

Okemo to host 2014 Masters National Championships

With the 2014 Masters National Championships slated for Okemo Mountain, Vermont, racers from across the country will get to see why Okemo is the most popular masters ski racing site in the East. What makes Okemo Mountain such an attraction among the masters?

Size Matters: Topping out at close to 4,000 feet with 2,200 vertical feet of fall line skiing, Okemo is a serious mountain. Throw in 650 acres of skiable terrain, 97% of which is covered by snowmaking, and 119 trails, serviced by 19 lifts, and masters ski racers will be treated to plenty of skiing options.

Terrain Matters: The masters-friendly venues are one of the primary attractions for masters ski racers. The Chief Racing Trail, site of the DH, SG, and GS events is long and rolling with opportunities for air, fall-aways, or airplane turns in the speed events. Race organizers have the option of running the DH from top to bottom, which would yield winning times in the 80-second range, or the start or finish could be altered to shorten the course by about 10-seconds. Course setters also have the same options for SG, and GS. But what makes racing on the Chief special is its rolling pitches over varied terrain, which makes it a challenge for the best and fun to ski for all. The Chief Racing Trail is serviced by a high-speed detachable quad, which provides a turnaround time of less than 10-minutes. Full service lodges are available at the top and the bottom of the courses.

The slalom race will be held on the adjacent War Dance Trail. The fastest times may vary between 40 and 50 seconds depending on the set and placement of the finish. Racers kick out of the start house and negotiate a consistently moderate pitch, which gradually flattens out toward the finish. The hill is plenty wide enough for two courses.

Experience Matters: This is a race organization that is on the go from the beginning of December through the end of March. All the trails are FIS homologated and the Okemo race organization runs all levels of racing from NorAms to peewees. Having hosted so many masters ski races over the years, the race organization is well-versed in appropriate course setting, length of courses, and optimal snow conditions.

Convenience Matters: Multiple ski-in-out housing options are available at the mountain, and additional well-priced lodging can be found in the village of Ludlow. This quintessential rural Vermont town is nestled at the foot of the mountain. Mountain options include the upscale Inn at Jackson Gore, or guests may bring it down a notch to housing units surrounding the base of the mountain. Dining choices abound as well, at both the mountain and in the village. With all the parties at the bar at the base of the mountain and the banquet at the Inn at Jackson Gore, it's a tidy, logistically-friendly package.

Proximity Matters: Proximity is another reason that Okemo is number-one among the eastern masters. It's a two-hour drive from Albany, Burlington, and Manchester airports, and three hours from Boston or Montreal. The New York and Canadian contingents are always well represented at Okemo events, as a result.

Okemo was the first choice for the Nationals for all in the East. Masters ski racers from all over the country are invited to attend this event on Mar 17-22 to find out why.

Be there!