

Big Alaska Snowboard and Freeski Club,
aka

Big Alaska

Informational Handbook 2008-09

www.bigalaskasnow.net

PO Box 112126
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USASA Big Alaska Snow Series Big Alaska Training Program

Our mission is to provide the best training program and competition opportunities for Alaska snowboarders and freeskiers of all ages.

2008-09 Board of Directors:

Ron Dailey, President
Steve Stassel, VP, Treasurer
Alison Sterley, Series Director
Doug Hupp, Director
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Introduction

Big Alaska Snowboard and Freeski Club (Big Alaska) has two components—the Big Alaska Snowboard and Freeski Team Training Program and the USASA Big Alaska Snow Series. The training program teaches the techniques essential to all-mountain recreational snowboarding and develops and hones the competitive snowboarding and freeskiing skills requisite to compete at the National level.

The USASA Big Alaska Snow Series is the United States of America Snowboard Association (USASA) sanctioned series of local competitions in five disciplines open to all ages. The competitions are held at Hilltop Ski Area and Alyeska Ski Resort.

Big Alaska Snowboard and Freeski Team Training Program

The purpose of the Big Alaska training program is to develop each individual athlete's snowboarding or freeskiing skills.

- Available for all athletes above beginner level ability, aged 8-18 as of December 31, 2008
- Freestyle and alpine training
- Participants will be placed in training groups based on age and ability
- Training groups may train together on the same venue, exchange coaches, and use guest coaches with specialized knowledge
- Emphasis is on developing an individual's athletic skills
- Participation in competitions is encouraged but not required
- **Each participant must be a full member of USASA, cost is not included in program fee.** Register online at www.usasa.org
- Lift tickets are required and are in addition to program fees
- Helmets are required for all participants--other safety gear such as adequate eye protection and wrist guards are recommended. Snowboarders/skiers acknowledge that the sports of snowboarding and skiing are hazardous activities with inherent risks of serious personal injury, disability and death.
- Parents & athletes are responsible for safe and properly maintained snowboard gear

Note: After an initial coach assessment, a rider may be referred to the resort's snowboard lesson program for further beginning instruction before being accepted into the training program.

The Big Alaska Snowboard and Freeski Team will be broken into training groups each week to focus on specific lesson plans and skill sets.

Snowboard Team

This year we have a Head Coach at Hilltop, Paul Kelly, and Head Coach at Alyeska, Brad Christenson. These guys will be in constant communication with each other. Riders may not be with the same coach or group of riders at each training session. The Head Coach will assign riders to coaches based on that day's lesson plan and progression goals.

Freeski Team

This team will be formed only if there are at least 5 freeskiers registered for the 2X a week program.

Skills focus: Develop the tricks and routines needed for freeski competitions at the local and national levels. Freeskiers can compete locally in USASA Big Alaska Snow Series disciplines Skiercross, Slopestyle and Halfpipe. USASA and Big Alaska do not offer the traditional disciplines, Giant Slalom and Slalom to skiers, only snowboarders—please check with USSA and the local Alyeska Ski Club for traditional ski races.

Training Program Schedule

- If you register for the 1X a week option—you must choose either Wednesdays OR Saturdays
- If you register for the 2X a week option, you will train both Wednesdays and Saturdays
- If you are invited to the intensive option, you will add training Tuesday to your training program week
- Wednesday training at Hilltop Ski Area, 5:00 – 7:30 pm, Dec 3rd through March 2009 (check the website as specific dates are dependent on snow conditions).
- Saturday trainings are in conjunction with the Big Alaska Snow Series events. For example, if a Slopestyle is scheduled for Hilltop on Sunday, the Saturday training will be at Hilltop. Saturday trainings are scheduled for 9:30 am– 3:00 pm, Dec 6th through March 2009.
- New this season, is the invitation-only intensive Hilltop program. Riders invited by the Head Coach Hilltop will train Wed with the regular team and then add Tuesday training for the exclusive intensive training. IMPORTANT: Only invited riders may choose either the 2X a week Hilltop intensive program or the 3X a week option which includes Saturday at Alyeska.
- Check the Big Alaska registration packet at www.bigalaskasnow.net for program fees.

Training Program Athlete Expectations

- Be ready to go by the start time of the program—that means geared up and ready to get on the lift before 5:30 pm for Hilltop and by 10:00 am for Alyeska.
- **Always** bring a water bottle or hydration pack. No sports drinks or other sugary beverages are allowed during training and competition.
- *Before* you come to training check that your equipment is in good condition.
- Proper nutrition and rest makes for better athletes, better attitude and better results.
- You will need to be able to accept constructive criticism from coaches.
- Your group and coach assignments may change throughout the season.
- Please respect and follow the daily training program plan. You may not understand how a particular practice will help you improve but your coaches do.
- Be courteous to your coaches, teammates, mountain personnel, and every other skier and rider on the mountain. Treat people the way you would like to be treated.
- Follow all guidelines in the Code of Conduct and Membership Expectations/Common Courtesies.

USASA Big Alaska Snow Series

USASA Big Alaska Snow Series sanctioned competitions in five disciplines are open to athletes of all ages. Medals are awarded at each event or race for each age group, men and women, with registered competitors. Riders and skiers may compete in as many or as few events as they wish but all athletes must be USASA registered.

- Must be a Full USASA member. Register either online (www.usasa.org) or at the Big Alaska Snow Series registration table on the day of your first event. You are strongly encouraged to register online at www.usasa.org--PLEASE.
- Snowboard disciplines—Giant Slalom, Slalom, Boardercross, Slopestyle and Halfpipe
- Freeski disciplines—Skiercross, Skier Slopestyle and Skier Halfpipe

USASA Big Alaska Snow Series event fee (in addition to the mandatory USASA membership)

- \$20 per event
- Lift ticket not included
- Helmets are required

USASA Age Groups

The following age groups for men and women are recognized by the USASA for the season:

- Ruggie (ages 7 and under)
- Grommet (8-9)
- Menehune (10-11)
- Breakers (12-13)
- Youth (14-15)
- Juniors (16-17)
- Jams (18-22)
- Senior (23-29)
- Master (30-39)
- Legend (40-49)
- Kahuna (50-59)
- Methuselah (60 & over)
- Open Class
- Adaptive Snowboarders
- Skiers 10 and under
- Skiers 11-15
- Skiers 16-20
- Skiers 21 and over
- Open Class Skiers

USASA Nationals

USASA Nationals will be held in Copper Mountain, Colorado April 3-10, 2009. The Big Alaska Snow Series races and events are sanctioned by the USASA and lead to selection of competitors for participation at Nationals. At the local and national levels, competitors are divided by gender and age. The USASA and its sanctioned events encourage grass-roots participation in freeskiing and snowboarding competitions.

The USASA Big Alaska Snow Series Director in conjunction with the Big Alaska Board of Directors follows the USASA qualification criteria for selection to the Nationals team. Competition disciplines are Giant Slalom, Slalom, Halfpipe, Slopestyle and Boardercross for snowboarders; and Skiercross, Skier Slopestyle, and Skier Halfpipe for skiers.

Membership requirements, official rules for competition and other information is available from the USASA rulebook posted on their website www.usasa.org. You are responsible for reading the Rules and National Ranking System (NRS) posted on the USASA website.

Qualification & Selection for USASA Nationals

Riders and skiers are encouraged to qualify for USASA Nationals by participating in our local series.

USASA allots the Big Alaska Snow Series one competitor in each age group, men and women, in each of the five disciplines—you win your group if you get the top points in a discipline and qualify for Nationals as the Big Alaska Snow Series winner. However, additional athletes may be selected by USASA, not Big Alaska, to compete at Nationals based on the National Ranking System (NRS) available at www.usasa.org click on “Ranking” tab. This means that there is a high probability that more than one competitor in each age group may be selected. (Note that USASA grants an additional event-specific slot to the gold medalist from the previous Nationals who meets the other conditions specified in the USASA rulebook.) The guidelines for qualification and selection for Nationals are the following:

- 1) The competitor with the most points in a discipline in his or her age group will be selected for Nationals as the USASA Big Alaska Snow Series winner. The second place finisher will be the alternate. The best 3 finishes in the current year in our Series in a discipline count towards ranking—that means if you compete in more than 3 competitions in a discipline, your lowest score will not count towards Series winner or Nationals ranking.
- 2) However, the Big Alaska Series Director may recommend exclusion based on factors other than ranking. The final selections will be made by the Big Alaska Board of Directors.
- 3) If the top qualifier can't attend Nationals, the alternate may be selected instead. If the alternate can't attend Nationals, that slot will go unfilled at the local Big Alaska level and will be awarded by USASA through the NRS.
- 4) ***Each competitor must compete in a minimum of 2 events in a discipline in the Big Alaska Snow Series to be considered for the Big Alaska Snow Series winner and National Ranking in that discipline.***

You can help by notifying race registration volunteers, the Series Director or a club board member:

- If you WANT to be considered for selection for Nationals.
- If you change your mind about wanting to attend Nationals.
- NRS standings will be updated and posted online on the USASA website. Big Alaska Snow Series standings will be updated and posted on our website as time and volunteers are available.

USASA Judging Criteria

All USASA Big Alaska Snow Series events are judged in accordance with USASA rules and regulations. The USASA Rulebook has an extensive section on judging at www.usasa.org. It is each competitor's responsibility to read and understand the USASA rulebook and judging criteria.

Big Alaska USASA Nationals Travel Policy

Each competitor selected to participate at USASA Nationals must read and follow all USASA rules. Competitors must also abide by the Big Alaska Snow Series policies and procedures. The Series Director is responsible for enforcing these rules and resulting disciplinary actions. The Series Director can pull competitors from a competition or send them home at their own expense for violating USASA and/or Big Alaska policies and rules.

Competitors are not required to travel or stay with the Big Alaska Snow Series team. However, all competitors under age 18 must have a parent or personally designated guardian with them or they will not be allowed to compete at Nationals.

You must make your own travel arrangements for Nationals. Big Alaska does not make group travel arrangements.

During travel and while at Nationals, all competitors, coaches, chaperones, guardians, parents and family members are subject to Big Alaska's policies and procedures. Most of them are common sense. Respect competitors, coaches and chaperones. Respect yourself. Be fair, be safe, have fun. Abide by all local laws and rules.

Under no circumstances will any illegal behavior be tolerated by competitors, coaches, chaperones, guardians, parents or family members. No underage drinking or smoking and no illegal drug use. Violation of this policy will result in immediate suspension from participation in USASA Nationals. Violators will be sent home at their own expense.

Equipment

Helmets and retention devices are required for all training programs and competitions. Other safety gear such as adequate eye protection and wrist guards are recommended.

Snowboarders/skiers are responsible for providing and maintaining their own personal snowboard and ski equipment and helmet. Equipment must comply with ski area requirements and the sponsor organization for any races. USASA equipment requirements are specified in the current USASA Rulebook posted on their website at www.usasa.org.

Snowboarders/skiers acknowledge that the sports of snowboarding and skiing are hazardous activities with inherent risks of serious personal injury, disability and death. It is the sole responsibility of the snowboarder/skier to select appropriate safety equipment for their event.

Snowboarders/skiers are responsible for maintaining their personal equipment on a regular basis to ensure personal safety and optimum performance.

Disciplinary Actions

The club would like to resolve snowboarder/skier conduct problems at the lowest level possible.

- During training or competition the coach or coaches will deal with minor infractions of the Code of Conduct and Member Expectations/Common Courtesies fairly and immediately. Appropriate actions include, among others, a verbal warning or sitting out a portion of the session.
- Major infractions will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis to determine disciplinary action. Appropriate actions will be decided at a meeting of a coach or coaches and at least 1 club director and include, among others, an apology to those involved, or if traveling, a set curfew, withdrawal from a training or race, and being sent home at the snowboarder's/skier's own expense.
- The breaking of any law by a coach, club director or snowboarder/skier, is considered a major infraction.
- The USASA Rulebook spells out additional sanctions, disciplinary actions and disqualifications. You are responsible for knowing and following the USASA rules.

Medical Insurance

USASA rule 108.02 states: "Competitors must have a current medical insurance policy."

USASA provides **secondary** insurance for certified coaches and USASA Big Alaska Snow Series competitors and training program athletes as part of their USASA membership. There is a very high deductible. Claim forms are available from USASA via their website.

All coaches, training program participants, and USASA Big Alaska Snow Series competitors are responsible for having **primary medical insurance** coverage and must have medical release forms on file with Big Alaska. If you're under 18, your parents must sign.

Code of Conduct

Club members shall follow the rules, duties and courtesies of the ski area where they are training or racing and the rules of the event sponsor (such as USASA or USSA). Snowboarders/skiers shall have duties and responsibilities which include but are not limited to the following:

- Snowboarders/skiers, who travel in any area not designated for snow travel within the permit area, assume the inherent risks.
- Snowboarders/skiers shall be the sole judge of the limits of their skills and the ability to meet and overcome the inherent risks of snow travel and shall maintain reasonable control of speed and course.
- Snowboarders/skiers shall abide by the directions and instructions of the ski area operator, their coaches and trainers, and the Directors of the club.

- Snowboarders/skiers shall familiarize themselves with posted information on locations and degree of difficulty of trails and slopes to the extent reasonably possible before skiing/snowboarding on any slope or terrain.
- Snowboarders/skiers shall not overtake any other skier/snowboarder except in such a manner as to avoid contact and shall yield the right of way to the overtaken skier/snowboarder.
- Snowboarders/skiers shall yield to other snowboarders/skiers when entering a trail or starting downhill.
- Snowboarders/skiers must wear leashes or other retention devices when required by the ski area.
- Snowboarders/skiers must wear helmets for all club trainings and races.
- Snowboarders/skiers shall not board rope tows, J-bars, T-bars, ski lifts or other similar devices unless they have sufficient ability to use the devices, and they shall follow any written or verbal instruction they are given regarding the device. They shall request instructions if unfamiliar with any lift device.
- Snowboarders/skiers, when involved in an accident, shall not depart from the scene without leaving their names and addresses if reasonably possible.
- A snowboarder/skier who is injured should, if reasonable, give notice of the injury to the ski area operator before leaving the ski area. The injury should also be reported to a coach, trainer or Board member.
- Snowboarders/skiers shall not embark or disembark from a ski lift except at designated areas or by the authority of the ski lift operator or ski patrol.
- Snowboarders/skiers shall not deface resort property, including the application of decals or stickers.
- Offensive, rude or abusive behavior, obscene language, vandalism, or disregarding the instructions of coaches, trainers or club directors will not be tolerated.
- Snowboarders/skiers shall not use illegal substances or legal substances which they are not entitled to use while participating with the club or team.

Member Expectations/Common Courtesies

Snowboarders/skiers, coaches, trainers and club directors shall behave responsibly, courteously and ethically when representing the club while training, racing and traveling. This includes:

- Good sportsmanship
- Respect for ski area personnel, ski patrol, race officials, team members, coaches, trainers, club directors, and competitors
- Self-control and good manners in public places, no disruptive behavior
- No abusive, profane or foul language
- Abstain from the use of illegal substances
- All club members will follow the guidelines, requests and rules set up by their coaches, trainers and club directors

- All trainers and coaches will treat club members with respect and courtesy and model responsible behavior
- Be considerate, honest and respectful of others

Forms Available from Big Alaska

- Big Alaska Training Program Fee Schedule
- Big Alaska Training Program Registration Form
- Big Alaska Program Goals and Procedures
- Big Alaska Waiver and Release
- Alyeska Ski Resort release form
- 2008-09 Big Alaska Calendar
- Authorization for Temporary Guardianship of Minor (for travel)