Nyman said.

“We’re just buddies,” Nyman added.

Nyman’s blue eyes scanned the distance as I scribbled notes, and suddenly, like a lioness who has just spotted a cub, Nyman began climbing awkwardly over the plastic netting in his ski boots, determined to reach someone or something in the next corral over.

An agent? A relative? Sponsors? Events on home snow draw everyone from young out-of-state race teams to product reps handing out beer cozies to a throng of about 50 Californians painted green to support Nyman’s teammate Marco Sullivan.

Ultimately, Nyman just wanted to talk to a brown-eyed kid with freckles who seemed fit and happy.

It was Walsh.

This was the kid whom Nyman said had a two percent chance of being here? The kid who, as it turns out, is also a talented actor and dancer and will celebrate his 16th birthday on January 30?

As Walsh agreed to fill in details about their friendship and candidly discussed the details of his treatment like a pro, it made perfect sense that he and Nyman had become a team. Not only were they both natural athletes with big smiles and sweet souls, but they had forged a silent strength that comes from being profoundly humbled.

Unsure whether Walsh knew the effect he had on Nyman, I said, “You helped him, you know.”

“I don’t know about that,” Walsh said. “Not as much as he helped me.”

That’s all for now. We all wish you and yours a safe and peaceful holiday season, and all the best for the New Year!

On behalf of the Staff- Jere