

## 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Chama Chile Ski Classic

January 15-17, 2011

### Race Report

The 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Chama Chile Ski Classic was a smash success with 2 days of races and 3 days of events under bluebird skies! Racers completed 201 races in 7 different events, a major increase over the 2010 races, when only 122 racers completed races in 5 different events! In addition, 65 people participated in ski tours, ski clinics and events over the weekend and over 100 people participated in the Chile/Chili Contest held in Chama. Overall, we estimate that Chama had over 300 people in town over the weekend, mostly from New Mexico and Colorado.

This report focuses on the races held over the Martin Luther King Jr. Weekend in the South San Juan Mountains on the Rio Grande National Forest. There were 7 different races, including our first ever, Freestyle only races, 7.5 K and 15 K distances on Saturday, January 15<sup>th</sup>. Freestyle races were allowed once a few years ago but were mixed in with the Classic style races.

**Freestyle Races:** The Freestyle races included a new...and what some say was grueling..... hilly loop to the usual Chama Chile Ski Classic course of rolling hills, meadows and forests, in order to increase the normal 5 K course to a 7.5 K course. 15 K skiers had to ski the entire course twice and then add a third, final loop on the new part of the course, before finishing the race. Skiers looking for a challenge found it here!

Twenty three racers competed in the 15 K Freestyle race. Caleb Thompson, age 27, from Durango, CO led the pack of 15 K skiers, and skied to an impressive win with a time of 49:18:00, 37 seconds faster than second place winner Clay Mosley, age 40, Los Alamos, NM. The overall female winner of the 15 K, Sanna Sevanto, finished with a time of 54:21:00 and placed fifth overall.

Nine racers competed in the 7.5 K Freestyle race with Mark Seaton from Mosca, CO, placing first with a time of 34:12:00 followed by Marc Esposito, Santa Fe, NM (36:42:00) and Dave Wykoff, Los Alamos, NM (39:45:00). Dina Pesenson, Los Alamos, NM placed first female with a time of (41:15:00) and fourth overall followed by Tove Shere, Santa Fe, NM(42:52:00).

Way to go Freestylers!! You've set the mark for others to follow!

**Classic XC Ski Races:** Sunday marked a second day of races under azure skies! Our new Costume Contest brought out the best in racers!! There were spacemen, lions, fairies, racers dressed in formal wear, a pimp, old fashioned skiers in knickers and wool....you name it, we had it! The costumes were amazing and judges had a tough time making decisions but eventually settled on giving the lion, first place, the fairies, second place and Miss Understood, third place. Next year we'll need to have both a youth and adult division for the contest!

Racers competed in 5 different events - 5K and 10K Classic Style Cross Country ski races, a 5 K snowshoe race and the combined races including a 10K Ski/5K snowshoe competition for the King and Queen of the Mountain Awards and a 5K Ski/5 K Snowshoe competition for the Prince and Princess of the Mountain Awards. In addition, 5 K skiers could enter the wooden ski division or participate in team competitions.

The 10 K Classic Skiers were the first to leave the start line and Clay Mosley from Los Alamos, led the group from the beginning and finished the race (44:11:00) over three minutes ahead of 2<sup>nd</sup> place winner Steve Ilg (47:30:00) from Durango, CO and our King of the Mountain in 2010. Sanna Sevanto from Los Alamos placed third overall and placed first female in the race with a time of 49:01:00. Wow! These guys are fast!!

Our largest group of racers with 89 finishers, the 5 K skiers began the race after the first heat of 10 K skiers passed by. The youngest racers in the group were 9 years old and the oldest racers were in their seventies. This was an impressive group of people of all ages and abilities!

Thirteen people took on the challenge of using old-style wooden skis. Peter May from Crestone, Colorado finished first (37:22:00) in the wooden ski category but even more impressive, he finished fourth overall even with the sticks on his feet!

Our perennial winners, Team High Country (Che Johnston, Gayle Guerin, Dave Burdette and Donnie Damonte) took first (and only) in the Team Category for the 5K race. Someone has got to give these guys a challenge next year and enter their team in the race!

First place winner overall in the 5 K Classic Ski was David Wykoff from Espanola, NM (34:35:00) in his red racing suit followed by David Burdette, Chama, NM, also fully suited and looking dapper in his formal costume, with a time of (36:27:00). Third place overall and first female winner, Janie Miller from Santa Fe came in with a time of 37:12:00. Dana Price from Albuquerque, placed second female winner with a time of 38:13:00. Way to go skiers!

**Snowshoe Race:** The last group of racers with 42 finishers, the 5 K Snowshoers, left the start line shortly after the 5 K skiers. Jurgen Montgomery, Pagosa Springs, CO blazed the way with an impressive 33:12:00 time, more than four and a half minutes ahead of Daryl Dagel (37:49:00), second place snowshoe winner and a combined racer who did not race with the snowshoe mass start but did an individually timed race. Annie Sewell, another combined events racer, placed first female and fourth overall with a snowshoe time of 39:44:00.

**Combined Events:** Combined races represent our toughest races with athletes completing both a Classic ski event and the snowshoe event. The 10K Ski/5K snowshoe male and female winners are bestowed with the title King and Queen of the Mountain and the 5K Ski/5K Snowshoe male and female winners are our Prince and Princess of the Mountain.

Our King of the Mountain went to Daryl Dagel from Albuquerque, NM with an impressive time of 1 hour 29 minutes and 19 seconds and our Queen of the Mountain went to our only female finisher in this event, Graciela Perez from Santa Fe, NM.

The 5K Ski/5K Snowshoe combined racers compete for our Prince and Princess of the Mountain title. Kirk Rhinehart from Santa Fe, NM completed the race with a combined time of 1:23:13:00 and earned our Prince of the Mountain title! Tove Shere, also from Santa Fe, placed second overall and was our Princess of the Mountain with a time of 1:30:20:00.

Congratulations to all our combined racers for completing our longest and toughest races!!

**Our Wonderful Sponsors, Donors & Volunteers!** We cannot thank our sponsors enough for helping make the Chama Chile Ski Classic happen. First thanks to the Rotary

**Club of the Chama Valley for their years of support for the Chile Ski Classic! It's finally a really, really big event and it's thanks to their sponsorship and leadership. Plus they are an enthusiastic group of volunteers to work with!**

**Second we want to thank Lowe's Chama Valley Supermarket for their generous donation to the races. Also, thanks to the Village of Chama, Lodger's Tax Board who provided the funds we needed to get the word out about the Ski Classic weekend.....and the advertising is working as this year's turnout shows! Finally, we are so glad the Chama Chamber of Commerce joined us as a major sponsor. Their help with registration, business outreach and volunteers was invaluable.**

**So many people are involved with the Chama Chile Ski Classic, it is hard to keep track of everyone. We welcome the involvement of 3 different Nordic ski clubs in the region - thank you to the Pagosa Nordic Club, the SW Nordic Club and the San Juan Nordic Club for their help both on the ground and in helping us get the word out to skiers and snowshoers. Thank you to the Santa Fe Striders, a running group, who helped out again with timing the races.**

**We really appreciate the many people who taught ski clinics or led yurt and ski tours. Rex Shurtleff and Doug Call from Pagosa Nordic Club taught a Beginner XC Ski Clinic, Doug Treadway led a tour into the Sargent's Wildlife Area, Pat Hogan (also our course photographer) taught a telemark ski clinic, Gayle Guerin led a small group to the Grouse Creek Yurt, Jessica & Ken Kisiel from the SW Nordic Club taught our Classic Style XC Ski Techniques Clinic, Clay Mosley from Los Alamos gave his advice on waxing skis for race day in his clinic, Mark Mueller from Wolf Creek Backcountry taught a group the essentials of Avalanche Rescue Techniques and Steve Ilg, who hosted a morning yoga class.**

**We can't forget the work of the gang at the High Country Restaurant for hosting two awards ceremonies and hosting 3 nights of music and beer tasting for weekend guests. They were hopping!**

**Thanks to Gabe Hogan from Gunnison, CO for being our M.C. for our awards banquets. The guy has a real talent for making things fun and keeping the crowd roaring.**

**The Chile/Chili contest was a great success with 14 entries and almost 100 tasters participating. Thanks to Shawn Hastings and the crew at River Lumber for hosting this event.**

**Thanks to Cory Dryden at the Baptist Church for making a valiant effort to host a broom hockey event for kids. Unfortunately, the weather didn't cooperate and melted all the ice, so the event had to be cancelled! Hopefully, next year we'll have a broom hockey game!**

**Many thanks to all the local on-the-ground volunteers and organizations who really make the Chama Chile Ski Classic happen (see attached list). We are building a reputation as a well organized, FUN event with friendly people to boot. It is this kind of reputation that will bring people back to Chama again and again!**

**Mary Ann DeBoer**

**Race Director**

## Race Sponsors

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Thank you to all the Businesses and Organizations that made donations!

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33. Pagosa Ski Rentals, Pagosa Springs, CO
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35. Pedal and Powder, Pagosa Springs, CO

Course Grooming done by:

1. Southwest Nordic Club members Clay Mosley &  
Dave Wykoff
2. San Juan Nordic Club member Mark Seaton
3. Derek Strauch
4. Charlie Paynter, Quinlan Ranch
5. Will Aguilar & Soni Honeggar, G Force Choppers
6. Dave Burdette

A Special Thank You to the CCSC Organizing Committee

Carolyn Beasley, Paul Edwards, Che Johnston, Shawn  
Hastings, Jim Haskell, Jim Madden, Frances Elliot, Dick  
Hinerman and Mary Ann DeBoer