



DURANGO NORDIC



Photo provided by Helen Low

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021

WHO WE ARE

We are a community of outdoor enthusiasts. We are Nordic skiers and snowshoers. We celebrate the solitude and stark beauty of a winter's day and the joy of moving over snow through our own power. We are beginners, recreationalists, elite athletes, kids, team members, lifelong learners, coaches, instructors, and friends.

We are Durango Nordic.

LETTER FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Despite the challenges of Covid-19 that affected our families, friends, and community, Durango Nordic celebrated a successful 2020-2021 ski season. One of our most important ongoing goals is fostering a sense of community for the diversity of people who enjoy our trails and programs. Nordic skiing and snowshoeing are lifelong pursuits, and we endeavor to provide multiple ways for people for all ages and abilities to enjoy the beauty, solitude, and camaraderie of winter outdoor recreation.

This past year, with Covid protocols in place, we hosted over a dozen events, including two new ones. The **4Corners Riversports Red Hot Relay** is a fun and community-oriented team event that served as a fundraiser for our youth program. We also hosted the inaugural **McDonald's Winter Triathlon**, with fat bike, ski, and snowshoe legs. The long-standing **Coke race series** and the **Pine Needle Langlauf** drew athletes from Durango and the region, while the **Alpine Bank Full Moon Howler** was a family-friendly favorite night out at the Nordic Center. Our **skate clinics** were popular again this year, including one aimed at supporting women of all levels in honing their technique. We also continued to grow the number and diversity of adult athletes in our **Masters Program**, with beginner to elite athletes participating. Our **youth and team programs** continued to thrive, though travel for the team was limited given pandemic restrictions and cancellations.

Through the guidance of Helen Low, Center Manager, and the skills and generosity of A.J. Construction, we continued to **upgrade our trails**, improving access to beginner terrain and allowing us to groom with less snow so we can open earlier. Our efforts paid off. Despite the paltry snowfall last December, we had our opening day on December 19.

We are also thrilled to bring on **two new staff** to our organization. Lydia Lawhon joined DNSC as our first Executive Director, while Evan Elliott returns as our Head Coach after two years working at Rossignol. We are grateful to Tad Elliott for all of his work and initiative as Head Coach over the past two seasons.

As we enter the 2021-2022 season, we remain committed to delivering a safe and quality experience for our trail users, offering diverse programs and events for our community and pursuing key strategic initiatives for the Durango Nordic's ongoing growth and sustainability. We invite you to show your support for our non-profit mission by purchasing a season pass package (formerly membership) this year. We also thank our generous sponsors and donors for their longtime support. See you on the trails!

DNOSC UPDATES

STAFF NEWS

This summer, DNOSC welcomed Lydia Lawhon as our first Executive Director. Evan Elliott will be returning this year as Head Coach, and Helen Low continues as Center Manager Extraordinaire! We are grateful to Tad Elliott for his dedicated work over the past two years in as Head Coach, as well as Paige Elliott for her support in communications and marketing.

OUTDOOR PROGRAM GROWTH

With limitations on indoor activities related to Covid-19, we saw growth in our programs, clinics, lessons, and pass sales. Because the Nordic Center building was closed, we expanded online registration for passes, ski rentals, and clinics. Going forward, we will keep the convenience of online sales so visitors can plan their outings in advance.

STRATEGIC PLAN AND BYLAWS UPDATES

Given the ongoing challenges of Covid-19 this past year, the board of directors postponed the update of the bylaws and the strategic plan, including a five-year vision for the club. These updates are a priority for 2021-2022.

CONTINUED TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

Nordic Center Manager, Helen Low, continues to spearhead trail improvement projects with the generous support of AJ Construction.

ONGOING COMMUNITY SUPPORT

We are grateful for the generosity, enthusiasm, and support we receive from our sponsors, donors, partners, volunteers, members, and trail users to make the Durango Nordic Center a community asset to be enjoyed for generations to come. We could not do this without you!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Terryl Peterson
Treasurer

Moira Montrose Compton
Secretary

Jen Garvey
Website

Daniel Murray
Masters Program

Benjamin Mitchell
Youth Programs

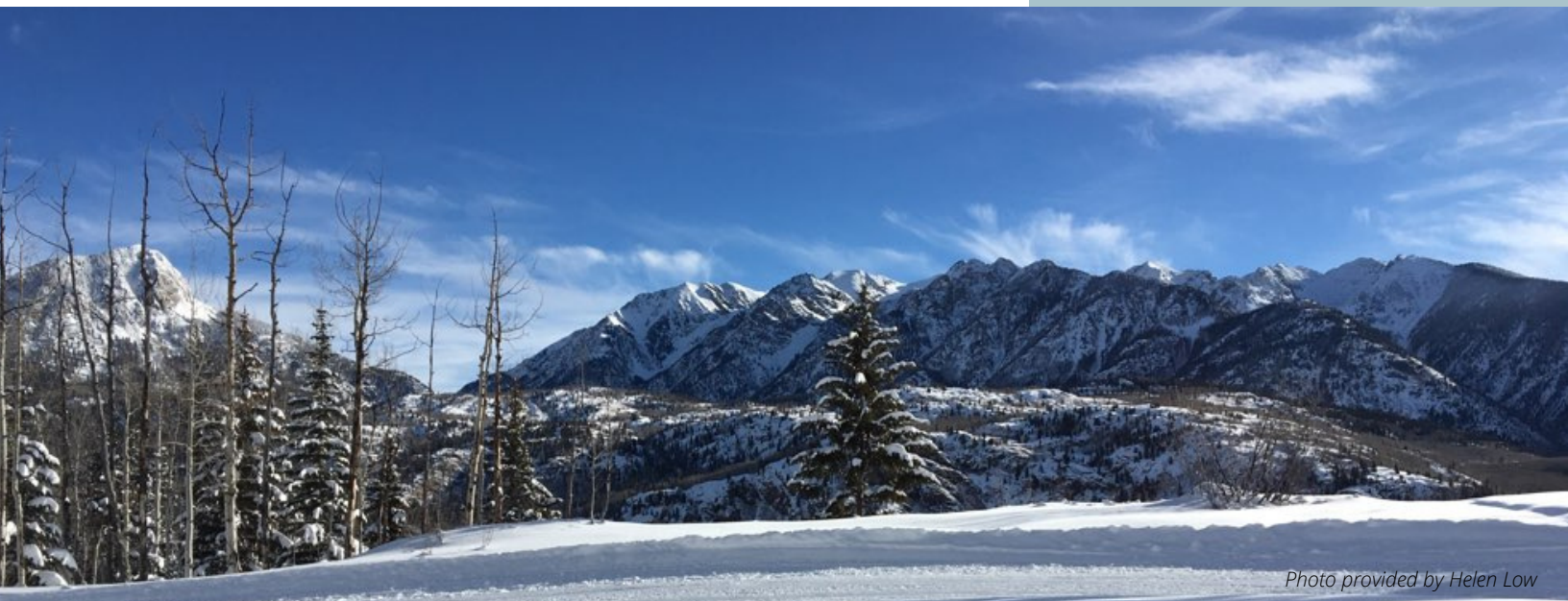
STAFF

Lydia Lawhon
Executive Director

Helen Low
Nordic Center Manager

Evan Elliott
Head Coach

Jesse Guglielmo
Lead Trail Groomer



OUR IMPACT IN 2020-2021

SEASON PASSES SOLD

270

DAY PASSES SOLD

2,100

RACE ENTRIES

303

72

SNOWBURNERS

72

JUNIORS

41

MASTERS

RENTAL SETS

625

SKATE RENTALS

181

WAXLESS XC RENTALS

444

85

TOTAL SKATE CLINIC PARTICIPANTS

21

WOMEN'S SKATE CLINIC PARTICIPANTS

45

HOWLS AT THE FULL MOON

GROOMING HOURS

360

KILOMETERS GROOMED

2,020

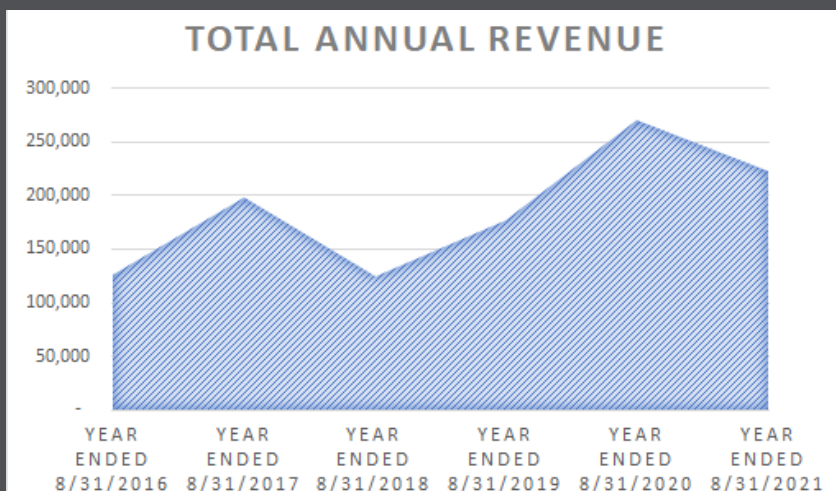
FINANCIALS

Our fiscal year runs from September 1 through August 31. Our revenue has varied over the past several years. In 2019-2020 Durango Nordic had a significant and successful fundraising push to allow for the purchase of a new snowcat for grooming. Our most recent year (2020-2021) was very strong for program and participation revenue.

Due to Covid-19, Durango Nordic migrated to a fully online payment and reservation system. We had a great year in programs (team and masters) as well as a strong year for trail passes, lessons, and rentals.

Durango Nordic budgets for a balanced budget – being conservative with our expenses – and fundraising to meet our needs beyond basic operations. We build cash reserves for specific projects prior to initiating them to ensure the long-term financial health of the club. We are proud to say that we are continuing to serve the Nordic community with a variety of events and programs and have a solid financial base from which we operate.

REVENUE BY YEAR

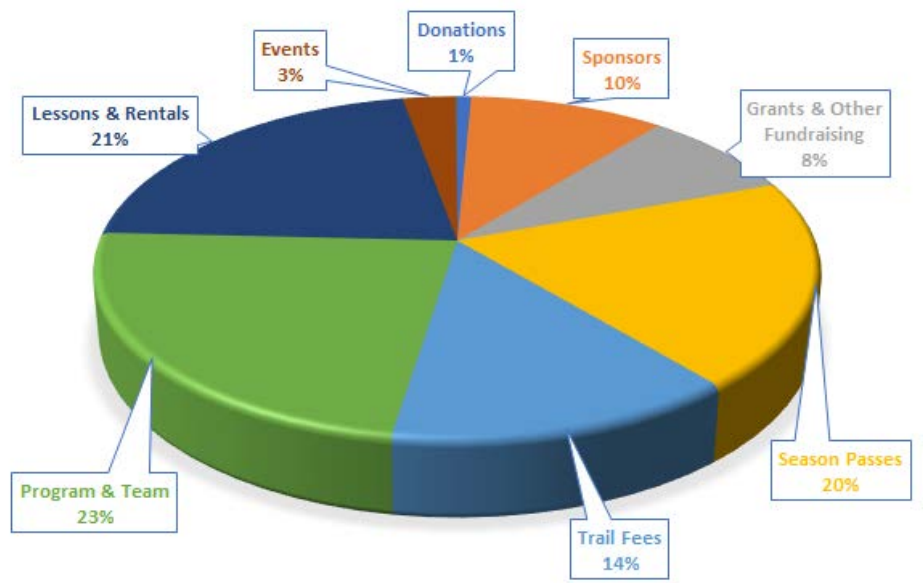




INCOME



REVENUE BY SOURCE 8/31/2021



EXPENSES & INVESTMENTS

EXPENSES & INVESTMENTS BY TYPE 8/31/2021



Photos provided by Chad MacCluskey

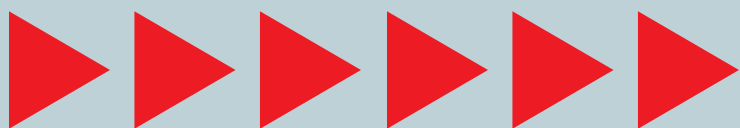
TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

We would like to give a huge thank you to our friends, Terry and Grady James of AJ Construction, for all their help realigning and regrading much of our beginner terrain this summer. AJ Construction brought in 200 dump truck loads of dirt to spread out on beginner trails close to the Nordic Center, so skiers this winter will find both Beast Hill and Developer's Drop are now much more approachable. The total elevation gain on Beast Hill has been reduced by about 10 feet and the corner at the bottom has been straightened to make a gentler ramp for the final climb back to the Nordic Center. The trail will need to be renamed Baby Beast Hill! Skiers will also notice that the Aspen Loop and the return trail from the Bench Loop have had the grade reduced. But don't worry - there are still plenty of hills for more advanced skiers as you get further from the Nordic Center!



New trail grading. Photo provided by Helen Low.

**2021-2022 GOAL:
ACQUISITION OF A UTV FOR
IMPROVED EARLY AND
LATE SEASON GROOMING**



Many Nordic centers are transitioning to UTVs instead of snowmobiles for early and late season grooming, when using a snowcat is less feasible. Because of the suspension on a snowmobile, when it is towing a Ginzu, which is a piece of equipment used to create tracks, it overcuts on rises and undercuts on dips. Our groomers have to constantly adjust the height of the cutting teeth; however, when using a UTV, this happens much less frequently. In spring conditions, the snowmobile leaves a deep rut from the two skis at the front, which means the groomers have to cut



much deeper with the teeth than is optimal. Otherwise, the ski ruts are dangerous for skiers. Cutting deeper means the snow gets softer and melts quicker - not a good combination on warm days and when we have low snow! The UTV gives a far superior groom than a snowmobile. Finally, it is much easier to drive, more comfortable, and warmer than a snowmobile, which are all welcome bonuses on frigid mornings!

To support our fundraising efforts for the new UTV, please contact Helen@durangonordic.org!

NEW EVENTS IN 2020-2021

RED HOT RELAY

The inaugural Red Hot Relay took place at the Nordic Center on February 13, 2021. Thank you to everyone who supported the DNSC team through this event, **especially our sustaining sponsor, 4Corners Riversports**. Tad Elliott provided his recap of the fun that ensued:

Even though he didn't race, Ben Mitchell is no chicken, and to prove it he rode one around all day to tie for best costume with the clear winners of the event, the Golden Girls. Some teams might dispute the results. To that, the coaches just say, "Ha...na...nah." The fastest team won in the Nick of time by just a Tad. Cupids Angels shot their arrow, but they were unable to Buck prerace assumptions and could have used a little Moore help. A kilt was spotted so the skier could Wade into deeper, slower snow. Even if you are a Nordic Noob there was fun to be had. If you didn't race, next time you Ott to Man, just ask Dave and Zach. Two different types of Wiley were shown: the tough rugged ski-no-matter-what kind and the Loco Chica who raised such a spirited skier and proved the name is no mistake. She can support and race with dos other crazy ladies. If you didn't race on a team with your family, you Ott to try it and show skiing is a team sport for the whole clan. The Red Hot Mommas lived up to their name and left the Go Daddies grumbling they'll get their number someday. Who knew Quayle's could fly, and if you were paying close attention, there was Sage burning, catching some Buffaloes on fire, causing one hell of a Bear fight. Piggy Puffs aren't sweet like Maple and have just a Lil-Bit of sass while having a Lott of fun with friends. Triangles are the strongest shape on earth showing how Awes(om)e it is to have such a strong bond. We all know The Golden Girls are the best and Betty White isn't back, she never left. Maybe a DC Dingo ate your Baby Yoda, or he just felt the force in his elbow and had to show how tough he is by sitting. There was an addition of some White and Brown that Chipped in by making some great race trails. We all know bunnies get down Lower than we can ever hope. You can be an OG or part of the Rat Pack, we take all kinds. Until next year, rock on Rockin' Racers.



Photos provided by Frank Mapel

MCDONALD'S WINTER TRIATHLON

Also in its first year at the Nordic Center, the McDonald's Winter Triathlon brought out skiers, snowshoers, and fat bikers to test their skills on the Nordic trails. Held on January 30, conditions were excellent for racing on a range of winter sports gear. Individuals or teams could compete with the goal of completing a 5k ski, 10k fat bike, and 3k snowshoe. The 2022 race will take place on February 5.

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO MCDONALD'S AND 4CORNERS RIVERSPORTS FOR THEIR ONGOING SUSTAINING SPONSORSHIPS OF DNSC!

TEAM UPDATES



The Nordic team excelled this year at demonstrating resilience and enthusiasm through the uncertainty of Covid-19. Under the direction of Tad Elliott, Head Coach, the athletes accomplished their goals of racing and having fun while staying close to home. In fact, every athlete competed in a race this year. DNSC once again hosted the Coke race series, as well as the inaugural Red Hot Relay, at the Nordic Center, which provided opportunities for our athletes to race on their home turf. We invited teams from other areas within day-tripping range, including Telluride and Los Alamos, to join the race series as well.

DNSC extends our gratitude to Tad for his two years as Head Coach, and we wish him well in future endeavors. We are also grateful to all of our team coaches for their dedication and enthusiasm to the program.

“It’s all about the kids and having fun on snow. We get to do something fun in a gorgeous location every evening. That’s pretty special.”

Tad Elliott

WELCOME TO EVAN ELLIOTT

Evan grew up skiing for Durango Nordic, attending multiple regional and national championship races. He attended Fort Lewis College, where he competed in their multi-national championship cycling team as a member of their downhill mountain biking team. Evan began his coaching career in 2007 and quickly moved up to the Assistant Head Coach position for DNSC, a title he happily held though the 2013 season. He continued his coaching career as the Assistant Head Coach for Boulder Junior Nordic Race team for the 2014-2015 race season. He then made his way to the Vail Valley, joining the Ski and Snowboard Club Vail in the summer of 2015. In the summer of 2017 Evan accepted the Head Coach position for his home club of Durango Nordic Ski Club and held the position until the fall of 2019, when he took a position with Rossignol as their Nordic Race Manager.



He has been named as a coach for the Junior National team, Rocky Mountain Division, annually since 2012. In 2016 he became the head glide wax technician for the Rocky Mountain Division and was the head glide wax technician for the US Ski Team at the 2016 U23 World Championships in Roznov, Romania and again in 2017 at the U23 World Championships in Heber City, Utah. We are thrilled that Evan is returning to DNSC!

ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT: ZACH OTTMAN

When did you start skiing?

I started Nordic skiing in 6th grade. I found out about it through a handout given to us during class. I also had a few friends who were involved with it.

What is your favorite part of being on the team?

My favorite part is everyone helps out each other and is super supportive. Everyone has their own goals that coaches help with throughout the season, which is really great for motivation.

Thoughts on the 2020-2021 season?

Tad was a really great coach. It was really awesome to have someone who could give advice from their racing experiences, especially when it came from the World Cup level. It was a little disappointing that JNQs were harder to do because of the pandemic. However, the team did a good job coming up with local opportunities with the Coke races and the Red Hot Relay.

What are your future goals?

I hope to make it to RMN races this year and hopefully next. I also hope that I can compete in college whether it be on a club or college team.

We are grateful to Moreheart Murphy Subaru for sponsoring our youth programs in 2020-2021!



Photos provided by Zach Ottman

ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT: GWEN GALLAGHER

Why did you start Nordic skiing?

The reason I did Nordic was because my friend Ilah told me about it. Ilah invited me to dryland [training]. I did it and I loved it!

What are your favorite parts of being on the team?

My favorite things about being on the Nordic team are skiing with my friends and, of course, doing the races.

What are you looking forward to this year?

I am looking forward to getting better and having something fun to do with my friends and family.



Photo provided by Scott Gallagher

MASTERS PROGRAMS



Durango Nordic had a breakthrough Masters Program during the 2020-2021 season. The program was revised this past year to offer three distinct ability levels - beginner, enthusiast, and elite - and saw a total of about 40 participants. The program, which is intended for adult skiers who want to improve physical fitness and technique, meets weekly at the Durango Nordic Center and provides instruction on skate technique from a qualified Durango Nordic coach. In addition to providing direct coaching, the program also aims to connect skiers with a group of fellow Nordic enthusiasts and prepare those who are interested in competing for one of the many races offered by Durango Nordic.

IMPROVE SKIING ABILITY

Nordic skiing is such a nuanced sport that no matter your experience level, there is always something to work on. Whether you are a beginner or seasoned skier, we can all improve from practicing technique drills and having a coach provide feedback.

BUILD COMMUNITY

In times when we've recognized the importance and value of our social interactions, the Masters Program is a way to connect skiers in the Nordic community in a manner that is safe and follows Covid-19 protocols. It's an opportunity to meet new people and improve your physical and mental health.

PROVIDE ACCOUNTABILITY

One of the benefits of this program is that it will naturally build more skiing and time outdoors into your life. It is motivating and provides accountability to have other people at a set time and place who are ready to ski.

PREPARE TO RACE (BUT ONLY IF YOU WANT TO)

Racing can be a great way to push yourself, realize fitness and technique gains, and participate in a community event. Set your sights high with the Pine Needle Langlauf 30k, tackle something a bit shorter with one of our Coke Races, or don a costume and cheer from the sidelines!



Photos provided by Chad McCluskey



WE WANT TO EXTEND A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ANIMAS ORTHOPEDIC ASSOCIATES FOR BEING THE PRESENTING SPONSOR OF OUR MASTERS PROGRAMS.

GET INVOLVED IN DURANGO NORDIC!

Durango Nordic is committed to offering programs and opportunities for individuals of all abilities and ages to get out on the snow and enjoy the beautiful winters we have here in Southwest Colorado. Below, you'll find a catalog of our current offerings. We are always open to new ideas for enabling everyone to develop a lifelong passion for Nordic skiing and snowshoeing to support health, well-being, and connection to community!



Snowburners (Ages 5-12): For kids ages 5 through 12 to learn cross-country skiing through fun and games in a non-competitive environment. Cross-country skiing teaches balance, improves strength and coordination, and offers a wonderful option for kids to enjoy winter.

Cruisers (Ages 6-14): For elementary and middle school aged athletes who wish to have fun, be outside with friends during the winter months, and develop their ski skills in a less competitive environment.

Nordies (Ages 7-18): For the youngster who wants to get off the beaten path and use skiing as a way to venture out into the wilderness in a fun and safe environment on scaled touring or classic skis.

W.A.C.O. (Ages 14-21): For athletes who wish to maintain fitness during the winter. This program is ideal for the competitive mountain biker, the cross-country runner, or the summer sport athlete who is looking for a way to remain fit during the snowy winter months.

Race Program (Ages 8-19): For competition-minded skiers who wish to reach their full potential. Participants compete in Rocky Mountain Nordic (RMN) Junior National Qualifier (JNQ) races in Colorado and Utah.

Masters Program: For adult Nordic skiers. Beginner, enthusiast, and elite sections are available depending on previous experience and goals. Programs are designed to improve physical fitness and technique, connect you with a similar group of fellow skiers, and support you in setting and achieving your ski goals for the season.

Skate Clinics: For all levels of adult skiers looking to improve or refresh their skate-skiing skills without a season-long commitment.

Lessons: For anyone looking for private or small group instruction in skate or classic skiing.

THANK YOU!

2020-2021 SUSTAINING SPONSORS



2020-2021 DONORS, MEMBERS, & PARTNERS

Nancy Agro & Geoff Craig
Anonymous (3)
ASAP Accounting & Payroll
Drew Bourey
Jessica Brooks
Ron & Linda Bunk
Jim & Barb Casey
Tom Cohn
The Collianders
Ted, Moira, & C Compton
Kathleen Costello
Crossfit Catacombs
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Brian Dannemann
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Purgatory Ski Resort
San Juan National Forest

**Partners provide financial and/or in-kind support for capital investments, operations, and programs.*





Photos provided by Chad MacCluskey

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2020-2021 COACHES & INSTRUCTORS

Snowburners Coaches

Ken Armstrong
 Andrea Avantaggio
 Katrina Blair
 J. Burnite
 Nola Burnite
 Steve Conklin
 Aidan Eisenhour
 Buck Farley
 Bailey Freeman
 Zoe Freeman
 Hannah Garvey
 Lorelei Hassel
 Kathy Hearn

Eva Hobby
 Erik Hobby
 Kim Hobby
 Maggie Holcomb
 Jeanne Pastore
 Rob Trudeau
 Brett Wilson

Team Coaches

Tad Elliott, Head Coach
 Jon Bailey, Nordies
 Henry Barth, U16-U20
 Evan Elliott, Coach
 Hannah Garvey, Cruisers
 Cara Kropp, Nordies
 Mylie Lanier, Cruisers
 Chad MacCluskey, Cruisers
 Nick McKey, W.A.C.O.
 Logan Moore, U14/Masters
 Chrissy Mosier, Nordies
 Missy Neagos, Masters
 Gunther Ott, Cruisers

Zach Ottman, U12
 Jeanne Pastore, Masters
 Hannah Petterson, U16-U20
 Jes Reed, Nordies
 Sarah Tescher, Nordies

Instructors

Helen Low
 Miki Harder
 Sabina Kuss
 Jeanne Pastore



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