

Outlaw racers slalom in sunshine

Sisters Outlaws skiers hit the slopes in sun and unseasonably warm temperatures last weekend. The third alpine ski race for the Sisters High School team was held Saturday, January 24, at Mt. Bachelor ski area.

“Last week’s race in the pouring rain was like skiing through a car wash. This week, it was sunny and warm, it was like skiing down a sand dune in the desert,” observed Sisters alpine team Head Coach Greg Ausman. “Last week we were wearing trash bags over our jackets to try to stay dry. This week we needed lots of sunscreen, and no long underwear.”

The course was a very

short, very technical slalom race.

“This was a tough course, it was survival of the fittest,” said assistant coach Sara Ausman.

The Outlaws team did much better than just survive; both the men’s and women’s teams had outstanding runs.

In addition to the seven teams from Central Oregon that normally race in the high school league at Mt. Bachelor (Bend, Summit, Mountain View, Redmond, Ridgeview, Lakeview and Sisters), there were teams from Corvallis, Crescent Valley, Dallas, South Eugene, and West Albany. There was a total of 131 racers in the event: 66 girls, and

65 boys from 12 high schools.

On the women’s team, Sisters junior Cammi Benson placed within the elusive Top-10 standings with a ninth place overall. Her combined time for the two slalom runs was an impressive 1:03.07.

“This was a great race for Cammi. The more challenging the course, the better she does. When a lot of racers lose control and miss gates, that’s when Cammi is at her best,” said Ausman.

Senior Emily Ausman placed 16th overall, and also had two very clean runs.

“Emily’s technique was excellent, and she is very focused and precise. She will continue to improve her speed and climb in the placings,” said Ausman.

Betsy Ausman placed 26th in the women’s standings.

“I am especially proud of Betsy,” Ausman said. “She was seeded early in the race order when the snow conditions were very challenging. The shady areas were icy, then transitioned immediately to sunny spots, which were slushy. Betsy missed a gate when she slid out on the ice, but she hiked back through it to have a legal finish. That’s what we needed in order to place all three girls for the team standings.”

The Sisters women’s team placed fourth at this race.

In the men’s division, Sisters senior Yasha Saldi turned in a two-run combined time of 58.86, placing him



PHOTO BY JULIE BENSON

Outlaws skiers had to don the sunscreen for last weekend’s race.

13th overall.

“Yasha was very smooth and makes hard courses like this look easy. He is a very fluid skier, and watching him you can tell he just really loves to ski,” said Ausman.

Newcomers to the Alpine team, Jake Sahlberg and Lachlan Wood, also had strong performances, placing 18rd and 22nd respectively.

“Both Jake and Lachlan

are improving dramatically. They are both new to racing, and are really figuring it out. At the first race, they placed in the 30-somethings, now they’re in the top third of the men’s division. Their technique looked great, and they are not making any mistakes,” said Ausman.

The Sisters men’s team also placed fourth in their division.



PHOTO BY JULIE BENSON

Emily Ausman navigates a technical slalom course.

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