

USSA, Eastern Division - EFCC Annual Meeting

Sunday, May 15, 2011

8am - Noon

Killington Mountain School

In Attendance: Mark DePeters, Glenn Eddy, Ron DiGravio, Matt Ellinger, Jack Weir, Ed Albert, Nick Preston, Susan Preston, Chris Huffman, Eric Antiewicz, Brian Broderick, Sarah Taymore, John Kimble, Murray Johnson, DJ Montigny, Stan Pawlik, Larry Titus, Deb Newson, Sherry Albert

- I. Chair Report
 - a. Season Up-date
 - b. USSA Spring Congress - May 20-21, 2011
 - c. 2011-2012 Eastern Freestyle calendar

- II. Office Report
 - a. Finance report - At a break even point in terms of head tax funding EFCC meet expenses. Divisional dues are supporting the web site, office and extra initiatives

Motion #1: EFCC will support travel expenses for TD and Judge subcommittee chairs to attend FIS clinics. This will include travel, lodging and per diem up to \$1000 per trip. Passed unanimously.

- III. Operations Report
 - a. Web site status
 - b. On-line registration
 - c. Eastern Points List
 - d. Invitations Process

All went more smoothly this year including B quotas. Getting in bib numbers at the A level during the registration process is high on the priority list.

- IV. ECS Report - Moguls and Aerials

Motion #2: Change ECS 4.3 to read, "Late registrations will go to the beginning of the run order." Passed unanimously.

- V. ECS Report - Half Pipe and Slopestyle
Changing up Eastern Freeride Tour schedule
 - Change tour to a 3 event series
 - Arrange the schedule so that we have our three events before the list closes for Junior Nationals.
 - Checking the numbers over the last few years, our later Freeride Tour events (fourth or fifth event) have less attendance than the first three that are held before the points list closing.
 - It would be a three event series with an event in NH, VT, and ME. These states have held the events for the last few seasons. In NH Waterville Valley, in Vermont Okemo, Killington, and Mount Snow, and in ME Sunday River and Sugarloaf. We could have the mountains on a rotation to host the events each season to make sure that everyone can host an event.
 - We can call each event for example the NH Open hosted by Waterville Valley. Each season the event name would stay the same just hosted by a different resort.

- We can make the events 3-day events. This would give us the ability to run double slopestyle events, double halfpipe, big airs, and rail jams.
 - This can also open up opportunities for the host mountain to offer training opportunities with air bags or trampoline facilities.
 - This will also give us the ability to run more than 3 events. Examples are SS/2xHP, 2xSS, SS, SS/SS/2xHP
- The series could be run as a Grand Prix, best two or three events of the four to five event grand prix.
 - From this Grand Prix we can pick an Overall Tour winner (similar to Rev Tour) in slopestyle, halfpipe, and big air.
 - Other thoughts are to have an overall winner of all events similar to how they choose the AFP Overall Champion.
 - Grand Prix would be figured out on a place point system in each event to pick the winners, and then the overall winner will be figured out of a combined formula.

Recommendations:

- Would like to see the Freeride Tour start a week later.
 - This would give our weekend athletes a chance to train for another week before the season starts.
 - Some mountains don't open their parks up until Christmas or until after the New Year.
 - Also gives mountains a chance to have all the venues ready, especially if we run into a bad weather year.

Discussions:

- It looks like Nationals for halfpipe will end up being decided from Grand Prix halfpipe events in the future. Having said this it seems unnecessary to have an Eastern Championship event. We would be able to pick our Eastern Champ from our Grand Prix if it is accepted. **Question** – Do we still need Eastern Championships?

By consolidating the Freeride Schedule, we are looking to have maximum participation. With the 3-event tour, it will give athletes a chance to compete in other USSA event tours (Revolution Tour, and Grand Prix), and other event tours that are being incorporated into our pipeline (USASA, North Face Open).

Adding Big Air and Rail Jam events to the Eastern Freeride Tour

- Adding Big Air events would be great opportunity for our athletes. It has become such a big part of the higher levels. Introducing them back to Eastern Freeride gives our athletes another avenue to be successful.
- These events could be added to our Grand Prix to help crown a Grand Prix champion, and an overall champion.
- It would help make the overall champion mean more with 3 events
- Events should be scored on overall impression.
 - Not really sure how this would work as a USSA event.
 - Even if the events aren't aerial events, we should still host them to help our athlete's progress. Give them more opportunities.
- Rail jams could be held in the afternoon after an event, or after a slopestyle event and could be used as a slope event. (If this is within the rules)
 - Rail jams held in afternoon could be Coach judged, one from each team.

Incorporating B's into Open Events

Creating a division specific to the J3 and J4 B athlete in the Open Events

- Looking to get participation from the J3 and J4 age groups in the Open Events in Slopestyle and Halfpipe.
- Create a separate division for the B skiers that would be scored similar to the B events. Not scored on the National list.
- Only slopestyle results would count toward B Easterns.
- Division would need a name that the kids can relate to. Grom, Devo are used too much. It would need a "cooler" name.
- The athletes should be rewarded for participating in these events.
- Proposing a higher point value. B events are worth 100 to the winner; new events could be worth 125 or 150.
- Not trying to create a short cut to B Easterns, looking for participation from the Grass Roots level and a nice transition to Open events when athletes feel ready to move up. Could also let some of the younger athletes realize that they should move up to the Open Series events.
- Separate award and prizes for the group.
- Off axis and Inverted maneuvers are allowed per USSA rules.

This will give the J3 and J4 age group skiers a smooth track through the pipeline, and gain participation in our Open events.

Rules Proposal

- Proposing that all host mountains of Open Freeride events should build a small side on each table.
 - This will help with participation of female athletes.
 - This will help with participation of younger athletes.
 - It can also offer an opportunity for athletes to throw a trick that they may not be comfortable throwing on the larger jump.
 - This is something that USASA does very well.
 - We should come up with a spec for this jump and include it into the Eastern Rules. Maybe the National Rules

Discussion:

- Mountains that are hosting a freeride series will be given a packet that lets each hosting mountain know the parameters of the competition including events, awards, age groups etc. This format will be determined after the National meeting, via email and conference call.
- All of these freeride ideas are just ideas that will be formatted more clearly after we see where the National meeting goes.
- Try to set the schedule so there are not major conflicts and that best suits the athletes. The goal is to offer opportunities without overwhelming the athlete.
- If event rotation is to happen maybe it should go into the rotation of A champs and B champs.

- a. Event Organization Reminders
 - i. Rules in regards to posting scores and final results
- b. EQS Rule #10 Slopestyle events: During the 2009-2010 competition season there was a specific rule for EQS Slopestyle events that prohibited athletes from performing invert and off axis jumps. For the 2010-2011 competition year the rule was changed to follow USSA rule 3070. The change was made since Eastern Freestyle events were changed to open events to allow more competitors in each event. This led to confusion as to whether inverts and off axis were allowed in an EQS meet. If a meet is non-scored is it an open meet or is it an EQS meet, where different rules apply?

Motion #3: If a slopestyle event is sanctioned as a non-scored event, then inverts shall not be allowed in the event (Off axis jumps would be allowed). If the event is sanctioned as a scored (or open) event, the event would follow USSA rules and thus inverts and off axis jumps shall be allowed. (Wording in rule book will be simplified.) – housekeeping item – not voted upon

Motion #4: In EQS slopestyle competitions any off axis or spins greater than 900 that will be performed in competition must be demonstrated in official training. One opposed - Motion carries.

Motion #5: In EQS a Level 2 USSA(or higher) certified coach must be present when jumps requiring qualification are being performed. An athlete must be represented by a certified coach when performing jumps requiring qualification. Reworded to : In EQS slopestyle an athlete must be certified to perform the jump that will be competed or the athlete must be represented by an appropriately certified coach. Motion carries unanimously.

Motion #6: In an effort to increase participation and to provide developmentally appropriate championship competitions, a working committee will be formed to create a new EQS Championship format. The event shall be run by age groups – J1 &2, J3, J4, J5, J6 over the course of the three days of competitions with 3 judging panels, 3 venues up and running simultaneously. The three days and events will culminate with an afternoon of finals at each venue to determine an overall champion. The working committee will report back to the EFCC with quotas and a full schedule design by June 15th. The EFCC will provide a race director for this event, as well as activate a community outreach to help with volunteers. Motion carries. Working committee: Marissa Preston, John Kroetz, Deb Newson.

Motion #7: for 2011 – 2012 eliminate EQS Regional Finals contingent upon approval of the motion above. Tabled until we get a recommendation from the working committee named above

Motion #8: To raise quota for EQS regional mogul events to 100 competitors for single event days. Passed unanimously.

Motion #9: EQS slopestyle shall be judged using overall impression. Passed unanimously

Motion #10: Change EQS aerals to be called “big air”. Big air events can be comprised of a small jump/large jump (option) and /or a conventional Aerial single invert kicker. Judging will be done using an aerial format. Carries unanimously

Discussion:

VII. Results need to be posted at all events.
Judges

Focus is to get existing judges to clinics and to get more judges.

Clinic the 3rd week in September for new judges and parents on the lake in NH.

Both air judges at every A event had binoculars.

Had freeride coaches help judge some freeride events. Would like to have coaches rotate in next year to continue this learning experience.

Had 4 new judges this year, hope to get that number again this year.

VIII. Rules and Technical, ECS

- a. Highlights of and Recap of 2010/2011 Season
- b. General Topics: Clinic 2010, Annual Report of Event Days, Injuries, Protests, Juries; Report on Selection/Appeals/ Judicial Committee; Official’s Upgrades
- c. Recap of R&T Proposals being made at the National USSA meeting, including a report on the strategies/vision of the proposed new FSC structure.
- d. Proposed new rules for Eastern ECS and EQS for 2012. (This will become a combined list of all proposals from Committee Chairman or membership individuals)
- e. TD’s/Officials: Discussion should take place on TD Reports (3) and recruiting. Recruiting will include local ski area clinics (2-4) and a significant recruiting effort needed for Free Ski Officials (Judges/TD’s).
- f. Misc.
- g. Did You Know”? Continue/change or stop
- h. TD/Officials Clinic 2011
- i. All TD Officials forms will require new posting on Eastern site in a Microsoft Word format, so that forms can be completed electronically.
- j. Discuss a reduction/reallocation of duties of the Eastern TD Committee Chair.

Report cards will be on line and completed by TD’s and head judge and distributed back to mtn organizers so that they can improve.

IX. Rules and Technical, EQS

Combined with above

X. Scoring

XI. Coaches

Recommendation – provide an in-season coaches clinic. Hard to schedule because all of the clinicians are working

Trying to get a Lake Placid clinic scheduled this summer

Will do an on snow clinic early winter

XII. Event Organizers

XIII. Sponsorship

Will have to rename tour; Eastfree. Should we have work on branding and a new logo. Name should be Solomon Eastfree Tour

Trying to put together a package for sponsorship.

Have been working on a mogul sponsor and have not been successful

XIV. Marketing

1. Free Opportunities:

The following marketing and branding opportunities are all free or very low cost items to implement

1. Utilize Winfree for logo placement and consistent branding. If each mountain sets up their score sheets/runorders/etc to a common format with the multiple image location placements. May be able to get Dick Stone to write something in for a common format or orientation.
2. Work towards bringing in sponsors for swag, gear, skis etc for prizes for winners. Logo placement on Winfree print outs for promotion. As this grows logo placement on other pieces can add value and sponsorship opportunities
3. Custom Eastern Freestyle Tyvek® score sheets. Also adds opportunity for more seasonal sponsors
 - a. Timeline for sponsor solicitation will be tough. Will need to have printed in early November to have for first comps
 - b. Expense will be printing and shipping to individual mountains
4. Contribute to a collaborated fund with mountain organizers for purchase of East Free branded event specific (preferable) giveaway. Could also collaborate with sponsors for general competitor grab-bag. Hats, Tees, stickers

Moderate Cost Opportunities:

These opportunities have an affordable cost of entry.

1. Banner-ups at Registration (3'x7' tube style, with replaceable roll/artwork)
 - a. Promote sponsors and reinforce a strong brand and viable governing body.
 - b. Increased visibility to passers by will result in more spectators and general interest for freestyle

- c. Could be mountain specific and list crucial info. Could also just list general info and mountain could have a place to put specific information for interested people
- d. QR Codes
 - i. Drive people to the East Free website, an easy way to connect people to the event info PDF. They could download all the info they need in the lodge
 - ii. Could also be used for an app that could pull in a run order or results once uploaded. Would require some pretty serious back end work and hardware
- 2. Develop new template for weekly freestyle newsletter. Visual branding with consistent sections and photos in a mini magazine format
 - a. Would be sweet to develop for the iPad/iPhone or Android
 - b. PodCast would be a fun 2 minute way to get your freestyle headlines
 - c. National and local freestyle news and events with your host Coach Deb
- 3. Design and produce an East Free trophy the mountains can use and customize with a plaque
 - a. Custom cast trophy
 - b. Could also incorporate headline sponsor if the price is right
- 4. Flags around the finish area/Banners around the start area
 - a. Promote and act as a visual landing place for the people who saw the banner-up in the lodge
 - b. They show up in a lot of pictures and videos that are shared on the web
 - c. Legit visual presence to a specific market. Thus offer a great sponsorship opportunity
- 5. Table Skirts at registration. An alternate or addition to the banner-ups that would offer a branded area that newbies and passers-by will recognize
- 6. Starting area tent
 - a. Would have to be a pretty HD structure to withstand the weather
 - b. Seasonal branding/sponsorship opportunity. Very high visibility in photos and videos
 - c. Makes more since on the ECS circuit

Essential early steps.

- 1. Establish a consistent brand and accompanying standards
- 2. Brand can include templates for collateral and signage. Tools that will help in the roll out and consistent implementation over the years
- 3. Determine budget.
 - a. Needs vs. Wants
 - b. Expectations
 - c. Other tours and what they're doing
 - i. Dew Tour
 - ii. X Games
 - iii. USASA

Potential Outcomes:

- 1. Better recognition of USSA and Eastern Freestyle events
- 2. Larger crowds at finish areas
 - a. Better informed parents
 - b. Better informed athletes

- c. Better informed passers by
- 3. Sponsorship opportunities to offset costs and add to appeal
- 4. Greater appeal to athletes through building a brand that is recognized as serious about Freestyle Skiing and their competitive progression
- 5. All of your wildest dreams will come true
- 6. Freestyle Skiing in the east will grow in popularity when the competitions offer greater legitimacy at lower levels of competition

Motion #11: Approve the funds to support the establishment of the new EAST FREE website that would be a portal for everything freestyle and freeski in the East. See Motion #12

Motion #12: Approve funds to support a marketing effort for Eastern Freestyle/EAST FREE. Reworded to: Establish subcommittee to develop a budget and market plan included branded roll out for East Free marketing campaign. Passed unanimously. Committee: Matt, Larry, DJ, Murray & Deb

Should we look at named gift ideas from within the community either on line or buying products needed.

XV. Old Business

XVI. New Business

- a. EQS Rule #15 Judging Aerials-Topic of discussion: The current rule states that jumps may be repeated and must be called down to the head judge, with the best jump to count. In an ECS event jumps may not be repeated and both jumps count. In EQS moguls we encourage the athlete to perform two different jumps. We do this by allowing a grab to count as a jump. We should be encouraging the athlete to be performing two different jumps in aerials also. Should changes be made in EQS aerials where the athlete should do two different jumps with both counting?

Motion # 13 Eliminate ECS Rule #15.3 verbage that states that in EQS aerials jumps may be repeated Passed unanimously.

- b. We want to provide Halfpipe opportunities to the B athletes. Not sure how to do it and may be looking to see the outcome of the National meeting before we decide how to do it. Looking at exhibition B events or in conjunction with new open format.
- c. All Mountain Challenge Series. Will fit into the new East Free website promotion.

Motion #14 Add an additional bonus to be paid by the event organizer of \$20 per day for all paid officials for meets that over 180 scored runs per day on single event days. Motion carries

Adjourned at 12:20