

## New York State Ski Racing Association - Nordic, Inc.

FALL MEETING MINUTES

09/30/2024 DRAFT

September 15, 2024

Osceola Ski & Sport Resort and Zoom

President Mark Chmielewicz called the meeting to order at 12:14 PM, welcomed everyone, and called for introductions from participants.

### Attendance & Voting Members

**In-person:** Mark Chmielewicz (President / GHN-ADK Vauhti), Holly Folsom (Cayuga Nordic), Ed Luban (CNY Nordic), Jack Rueckheim (Treasurer /Cayuga Nordic), Darwin Roosa (Past President / Saratoga Biathlon), Craig Wiggers (Biathlon Chair / Syracuse Biathlon),

**Online Zoom:** Roy Cooley (Wolverine Ski Club), Eric Hamilton (Secretary & Shenendehowa Nordic), Bernadette O'Brien (HURT), Todd Rayne (CNY Nordic), Juliane Stemp (NYSEF).

Audio difficulties for Zoom participants during the first 30 minutes presented problems for effective interaction, questions, and discussion.

**Minutes:** Mark Chmielewicz asked for review and approval of the minutes from the 4/21/24 Spring meeting. Darwin Roosa noted that the draft minutes + attachments had been emailed to the meeting participants, posted on the website, and published in the 7/1/24 summer newsletter by Bob Underwood. Mark asked for a reading of the record of board decision votes conducted by email since the April 21, 2024 Spring meeting. Jack Rueckheim noted four matters acted on as follows:

- 5/09/24 – Authorize reimbursement to Tom Moffett for website URL and domain transfer.
- 5/27/24 – Authorize establishment of a dedicated treasury line item for the Osceola Biathlon Range Building Fund.
- 6/08/ 24 – Authorize a total of \$1,425 to help fund expenses for Cora Hindsdill and Kai McKinnon to attend a summer U16 National Training Camp in Jackson Hole, WY
- 6/10/24 – Nomination and vote to elect Chris Yarsevich 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President.

Craig Wiggers moved that the meeting minutes be accepted, Darwin Roosa second, carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** Jack Rueckheim distributed the Treasurer's Summary as of 8/31/24 (copy attached) showing a bank balance total of \$32,710 of which \$18,473 belongs to Mid-A, and \$1,696 belongs to the Osceola Range Building Fund leaving a total of \$12,541. The report was emailed in advance to board members and for Bob Underwood to publish with the agenda in the September 6, 2024 e-newsletter. Jack commented that Syracuse Biathlon has done an amazing job with successful fundraising for the construction of their Osceola biathlon range building. He also noted that \$995 in post-race fees and sanctioning payments were received from ORDA during the summer.

Paul Smith's still owes \$200 for Phillip Matthew's participation in the 2024 Junior Nationals. Jack recommended the transfer of \$600 from the broad-purposed General Fund to the Mid-Atlantic BKYSL Fund. This fund is typically used as seed money for the BKYSL club that will host the next season's Mid-Atlantic BKYSL Festival. Juliane Stemp questioned the appropriateness of

the transfer because there should be a festival budget. So far, no club has offered to host the festival. An event budget is usually submitted by a host club.

Craig Wiggers moved to accept the treasurer's report + the \$600 transfer to the BKYSL Fund, Jack Rueckheim second. Carried.

**President's Remarks:** Mark Chmielewicz stated that we are all hoping the snow outlook for the 2024-25 racing season is better than last year. He praised the excellent momentum of support and progress for the Syracuse Biathlon range building project.

**Executive Director's Report:** Bob Underwood was not able to attend the meeting due to a conflict. He did not send a report of his activities and suggestions for the coming racing season.

### **Committee Reports**

**Insurance:** Sean Halligan was not present but submitted his committee report (attached). Highlights to note include

- The general liability policy was renewed with a policy premium of \$5,088 paid in late June, up \$900 from last year. Had to move from a \$2 million GL policy to a \$1 million GL policy with a \$1 million excess policy.
- The insurance company now requires background checks annually for volunteers and coaches that work with youth. This new change in NYSSRA Nordic background policy was updated in a website posting and announced by Bob in the 7/1/24 e-newsletter. NYSSRA-Nordic pays the invoices for these background checks.
- Sean needs to receive original signature paper racer waivers and sign-in sheets for all events from organizers after races. Jack needs \$ checks for post-race head tax fees sent to him. Bernadette O'Brien needs to receive race results for points list scoring.

Ed Luban noted that when clubs renew their sanctioning, they need to submit a list of club individuals (with contact emails) that may be working with youth. A switch to online submission of club sanctioning agreement forms is necessary to streamline the process.

Points List Chair Bernedette O'Brien suggested that regular and persistent communication by letter is needed to remind race organizers of the obligations to submit 1. Signed racer waivers, 2. Racer head tax, and 3. Results for points list scoring. She pointed out that registration by some racers using a nickname has created problems for scoring. So, a bullet on the updated check list should ask racers not to use nicknames when registering.

**Biathlon:** Craig Wiggers reported that NY Biathlon Committee met by Zoom on 9/8/24. (Meeting minutes are attached). He highlighted summer activities that included summer races hosted at Saratoga Biathlon, a Syracuse / Polar Bear Biathlon challenge event, and clinic at Pratts Fall Park, and a successful effort to raise funds to build a range building at Osceola's biathlon range. The Jim & Betty Schreiner Biathlon Scholarship Fund will continue with awards this season. The winter race schedule was discussed. The 2025 NY Biathlon Championships are tentatively scheduled at Saratoga during either of the first two weekends of March. Election of officers for the next two-year term was held with Craig Wiggers as Chair, Brian Burr as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair, and Steve Halasz as 2<sup>nd</sup> Chair.

**Ski Orienteering:** Eric Hamilton reported from Chair Janet Findlay that a pre-holiday Ski O event will be scheduled at Lapland Lake. Ski O events will be part of the Empire State Winter Games Jan. 31 – Feb. 2, 2025. (Complete Ski O Report attached).

**Cross Country:** Mark expressed disappointment that Winona Forest Recreation Association (WFRA) is no longer having Nordic ski race events. Their excellent ski trails, snow cover, and grooming have always been great for ski competition during most seasons. Eddie agreed and said he will continue to encourage people to ski and train there.

Eddie reported to date the following clubs have renewed sanctioning for 2024-25:

Rochester Nordic Racing  
Cayuga Nordic  
Gore Mt. Nordic  
Shenendehowa Nordic  
Glenville Hills Nordic-ADK Vauhti

These are the same clubs that renewed early in recent years. Normally more arrive starting in late September. No race sanction requests have been received yet. Those too normally come in later.

There was discussion last year about requiring club and race sanction requests to be made online. That hasn't happened. Unfortunately, we still don't have a way to take payments online, so we'll still be dealing with postal mailed paper checks for now.

Mark received from Eric Seyse the following GHN-ADK Vauhti schedule:

12/14/24 Lapland Lake 10K Freestyle  
1/12/25 GHN-ADK Vauhti Skiathlon  
2/16/25 Glenville Hills Classic  
1/25-26/ 25 GHN-ADK Games 5K/10k Skate & Classic Pursuit BKYSL to follow

Juliane Stemp reported that she was aware of interest by race organizers to conduct an ADK Tour De Ski race series again this season.

## **BKYSL**

Holly Folsom remarked about the good snow conditions, attendance, and organized activities at last season's Mid-Atlantic BKYSL Festival hosted by Camden Nordic at Osceola Ski & Sport Resort. A host club and venue are needed for the 2025 festival. Chris Yarsevich might have suggestions for a host venue. Juliane Stemp suggested that that the ADK Tour De Ski events consider younger age group participation. Juliane offered to be the contact person for Mid-A matters.

**Website:** Mark Chmielewicz expressed continued frustration on the lack of progress to get a new website developed. He reviewed events since last year when Phil Matthews presented his excellent initial work with revised content from our N-N WordPress website put into GoDaddy.com. The domain URL was renewed and transferred for 5 years. Phil resigned from 1st VP due to health issues and was not able to continue with the GoDaddy project. No one has picked up the project. Mark may contact Darryl Caron to discuss options for us.

**Officer Slate / nominees / election:** The two-year terms for the current executive board of officers expired as of this Fall meeting.

Mark Chmielewicz noted that the nomination of a slate of officers (President, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer) needs to be presented for consideration and election at this meeting. The 1<sup>st</sup> VP normally ascends to the President role. However, the 1<sup>st</sup> VP has been vacant since last year due to Phil Matthew's resignation. Mark reviewed the responsibilities of the 1<sup>st</sup> VP. Although Todd Rayne is away during most of the winter, he stated his interest in serving as 1<sup>st</sup> VP. The 2<sup>nd</sup> VP was filled by Chris Yarsevich this summer and can continue. Eric Hamilton is willing to continue as Secretary and Jack Rueckheim is willing to continue as Treasurer. No one was willing to assume the President role. Despite this vacancy, Mark moved to approve the incomplete slate of officers. Darwin second. Carried unanimously.

Juliane Stemp offered to contact several clubs to solicit an interested person to serve as President. Meanwhile, Mark Chmielewicz and Darwin Roosa will continue respectively as President and Past President on an interim basis.

### **ESWG Cross Country Director**

Mark cited interest last spring from Amanda Zullo to serve as sport coordinator for cross country skiing at the 2025 ESWG. He will check with her about accepting this role.

### **2025 Cross Country Ski Championships**

Saratoga Biathlon Club was suggested as a potential venue for the NYSSRA-Nordic Cross Country Ski Championships. Darwin will check with Curt Schreiner. Juliane Stemp will ask about a club or race event in the 2025 ADK Tour De Ski series that would be interested in hosting the Championships.

**Spring Meeting** will be 7 PM, **Sunday, May 4, 2025** by Zoom.

**Adjournment:** Mark Chmielewicz moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:50 PM, Jack second. Carried unanimous.

Submitted by Darwin Roosa with input from Eric Hamilton, Secretary

**See complete reports on next page.**

**NYSSRA Treasurer's Summary August 31**

**31-Aug-24**

<b>Fund</b>	<b>8/31/2024</b>	<b>8/31/2023</b>
Osc. Range Bldg.	\$ 1,696	\$ -
Biathlon	\$ 1,703	\$ 1,703
Youth Development	\$ 2,131	\$ 1,851
Mid-A*	\$ 18,473	\$ 17,802
BKSL	\$ 118	\$ 618
Schreiner Biath Sch.	\$ 1,240	\$ 435
<u>General</u>	<u>\$ 7,350</u>	<u>\$ 7,985</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 32,710</b>	<b>\$ 30,394</b>
Total less Mid-A and	\$ 12,541	\$ 12,592
Osc. Bldg. funds*		

\*These funds are ony managed by NYSSRA-Nordic

Key Business Reward Checking	
NYSSRA-Nordic Account 3/	8/31/2024
Beginning Balance	\$32,049.22
1 Addition	\$691.00
1 Subtraction	(\$30.00)
Ending Balance 6/30/23	\$32,710.22

**NY Biathlon 9/8/24 Fall Meeting Minutes**

- Attendees - Craig, Shelly, Brian, Darwin, Tom, Carl, Curt, Steve H.
- Last spring's minutes - Approved
- Summer recap, Osceola Range Auction, Scholarships, Elections
- Saratoga hosted races in June and August - Mt Bike and Mt Bike Biathlon coming up. Participation has been low but is trending up. Trails are all clear following the summer storm.

-Carl K. - fields are small. One race was cancelled because only 2 showed up. The Syracuse / Polar Bear Challenge did go. Syracuse hosted a sprint in the morning and a Mt Bike race in the afternoon. There was a clinic in Pratt Falls with 10 participants and some of the new folks came to the July race.

-Tom added he was chief of range at summer Nationals with 30-40 kids participating.

-Scholarships - a little over \$1200 in the account to provide 2 x \$500. Date for nominations and selection. Curt, Carl, and Craig will review the nominations. Award winners will be asked to write a brief summary of how they used the scholarship. (Photos would also be terrific).

-Schedule discussion for upcoming season. Feb 14-16 Masters Nationals in WI, ESWG/ and Eastern Cup first weekend of Feb, Jan 11 Craftsbury, Ft. Kent the last weekend of Jan., US Nationals Mar 26-30 in Bozeman MT., Saratoga will prob host mid Jan and March, Polar Bear Jan 12 in Old Forge, Feb 22-23 for Polar Bear / Syr Challenge (Tentative). Discussion of the course at Lake Placid for ESWG - requires natural snow. NY Championships will be at Saratoga tentatively for the first two weekends of March. Primary is 1st and 2d of March.

-Range and Auction update - The facility is almost complete. Auction is active, but reminders should continue to go out.

-Elections of officers for the next 2-year term. Also discussed the new webpage and formatting previously done through GoDaddy. The next NYSRA meeting will be at Osceola in person and with a virtual/Zoom - Sunday the 15th at 12:00 (Kitchen will not be open). See newsletter for more details.

\*\*Of note, when you sanction a club, you must submit for a background check. Craig nominated as Chair, Brian Vice Chair and Steve H. as 2nd Chair. Unanimous vote.

Craig Wiggers, Chair NY Biathlon

## **2024-25 NYSSRA Ski Orienteering Report**

The first scheduled event of the 24-25 NYSSRA ski-o season will be our annual pre-Christmas race at Lapland Lake. Following that will be the Empire State Games Jan. 30 – Feb. 2 in the Lake Placid area. For the past 2 years we've offered 3 individual races at the ESGs and have attracted over 60 competitors from all over North America, making it the largest ski-o event on the continent. We plan to offer a similar schedule this year.

The Rochester Orienteering Club will organize one or two meets if conditions permit, and if there's early snow we'll plan additional one day event in the Lake Placid and Garnet Hill areas. The opening of Scotts Cobble Ski Center and the upgrades to the Cascade Ski Center near Lake Placid have enabled us to offer two new challenging ski-o courses. The management at both venues is very supportive of ski-o and have requested that we offer some mid-week activities for kids and seniors' groups.

Keeping up with trail additions, rerouting and other changes at the venues is a constant challenge for our mappers but recent GPS technology makes this much easier. Last year we completed a major upgrade to the Lapland Lake map and we now offer up to date maps at all our events.

As soon as our winter schedule is finalized it will be posted at <http://skio.nyssranordic.org/> and <https://empoclub.org/events>.

Janet Findlay, Chair Ski Orienteering

## Insurance Report for 2024 NYSSRA-Nordic Fall Meeting -- From Sean Halligan

The general liability policy was renewed and paid for by Jack. The insurance company would no longer write a \$2 million GL policy, so we had to move to a \$1 million GL policy with a \$1 million excess policy. (Don't ask me what the difference is, it makes no sense to me either! As a reminder, the reason we have \$2 million in coverage is because ORDA requires it). The policy premium is now \$5,088, up about \$900 from last year. The GL policy is the same as last year and actually there was nothing to fix with the agent as is often the case. Still waiting for the excess policy to come in for review.

The insurance company is now requiring background checks annually rather than every other year as we had been doing them. Thank you to Eric Seyse who helped update the "Safety Program" document on a rush basis so it could be provided to the agent. It apparently was sufficient for the insurance company. The NYSSRA Nordic background check policy was also updated on the website, and this new requirement has been announced by Bob on the recent newsletter. I would suggest a similar announcement be added to the website.

With regard to background checks, we have not had much action yet. Ed Lubin is doing a great job keeping the clubs honest when they don't provide that information as required. I suspect that activity will probably pick up in the very near future. Thanks to Jack for always paying the invoices for the background checks in a timely manner.

As was the case last year, overnight camps and clinics are not covered by the policy. Last season, only the JO trip involved overnight team lodging. When I got the numbers in (thank you Jason), I reported them to the agent and the insurance company ended up not charging any additional premium for that coverage. I expect the same to happen again this year and going forward, especially since this was a large team due to JO's being local and if the EHS Champs & J2 Champs remain as is with no NYSSRA overnight lodging involved. \*\*Team leaders for any overnight activities need to keep me in the loop on the participation numbers prior to the event so I can report them.

As a reminder, event organizers need to use the waivers and also use the paper copy of the sign in sheet for every event and send it to me. This would include any biathlon events even if the clubs are getting insurance from USB A (I'm looking at you Syracuse!) since we list the events on our website. If they need to use other waivers, they should make sure that NYSSRA-Nordic is included on it and we get a copy.

That is all. I apologize to everyone who looks forward to hearing the semi-annual insurance report live during each meeting! I hope you are not too disappointed.