



NYSEF NORDIC PRESS RELEASE
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108 rollerski racers in NYSEF's "Climb to the Castle" Race

Wilmington, NY — The New York Ski Educational Foundation (NYSEF) Nordic Program hosted the first annual "Climb to the Castle" Rollerski Race up the 5-mile Whiteface Memorial Highway on October 13. With clear skies and fall foliage coloring the trees at the start, racers climbed up New York's 5th highest peak for an elevation gain of 3000 feet. They were greeted at the top by frost covered trees and snow on the grass, to make a picture perfect day atop Whiteface Mountain.

Race Director Margaret Maher and Matt Cook, both NYSEF Nordic coaches, were happy to find a frost-free road hours before the start, confirming that the race would go on as planned. A very competitive field lined up at the start with athletes from the US Ski Team, both cross-country and Nordic combined, University of Vermont, Middlebury College, Dartmouth College, Harvard University, Williams College, St. Lawrence University, Clarkson University, Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation's Olympic Development Program, Central XC Elite Team, New England Nordic Ski Association Elite Team, Maine Winter Sports Center, Stratton Mountain School, NYSEF and other top athletes were among those racing. USST Coach Matt Whitcomb commented, "If you read the names on this start list, it looks like a National Championship event".

Taking the Men's Overall win was former Olympic Biathlete Robert Douglas from Honeoye Falls, NY in 34:56.6. He was followed by US Ski Team athlete Kris Freeman (Andover, NH) in 37:09.1 and junior racer Noah Hoffman (Ketchum, ID) of the Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation in 38:38.9. NYSEF alumni Bill Demong (Vermontville, NY), back home in the Adirondacks with the USST for a training camp, fought hard with Matt Liebsch (Minneapolis, MN) of the Central XC Elite Team for fourth and fifth, respectively.

Twenty-year-old Liz Stephens (East Montpelier, VT), racing for the US Ski Team, crossed the finish line in 47:22.9 for the Women's victory. Her teammate Morgan Arritola (Ketchum, ID) grabbed second in 47:48.8, while former Olympian Dorcas Wonsavage (Etna, NH) rounded out the podium in 49:12.7. USST/Middlebury College's Alexa Turzian (Sun Valley, ID) skied into fourth with USST/Dartmouth College's Rosie Brennen following in fifth.

Local athletes competing included: Matt Delaney (Lake Placid, NY) skiing for Clarkson University, Colin Delaney (Lake Placid, NY) and Alex Madden (Saranac Lake, NY) of the National Sports Academy, Brian Delaney (Lake Placid, NY), and Sophie McClelland (Keene Valley, NY) racing for Middlebury College.

Full results can be found at nysef.org.

The NYSEF program coaches over 350 athletes in Alpine skiing, Freestyle skiing, Snowboarding and the Nordic disciplines. The athletes range in age from children to young adults. Currently, there are athletes from the NYSEF program on the U.S. Ski Team for alpine skiing and Nordic combined, and the US Biathlon Team.