

2007 CHAMA CHILE SKI CLASSIC RACE REPORT

by Nancy Dervin

The 34th annual Chama Chile Ski Classic (CCSC) is in the history books. When Larry and I offered to help the Chama Rotary Club stage this event, we had no idea how different a cross-country ski event would be from trail running events, which we manage in Los Angeles. As the race has struggled in recent years, we did our best to spread the word that the Chama Chile Ski Classic is back, new and improved, hoping to become the premier event that it once was. We managed to attract 75 skiers and after two years of near blizzard conditions, the weather gods smiled on us by bringing perfect weather on race day.

The main event, the 10K, drew several high profile skiers lead by overall winner, 26 -year-old Russian and UNM Lobo skier, Vsevolod Soloviev. Vsevolod was followed closely by his UNM coach, 42 year old, Fredrik Landstedt, in second place. Third place was held securely by the first female, 31 year old pro skier, Kristina Strandberg, skiing for the Subaru Factory team. Fourth place was held by former UNM Lobo Champion, Martina Stursova, who now skies for Rossignol. Twelve of 25 skiers managed to complete the tough 10K course in less than one hour.

The 5K was touted as a “family/fun” event but several skiers demonstrated their prowess. The top two finishers were UNM Lobo skiers Rick Grahn and Tiffany Callahan, both 20 years old. The third place finisher was 62 -year-old, Ward Olin from Creststone, CO! The 5K actually had ten finishers in the 60 -69 year age division! Three Chama teams entered the 5K Team Competition including Team High Country Restaurant (finishing first), followed by Team BackRhoads and Team Chama Grill. Team High Country Restaurant will have their team name and time placed on the Perpetual Team Trophy, displayed at High Country Restaurant.

Larry and I had a wonderful time visiting and skiing with Alan Templeman and his lovely lady Patty Nordstrom, after the race. You oldtimers might remember Alan as the ski instructor who taught the class at UNM “back when” and brought the entire class of skiers (topping 100), to the CCSC. We enjoyed a private lesson with Alan and Patty followed by a tailgate lunch. What a neat couple! We look forward to having them become more involved in the race next year.

An outstanding “regular” at the CCSC is Clay Moseley from the Los Alamos Nordic Club. Clay is an exceptional triathlete, pro bicycler and now xc skier who won the 10K race last year. We are indebted to Clay and his new bride Dina, for spending countless hours grooming the course on Saturday.

So many people to thank: Thanks to the gang at High Country Restaurant for hosting the pre and post festivities; thanks to our snow-mo friends who donated their time and gas to pack the snow on Thursday and Friday (Cal, Sam, and Gene, and Bill and Jerry and their crew, from Cumbres Adventure Tours); Jerry, thanks for the topo map; thanks to the Village of Chama, the Lodger’s Tax Committee and the Greater Chama Valley Association for supporting our efforts to promote this event; thanks to Glen Rosales for the beautiful article in the Albuquerque Journal. We

acknowledge and thank our sponsors Chama Steam, High Country Restaurant, Yurt So Good, Buff Original Wear, Road ID, and Master Skier Magazine.

Our partner-in-crime, Che Johnston was a steady support to us, spending long hours mapping the course, dealing with the forest service, and putting up with my endless questions.

The CCSC could not be held without the generous help of our volunteers from Rotary who worked race morning registration and helped with logistics on the mountain. Special thanks to non-Rotarians Russ and Dawn Martin and their friend Elizabeth, for pitching in.

We have big plans for next year's CCSC which we hope will be host to a **Chama Winter Festival** that could feature events such as a snowshoe tour, xc ski clinic, a music festival, a chili cook off, dog sled demonstration, wine tasting, dances, and snow activities for children of all ages. We plan to approach the organizers of the Poker Run and the Balloon Rally to see if we might schedule these events on the same weekend. We are excited to be meeting with the organizers of the CO Cup Series to discuss putting the CCSC on their circuit calendar. Please contact us if you have any ideas for Winter Festival activities or would like to head a committee for one of these events.