

Congratulations 2008 Award Winners

Women's Bobsled
Athlete of the Year:
Elana Meyers

Men's Bobsled
Athlete of the Year:
Curt Tomasevicz

Women's Bobsled
Athletes' Choice Award:
Emily Azevedo

Men's Bobsled
Athletes' Choice Award:
Curt Tomasevicz

Women's Skeleton
Athlete of the Year:
Katie Uhlaender

Men's Skeleton
Athlete of the Year:
Zach Lund

Women's Skeleton
Athletes' Choice Award:
Annie O'Shea

Men's Skeleton
Athletes' Choice Award:
Zach Lund

From the CEO: *Darrin Steele*



Well, we are officially into the “off-season” now, but based on the pace of things, we may need to change that term. We are into our new fiscal year as of July 1st and quite a bit has happened since the final race of the season. I’ll attempt to summarize the key events.

FIBT Congress: Chairman of the board, John Ball, and I attended the annual FIBT Congress in Italy in June and it was quite an education. We got great updates from Vancouver, including the official POV video taken at the track by our own Shauna Rohbock and Emily Azevedo, as well as from Sochi on their plans for the 2014 Games. The only real issue to be debated was a proposal from Great Britain, Latvia and Austria to reduce the total number of competitors from any nation down from three to two in World Cup and Olympic competitions. We voted against the proposal in an informal poll and promptly submitted a formal letter of

opposition upon returning to the states. The final decision has not been announced, so keep your fingers crossed that the proposal fails. This will continue to allow the USA to be rewarded with three competitors at these events due to our high rankings on the World Cup tour. Next year’s congress is scheduled to take place in Moscow, Russia, so I will be brushing up on my Russian. **России-замечательная страна!**

National Team Camp: Based on all accounts, our first National Team Camp was a huge success. There was admittedly a lot of apprehension going into the camp from the coaches and athletes because it was really the first of its kind. There was only one key question that drove all elements of the camp: *What will make this team better as we prepare for Vancouver?* The athletes were put to the test physically and mentally as they tested the new combine test, sprinted up Pike’s Peak, pushed the new tow-sled and had daily weight room sessions. In the classroom, there was training in leadership, nutrition, sports psychology and PR/media.



Photo: Courtney Yamada

The official team building events included a visit to Memorial Children's Hospital and a boat race where teams of athletes, staff, board members and strategic partners built boats out of cardboard and duct tape. The USOC facilitators of the boat race got to experience what happens when ultra competitive personalities "interpret" the rules of a friendly game. I'm not sure if the resulting scene was more of a mêlée or a fracas, but there were capsized vessels, bodies everywhere, plenty of laughs and a whole lot of fun. As for sportsmanship...let's just say we missed the target but hit the tree. The feedback of the camp overall was very positive and many of the suggestions for

improvements will be implemented for next year.

Annual Summit: Thanks to the support of the El Pomar Foundation, we were able to end the season with a celebration of the athletes and the organization and made our new logo official. It was very encouraging seeing the most important partners for our federation in one place contributing to a shared vision. In attendance were the FIBT, ORDA, UOP, BoDyn, USOC, National Team athletes, the USBSF Board of Directors and the USBSF staff. We were able to recognize individual athletes for awards chosen by the coaching staff as well as their peers for their contribution to the team over the past season. At both the closed session

Board meetings and the Annual Open Board meeting, an increased focus for the upcoming season will be marketing. We are looking to hire either a marketing rep or a firm to handle this increased priority for the federation, a process that has already begun.

USBSF Staff: There will be a few changes to the staff for the upcoming season. As mentioned above, we will be hiring a Marketing Representative to focus primarily on new sponsor generation. We have officially hired **Josh Smith** as our new Medical Coordinator. He will be organizing all the medical volunteers, communicating with the medical personnel on tour and the USOC medical staff, managing all the medical supply needs and providing athletic training to development athletes at the track in Lake Placid. I am currently in the



Photo: 2008 Award Winners

process of hiring a new High Performance Director who will be involved in all things sport related, from World Cup athlete needs and criteria to recruiting and working with UOP and ORDA on our new development partnerships.

One changing role will be that of Women's Bobsled Head Coach, **Sepp Plozza**,



Photo: Sepp Plozza

who was promoted to USBSF Head Coach. Sepp will still remain Women's

Bobsled Head Coach, but will also contribute to the leadership of both men's bobsled and men's and women's skeleton. **Adelle Anderson's** role will also be expanding as she was promoted to Operations Manager. Adelle will take a leadership role in the Lake Placid office and will have increased authority over housing, facilities, logistics and membership matters. We will also be saying good-bye to **Steve Peters** who has accepted a position with the City of Plattsburgh as Superintendent of Recreation. Steve was instrumental in initiating a skeleton technology program and has agreed to serve as a resource to the federation in the future. We wish him well in his future endeavors.

The upcoming months will also include finalizing the athlete criteria and marketing agreements with

the USOC and the re-introduction of the National Push Championships. This year's competition will take place in August (skeleton) and September (bobsled) at the Calgary Ice House for the top athletes and will weigh heavily into the decision of bobsled push athlete sled assignments for next season.

The positive momentum and energy continues to increase as we gear up for next season. Watching the Olympic Trials for the summer sports only increases that excitement, as will the Beijing Games. If you think you know how things will play out prior to Vancouver, then you are probably new to the sport. From my experience, I find that it is best to sit back, hang on and expect the unexpected. See you in Calgary.

-Darrin

Combine Test

The USBSF Coaches and Staff have agreed on a Combine Test for all bobsled and skeleton athletes. The new test is:

- 15, 30, 45 and 60-meter sprints
- 30-meter fly (between 15 & 45-meter eyes)
- 35-meter 15k sled tow (flying time from 15-meters to 35-meters)
- Vertical jump (with a switchmat)
- Shot toss (16 lb. men's bobsled, 12 lb. women's bobsled and men's skeleton, 8 lb. women's skeleton)

Strength Testing:

- Power-clean (from the floor)
- Back squat (3 rep max, top of the thigh parallel to the ground) or front squat (if there is concern of back injury)

Notes: 1. Strength testing will not affect total score. 2. Sled tow weight for women skeleton is 5k.

Getting Intensive

Thirty-one athletes from the U.S. Bobsled and Skeleton team united for a community service event at the Memorial Hospital for Children in Colorado Springs, Colorado during the 2008 National Team Camp.

The athletes had the opportunity to tour the hospital's facilities, including the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Ronald McDonald Family Room, Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, and the Pediatric Unit.

“Memorial Hospital for Children is southern Colorado's only designated children's hospital, caring for more than 5,000 children each year,” said Chris Valentine, who handles Public Relations for the



Photo: Justin Olsen builds a bobsled

Memorial Health System. “The hospital is located right next door to the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs. Over the years, the children in the hospital have



Photo: National Team Community Service

enjoyed visits from a variety of Olympic athletes who live and train at the training center.”

Wooden toboggans and bobsleds were provided by Home Depot, which the athletes assembled and painted with several of the children staying in the Pediatric Unit.

“Volunteering at the Memorial Hospital for Children is a good reality check for us,” said Bree Schaaf, women's bobsled driver who assisted in organizing the community service event for the camp. “It reminds us of how fortunate we really are.”

The intensity of the camp's workouts and seminars

became insignificant as the athletes bonded over the intensity of something as simple as breathing.

“It was a special experience, and it was impossible for us to not bond as a team while we were hanging out with kids living in a hospital bed connected to an IV,” Schaaf said. “It's amazing to not only see the impact we had on the kids we visited, but the impact the kids had on all of us.”

The U.S. Bobsled and Skeleton Federation would like to thank the Memorial Hospital for Children for their service to the community, as well as the Home Depot for donating the wooden sleds. ❄️

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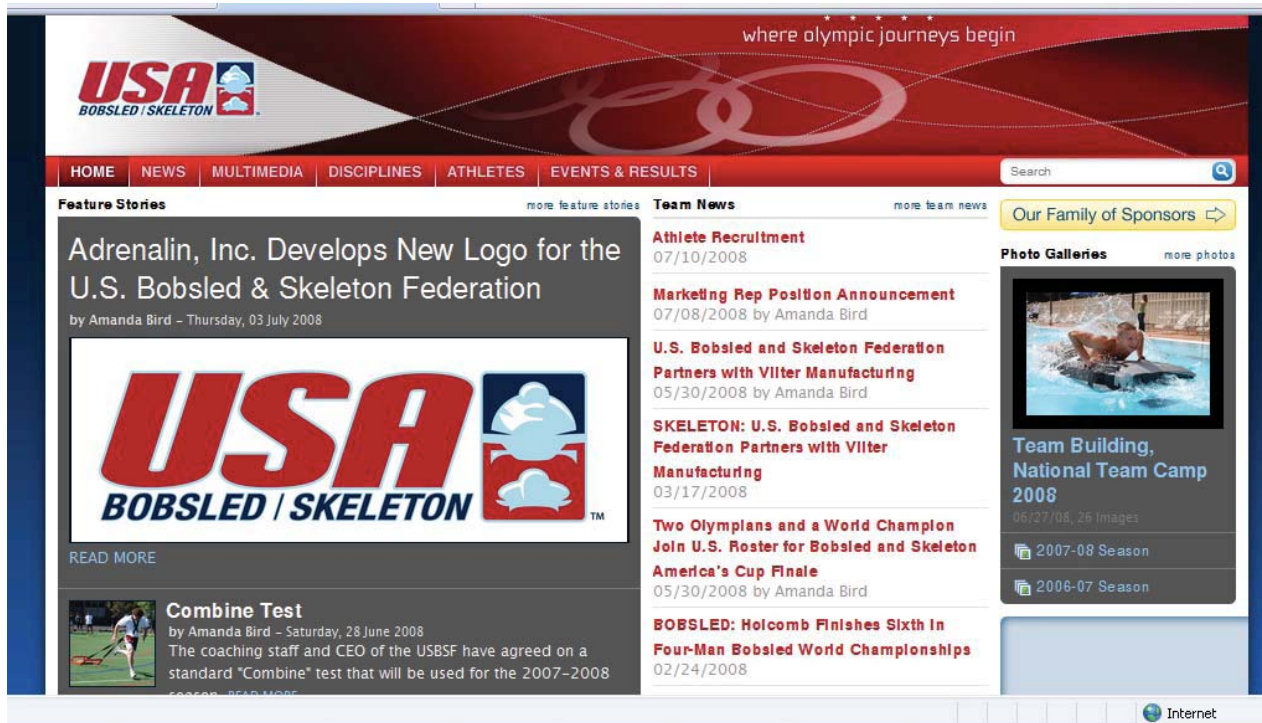
We're on Facebook! Find the U.S. Bobsled and Skeleton Federation Facebook group page under Sports & Recreation-Olympic Sports and join our discussions, share photos and videos, and stay up-to-date on team news.

HOW DO YOU MEASURE UP?

Interested in trying out for the team? Please visit <http://bobsled.teamusa.org> to send our coaching staff your athlete resume for consideration by clicking on the news story titled *Athlete Recruitment*.



Visit us on our new web site at <http://bobsled.teamusa.org>!



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