



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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By Emma Logan and Jay Moyer

LAKE PLACID, New York. – MARCH 5th, 2024. The U.S. Collegiate Ski and Snowboard Association (USCSA) kicked off its 5-day long annual Collegiate National Championships™ today with a women's Snowboard and Freeski Rail Jam, men's Skier and Snowboard Cross, women's Alpine Giant Slalom, and a 7.5k Classic Nordic race in warm weather under cloudy skies.

A record breaking 626 Collegiate athletes representing 71 colleges and universities are competing at the 2024 U.S. Collegiate Ski and Snowboard National Championships™, presented by Celsius. This includes alpine, snowboard, freeski, and nordic teams which qualified through their regional championships. Events include Alpine Giant Slalom, Alpine Slalom, Dual Slalom, Nordic Sprints, Nordic Relays, Nordic Distance, Slopestyle, Skier Cross, Snowboard Cross, Rail Jam, Snowboard Slalom, and Snowboard Giant Slalom. As the events unfold over next week at Lake Placid, please join the USCSA athletes, families and friends in celebrating this pinnacle of collegiate competition by following your favorite athletes either in person or online at www.uscsa.org, where team and individual results will be posted daily. Check in daily for live Video feeds online at uscsa.org/broadcast.html.

Alpine competition kicked off at Whiteface with a women's Giant Slalom. The field of over 140 became a field of 93 who started the second run. Emilie Stene from Vermont State University Castleton ended the day at the top of the podium after a commanding second run, putting her comfortably in first place. Following the first run, she sat in second place, 0.052 seconds behind leader Hilde Sato from Rocky Mountain College. Stene had the fastest second run by over a second, eventually giving her the lead by 0.67 seconds. Stene is a first time national champion. Rocky Mountain College had a successful team day and secured the first team National Championship of the week. Sato finished in second place, with teammates Bergitte Varne finishing in third place, Synne Gaustad Kvinlog in fourth place and Sofia Brustia in fifth place.

"It was a great day for the Lady Bears," said Rocky Mountain College Head coach Jerry Wolf after their team victory. "My three seniors led the Bears to a team win in their last GS competitions. Perfect way to end their GS skiing and a great way to start the series, on top. Couldn't be a happier coach to see such smiles."

The women will return to competition on Thursday to compete in Slalom. In the meantime, the men start their nationals competition Wednesday in Giant Slalom.

Nordic competition returned to the legendary Mt. Van Hoevenberg to find icy trails after an overnight freeze. After an hour delay to let the snow warm up, athletes competed in a 7.5km freestyle race. Winning their first men's team championship at Lake Placid was Clarkson University. "Today was a big win for our program," said Clarkson Head Coach Torin La Liberte. "Having come close many times over the last few years, to finally be back on top of the podium at our home course shows how much work the team has put in to get here." Paul Smith College's men's team placed second followed by Western



Colorado University in third. On the women's side, St Olaf College won the team National Championship, followed by University of Wyoming in second and Paul Smith's College in third.

At the Snowboard and Freeski venues, Liberty University won the team Collegiate National Championship™ in women's Snowboard Rail Jam while the Claremont Colleges topped the podium in women's Freeski Rail Jam. At the Cross venue, Rocky Mountain College won the men's Ski Cross team title while Lees-McRae College won the Snowboard Cross.

All this week the USCSA Broadcast Network will bring audiences over 22 hours of LIVE, multi-camera HD video coverage from all three competition venues. Scott "Boss" Hogg returns to lead the USCSA Broadcast Team at alpine, with ESPN broadcaster Casey Ditzel alongside USCSA nordic legend John Henry Paluszek bringing live daily coverage from the nordic venue at Mt. Van Hoevenberg Olympic Sports Complex. Additionally, each day's Awards Ceremonies and the final night's Champions Banquet and Awards Show will be broadcast on the USCSA X-TRA Channel. To enjoy these online broadcasts, visit www.uscsa.org/broadcast.

Teams began their quest to qualify for the U.S. Collegiate Ski and Snowboard National Championships™ in their local conference competitions, held across 11 conferences spanning the nation, this January. Top teams from each conference attend one of 6 regional championships, which decide who ultimately qualifies to participate in events at the Collegiate National Championship.

The USCSA is the sports federation for collegiate team ski racing and snowboarding in America. The USCSA believes that student-athletes of all levels and abilities should have access to quality and exciting venues of competition. USCSA athletes agree that our team orientation fosters a collaborative approach across their collegiate athletic and academic careers, and often this mentality proves indispensable in their adult lives and careers. The organization includes 213 colleges from coast to coast, fielding 4,765 male and female, alpine, freestyle, cross-country, snowboarding and nordic ski jumping athletes in over 300 events annually.

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For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact jmoyer@uscsa.org