

THUNDERBIRD RACE TEAM

Newsletter: January 27, 2021



A Ski Racing Refresher Course:

The MACC (Michigan Alpine Competition Council) ski race program is structured as follows:

- The racing is both individual and teams, with most teams being clubs that are members of the MDSC (Metropolitan Detroit Ski Council).
- Racing classes are divided by ability levels, with Elite (E) being the fastest racers, followed by E1, E2, A, B, C, D
- Classes are divided by sex, with M for men and W for women.
- If there are enough racers, classes are further divided by age, 60 and over are Super Veterans (SV), 40 through 59 are Veterans (V), and 39 and younger have no age designations.

First Race Weekend: January 23-24:

The first race weekend of the 2021 MACC season took place on January 23-24, as the originally scheduled first weekend of January 9-10 was cancelled due to the lack of sufficient snow. The race took place in cool winter weather conditions. Saturday's GS and Sunday's slalom were both raced on Superbowl with quite firm snow conditions.

For the T-Bird Race Team, this weekend was somewhat successful, with 10 T-Bird Racers going through the courses on Saturday and Sunday. The T-Bird's that made the podium (1st, 2nd, or 3rd) are as follows:

Giant Slalom (Saturday):

- 1st Janie Guiliani (E1W), Jeffrey Burnette (E2M), Brian Dusina (SVAM), Doug Gilmour (AM)
- 2nd Patrick Smithbauer (SVBM)
- 3rd Steve Foradori (BM)

Slalom (Sunday):

- 1st Janie Guiliani (E1W), Brian Dusina (SVAM)
- 2nd Jeffrey Burnette (E2M), Patrick Smithbauer (SVBM), Steve Foradori (BM)

Our T-Bird "racers of the week" are **Janie Guiliani** (E1W) and **Brian Dusina** (SVAM), each with two 1st place finishes. Not far behind, also with two podium finishes, are **Jeffrey Burnette** (E2M) with a 1st and 2nd place finish, followed by **Patrick Smithbauer** (SVBM) with two 2nd place finishes, and **Steve Foradori** (BM) with a 2nd and 3rd place finishes.

The T-Bird's had 60% of our racers (6 of 10) make the podium this weekend, which is very good. Hopefully, we can do this well in the next race weekend.

The **Race Team** also did very well this weekend, finishing 1st in giant slalom, 4th in slalom, and 2nd overall.

This Weekend's Activities:

Since the coronavirus restrictions limited our in-person interfaces, there was no Race Team social gathering this weekend. Hopefully, the restrictions will be lifted soon so that we can gather as a group, something that we all miss.

Injury Report :

The fastest racer on the Race Team, **Zach Jablonski**, has yet to race this season. In a late summer baseball game, he failed in a slide into second base and injured his ankle. He thought that it was near healed when he tried skiing on it on a visit to his sister in Colorado. He found that his ability to put pressure on it when skiing did not work. It is getting better,

but is not yet ready for the race course. He is hoping to race the next race weekend. On another note, he is now listening to his physical therapist girl friend regarding how best to resolve this issue.

After racing Saturday's GS race, **Jamie Pawelek** did his usual free skiing at Boyne Mountain. He loaded on the Victor chair, which is old and has boards after you load to keep your ski from digging into the snow since this chairlift rises off the ground very gradually. There was a pile of snow at the end of the boards and Jamie's ski tip dug into the snow and flipped him off of the chair, twisting his left foot. This ended up requiring a trip to the ski patrol room and an ambulance ride to the hospital. Fortunately, doctors confirmed that there were no broken bones, but the pain was still there when his team mate Patrick Smithbauer picked him up and returned him to his motel in Boyne City. Since it was his left foot, he was able to drive himself home on Sunday, stopping only to fill a bag with snow to ice down his injured foot. We are rooting for a speedy healing process so that he can return to the ski slopes (and race course) soon.

Mike's Musings:

The corona virus has taken its toll on the number of racers registered, both in the overall MACC program and in the number of T-Birds registered. To my knowledge, none of the racers has contracted the virus, but a number of racers have close family members that are at high risk, so the racers are taking this season off to limit their risk of contracting the virus and potentially spreading it to the at risk family. Hopefully, all of these racers will return to racing in the future.

Our SVAM speedster, **Brian Dusina**, continues to dominate the competition. He won Saturday's GS by almost 6 seconds and followed up in Sunday's slalom winning by over 7 seconds. His only concern at this point is that he is very close to being upgraded to E2. We should all have that kind of problem.

After a truly mediocre GS on Saturday where I finished off of the podium, I followed it on Sunday with a slalom run where I fell while going through the course. I didn't lose a ski and I returned to the course quickly, taking myself out of contention for the slalom podium as the clock continued to run. The only redeeming fact of this run was the compliments that I received for an old guy getting up quickly and continuing to race. Take any positive that you can!

As I have said many times before, "skiing is fun", but racing with the T-Birds is "more fun". All T-Bird skiers, regardless of their ability level, should give racing a try. It is not only a good time (on and off of the slopes), but will make you a much better skier. If you would like to find out more, please call or e-mail me. You will not be disappointed.

Your T-Bird Race Team Director,

Mike Jablonski

734-283-5510 (Home)

231-582-7339 (Cottage)

mtjablonski@wowway.com



It has been a strange year. It started when the 2020 race season finished just before the corona virus lockdowns started. Almost all of the ski areas in Michigan, around the US, and around the world closed for

the season in early March, forcing us to miss a lot of good late season ski conditions. The good news is that most of the ski areas and ski racing organizations had the rest of the year to plan to make the 2020-21 season as functional as possible, given the restrictions imposed by the various governmental bodies. Our racing organization, the Michigan Alpine Competition Council (MACC) did a great job of planning on how to race in these conditions, as did our host ski area, Boyne Mountain. Unfortunately, Mother Nature did not cooperate as well as we would have liked, with the cold weather and snow starting later than usual (a month later than last year) and the corona virus staying around.

All that being said, most of us, and especially me, are not willing to give up the time spent enjoying our winter season on the ski slopes, both on the race course and just cruising the ski hills with family and friends, just because of a little inconvenience. I didn't stop my activities in the summer (sailing and racing my sailboat) and I'm not going to do

it in the winter with my skiing and racing. Hopefully, most of you in the Thunderbird Ski Club will feel the same and stay active and healthy this winter in the great outdoors, especially on the ski slopes and racecourse.

With that in mind, the T'Bird Race Team opens our season on January 9-10, 2021 with the MACC races at Boyne Mountain, continuing every two weeks until the season finale weekend on March 5-7, 2021. Even with the social distancing required, we are still a very social group and participating will make the winter pass quickly and be much more enjoyable than sitting locked up in your house.

If you need more information about the race program, please give me a call or send an email and I will provide the information that you need to make this a winter to remember, not forget.

Mike Jablonski, Race Team Director

734-283-5510 (Riverview), 213-582-7339 (Boyne City),
313-720-1216 (Cell)

mtjablonski@wowway.com