

2010 Chama Chile Ski Classic Race Report

The 37th Chama Chile Ski Classic on Sunday, January 17th was another success with 132 registered racers and 122 racers finishing one of 5 race events! Unfortunately, the UNM Lobos Nordic Ski Team members were unable to make the race this year because they were at the Montana State Invitational Tournament. Despite their absence, the race continued to grow in numbers from 126 registrations last year to this year's 132 registrations!

In addition to the races, over 40 people participated in clinics and tours offered on the Saturday before the race and the Monday after the race, making the Chama Chile Ski Classic a 3-day weekend event.

Race day was mostly cloudy with a few spots of sunshine to warm the racers and volunteers. First off the starting line, 47 skiers competed in the 10K race, a 24% increase over last year's numbers, making the race more competitive for the citizen racer. Clay Moseley from Los Alamos, New Mexico, 39, easily won the 10K with a time of 42:51. Steve Ilg from Arizona and a combined event skier, placed second with a time of 45:26.

Half an hour later, 57 skiers took off from the start line in the 5K race, the most popular event. Lindsey Love, a 30 year old woman from Santa Fe, won the 5K with a time of 31:25. Vying for 2nd and third place, Doug Call, Donna Berg and Dave Burdette competed, crossing the finish line within a 1 minute time span of each other. Doug Call, 58, took second with 34:22 and Donna Berg, 64, took third place (34:41), edging out local Chama powerhouse Dave Burdette, 43, (35:23). Impressive!

Our most patient racers, the 5K snowshoers, waited 43 minutes after the 10K skiers started, to begin their race. Thanks to all the snowshoers for their patience! A computer needed to be restarted and plugged into back-up power in order to accurately time the race.

Twenty eight snowshoers competed this year. Greg Hartman, 36, from Del Norte, Colorado easily won the 5K Snowshoe Overall with an impressive time of 33:10. Tarik Saleh, 37, a combined events racer, placed second (40:47) with Lisa Dougherty, 38, taking third (41:03) overall and first in female overall. Please note that not all Snowshoe racers started with the mass start group. Combined events racers and a few others were individually timed.

This year, 10 people took on the challenge of doing one of the two combined races, either the 10K ski/5K Snowshoe combined or the 5K ski/5K snowshoe combined. These races represent our most challenging races at the Chama Chile Ski Classic. Six people competed in the 10K ski/5K snowshoe combined and 4 people competed in the 5K Ski/5K snowshoe combined.

The King of the Mountain was awarded to Steve Ilg from Arizona, with a total time 1:29:48 for doing 3 laps around the course in the 10K Ski/5K snowshoe combined!! Wow! Steve's and other's accomplishments were not recognized at the Awards Banquet due to an error in reading the combined results. The MC and the race director thought the combined results were listed in order 1st, 2nd & 3rd, but this was not the case. We apologize for the oversight and hope the combined racers were able to recognize this once they looked at the results posted at the High Country restaurant and online.

The Prince and Princess of the Mountain awards, the top male and female contenders in the 5K Ski/5K snowshoe combined, went to John Boland, 54, (1:19:42) and Deborah Kidd, 40, (1:28:43). Congratulations on a job well done!

For the 4th consecutive year in a row, Team High Country won the team challenge in the 5K ski. This year they had another team from Pagosa Springs, the San Juan Search and Rescue Team, make a valiant effort to bump them from the top.

Gabe Hogan from Gunnison, Colorado won the Wood Ski Award for his time in the 5 K Ski race.

Recording all the events were several photographers. Pat Hogan skied out on the race course to get the racers in action all along the course. These photos are posted on Facebook.com in the Chama Chile Ski Classic group site – anyone can join and look at these pictures! Jeff Layden from Pagosa Photography took pictures near the start/finish line and took portraits of individual racers and their families. Contact Jeff at jeff@pagosaphotography.com for more information. Chama Times photographer Ted Grove took pictures at the race site and at the Awards Banquet for the newspaper. These photos may be posted on Facebook. Clif Palmer from the Chama Times has promised to provide the race director with photos!

In addition to the races, the Chama Chile Ski Classic became a weekend event with several ski clinics and tours offered over the weekend. Local skier, Doug Treadway, led a group onto the Sargents Wildlife Area for an easy, enjoyable ski tour on Saturday morning. Certified Professional Ski Instructor Association (PSIA) level 3 certified cross-country ski instructors, Jessica and Ken Kiesel from Los Alamos taught a Classical Cross-Country Skiing Techniques clinic out at the race site to help casual and competitive skiers improve their skiing. Sandy Kobrock, a certified avalanche instructor from Wolf Creek Avalanche School out of Pagosa Springs, Colorado, taught an avalanche rescue clinic Saturday afternoon. On Monday, Mary Ann DeBoer from Cumbres Nordic Adventures led a group to the Spruce Hole Yurt for a tour, and hot drinks and snacks at the end of the trail. Pat Hogan, also from Cumbres Nordic Adventures, taught a telemark clinic in the same area.

It takes a Village (and a Valley) of people to put on a race!! Without our volunteers and sponsors, the Chama Chile Ski Classic could not happen. First a special thanks to the Chama Valley Rotary Club for sponsoring the event, providing start-up funds and providing a large number of volunteers on race day and throughout the planning process. Another big thank you to Lowe's Chama Valley Supermarket for their cash donation and support. The majority of advertising and promotion costs for the race were covered by the Village of Chama Lodger's Tax Board. We couldn't get the word out about the race and the Chama Valley without their help!

We want to thank the High Country Restaurant staff and Che Johnston for hosting the race registrations, pasta dinner, buffet breakfast and the Awards Banquet for the Chile Ski Classic. They worked their butts off!! Three cheers for all their efforts!

We have many other sponsors who donated cash or in-kind services that we want to thank. United Country and Susan Mundy provided the rstras that were used as prizes. Ron Alcorn Insurance paid for copying of a flyer for our mailing that went to past participants. Pam Alcorn even made the trip to Kinkos to get the flyer copied!! Fishtail Ranch and Valerie Weiss made a donation to cover part of the cost of the T-shirts. River Lumber donated materials for marking the race course. Innerglow Bodyworks donated the cost of materials for making signs. Dream Weaver Lodge donated a room and discounts for 2 other rooms. Jay Wimer with Chama Steam contributed much needed technical assistance and printing services! KZRM radio and the Chama Times newspaper both contributed free ads for the cause. Our website continued to be sponsored by Paul Edwards. High Country Restaurant covered the breakfasts and dinners of many of our out-of-town volunteers. Numerous businesses provided us with literature and small useful items for the racers' goodie bags. Thanks to all these businesses for their contributions!

And we want to make a special note about the people who spent several days grooming the trail and preparing it for the race – all for almost nada! Wil Aguilar and Sony Honegger donated their time and the use of their snowcat to pack down the race trail. Derek Strauch helped to mark the race course, worked

with Wil on the snowcat, and even contributed his time to building the dragon and castle that were at the warming hut at the racecourse (more on that later!). Southwest Nordic Club members from Los Alamos, took time off of work to do the final grooming of the trail with their grooming machines. Without the work of Clay Moseley, Denny Newell and Dave Wykoff, this race could not happen! Finally, many thanks to Mark Seaton from the San Juan Nordic Club (San Luis Valley in Colorado) for his help grooming the trail and bringing over the Club's groomer. We are blessed with nearby (and not so nearby) neighbors who are willing to help us out on the race each year.

Another group of people we want to recognize, are two men, Todd Schroeder and Jim Owens from the Santa Fe Striders (a running group), who helped time the event for a minimal fee. They helped to really upgrade the timing of the event, making it more accurate and giving us the ability to get results out quicker. Racers also had a timing clock at the end of the race to see their times. In addition to Todd and Jim, we had an awesome group of people to assist with the timing of the race!! Bob and Carolyn Marshall timed the combined events racers – all the racers had to do was find the man in the red jacket (not Santa Claus!) to start the snowshoe portion of their race. Thanks to all the timers, bib pullers and cowbell ringers.....your job was very important!

We want to thank the businesses that provided door prizes for the Awards Banquet. Cumbres Nordic Adventures provided two 1 night stays at the Spruce Hole Yurt as the top prizes. From Pagosa Springs, there were several business that contributed all sorts of schwag (did you know that this means “trinkets” in Yiddish?) for the Awards Banquet. Special thanks to Summit Ski & Sports, Ski & Bow Rack, Alpine Haus, and Pagosa Ski Rental for the gloves, t-shirts, caps, neck gators, hats, free rentals and other stuff for the racers. We also want to thank the Master Skier magazine for their contribution of free magazine subscriptions.

Finally, we want to thank all the volunteers for their time, energy and efforts!! Special thanks to Amaranti Casias, president of the Chama Valley Rotary Club, who just magically made things happen! Thanks to all the Rotarians who kept everything in order on the parking lot or helped operate the concession stand. Thanks to the great group of people who manned the registration tables on Saturday evening and Sunday morning – you helped make our racers feel welcome and made registration efficient! Thanks to La Clinica for providing the ambulance and to the two EMTs for donating their time at the race site. Thanks to Cindy Martinez and Siscily Lederman who lent their artistic talents to the effort! Thanks to Khane, Che and the gang for decorating our race site with a life size snow dragon (or was it a crocodile?) and castle – not too many people know that it takes great planning to make these things, including a night out in the warming hut the night before to celebrate :>! Extra special thanks to everyone who helped sweep the course, setup the race site, and clean it up. These are often unappreciated duties!

I can keep going on.....a special thanks to Frances Elliot, Lynette Cannon and Che Johnston for being with me on our organizing committee. Frances', Lynette's and Che's past experience organizing the race made it a lot easier to “git 'er done”! Thank you to Nancy Shura-Dervin for being my mentor! As past race director, she graciously spent hours on the phone with me going over the details of how to organize the Chama Chile Ski Classic. Thanks to Clif Palmer and my nephew Gabe Hogan for making our Awards Banquet fun and fast! And one last final word, thanks to Bev Burdette for helping me out in my hour of need, bright and early on Sunday morning, staking out the race finish and start lines – she took my blood pressure down a few notches!

Until next year,
Mary Ann DeBoer, Race Director