



## BEHIND THE SCENES: WHAT IT TAKES TO BUILD A WORLD-CLASS TRAINING VENUE

When our athletes push out of the start gate on Exhibition, they're stepping onto one of the best race and training venues in the Midwest. What many don't see is the incredible work, planning, and teamwork it takes to make that possible – long before the first gate is ever set.

Before the season begins, Exhibition is built from bare ground. Creating that surface requires nearly 180 hours of snowmaking, followed by days of pushing, shaping, and fine-tuning. Start areas, rollers, turtlesHELLS, and training features are all carefully constructed so GPST athletes have a challenging, safe, and consistent surface to train on.

Once complete, Exhibition spans 7.1 acres with an average 4ft deep snow base – built using nearly 10 million gallons of water. That depth isn't just impressive; it's essential. It's what allows the surface to hold up through weeks of daily training, drills, and race days while staying durable and safe.

The work doesn't stop there. Exhibition is groomed first every night, giving it the longest time to set up before morning training. Grooming that single run takes 2.5 hours and 12 full snowcat passes, night after night. This attention to detail ensures the surface sets up firm, consistent, and race-ready for our athletes!

# BEHIND THE SCENES cont...

## THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE IT HAPPEN:

**Kellen**, the Director of Mountain Operations, oversees the on-mountain experience from lifts and staffing to terrain and snow quality, ensuring GPST always has the space, access, and conditions needed to train and compete at a high level.

**Zach** leads snowmaking and snow surface operations and is responsible for snow depth, coverage, and consistency across the mountain..

**Charlie** is the Grooming Supervisor. He has been doing this work for more than five seasons and knows Exhibition inside and out. He leads the overnight grooming team and focuses on snow quality and the specific requests that come from GPST. He is responsible for shaping start ramps, rollers, turtlesHELLS, and the overall race surface. His experience and attention to detail play a huge role in creating a fair, reliable training environment day after day.

**Amy**, MFSR's Director of Sales and Guest Service, supports race day logistics with Michael, coordinates future race events at Granite Peak, Snowriver, and Lutsen, and provides direction on race ticket pricing.



The administrative team, led by **Duncan** and **Ashia**, coordinates ticketing, including early pickup and guest service needs throughout the day.

All of this work - much of it happening overnight or behind the scenes - is done to support GPST athletes. From snowmaking to grooming to logistics, it truly takes an entire mountain working together to provide the training environment our athletes are fortunate to have.

The next time you see a snowcat at night, a snowmaker in cold temps, or a Granite Peak staff member helping on a race day, please take a moment to say thank you. Their dedication and partnership play a huge role in helping GPST continue to train, compete, and **build champions for life - on and off the ski hill.**

## EXHIBITION: BY THE NUMBERS



**180 hr**  
snowmaking



**10M gal**  
water



**7.1 acre**  
race venue



**4 ft**  
snow depth



**2.5 hr**  
nightly grooming

# RACE RESULTS

## TOP 10 FINISHES

### Searchmont, FIS GS/SL

U18 GS (2 races)

- Alli Marti: 1<sup>st</sup>
- Emma Sicar: 5<sup>th</sup>
- Gavin Hristov: 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>



U18 SL (2 races)

- Gavin Hristov: 4<sup>th</sup>



### Sunburst, SL

U14/U16 SL

- Kathryn Floyd: 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Ella Tieman: 4<sup>th</sup>



### Marquette, U16 GS

- Stella Houlihan: 10<sup>th</sup>



### Aspen - FIS SG/GS

U18 Super G (2 races)

- Alli Marti - 5<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>
- Grace Kallio - 6<sup>th</sup>
- Ellie McNamar - 8<sup>th</sup>



U18 GS (2 races)

- Alli Marti - 5<sup>th</sup>
- Ellie McNamar - 10<sup>th</sup>



### Mt. Ripley, U14-U18 GS

- Emily Hostetler: 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>
- Finley Sharon: 8<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>
- Mason Marsolek: 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>

- Kathryn Floyd: 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Ella Tieman: 4<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>
- Stella Houlihan: 5<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>

- U16: Kate Hostetler: 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>
- Abigail Brill: 7<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>
- Aurora Hayek: 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>
- Cyrus Laudenbach: 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>

- U18: Alli Marti: 1<sup>st</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup>
- Brian Kleckner: 3<sup>rd</sup>



### Upcoming Events

- Jan 16-19: Shelley Glover Races
- Jan 24-25: Nagy Memorial
- Jan 25: Club/Development Race
- Jan 29-Feb 1: Spirit FIS SL Races
- Jan 31-Feb 1: GP GS Races
- Feb 2: Lutsen FIS GS
- Feb 5: High School Race @ GP
- Feb 9: U14/U16 Speed Camp SG
- Feb 7-8: U12 Speed Camp @ GP
- Feb 13: Friday Night Duals
- Feb 15-16: HS State Championship



# **BUILDING CHAMPIONS FOR LIFE!**

## ***Alumni Spotlight: Ashley (Johnson) Levins***

### **■ What years were you active with GPST?**

I joined GPST in 2013, racing for the home team for one year. I returned in 2019 as a U16 racer. After working closely with Coach Ron during after-school training sessions, I transitioned to online schooling, which allowed me to train full time during the day. I concluded my time with GPST in the spring of 2022 as a FIS athlete, with invaluable guidance and support from Coaches Ron and Atanas.

### **■ Did you ski race/compete after GPST?**

I did not continue competitive racing after my time with GPST, as I accepted an academic scholarship to the University of Florida. I have continued to pursue my passion for skiing and have had many exciting opportunities to ski in new locations.

### **■ Where are you now?**

After graduating, I obtained my general contractor license and worked with Innisfree Hotels as a traveling, part-time GC site supervisor. I earned my BBA in 2024 and am currently completing the final year and a half of my BSN while participating in clinical rotations. After completing my BSN, I plan to work in the CVICU with the goal of advancing into a nurse director role, while also helping my husband manage and grow his welding company throughout the south.

### **■ What is your favorite memory from your time with GPST?**

I can't pick just one single memory. I have many fond ones from my time with the team, from summertime dryland training to races and long training sessions. Some of my favorite memories are the daytime training days with the Marti girls, Grace Herrle, and Lexi Jorgensen. We spent many long, hard, cold days out on the hill, but always found a way to smile and push through the toughest moments together.

# **BUILDING CHAMPIONS FOR LIFE! cont...**

## **■What lessons or habits from ski racing have stuck with you in your adult life?**

To keep pushing forward, even when things get hard, has always been central to who I am. I experienced several accidents as a ski racer, but I never let them stop me from pursuing the sport I love. Skiing taught me resilience - how to fall, get back up, and keep going - and I carry that mindset in my everyday life. I am deeply ambitious and the lessons skiing instilled in me continue to drive my passion to persevere, adapt, and keep trying - even when things don't go as planned.

## **■What's your favorite place you've ever skied?**

Over the past few years, I have been fortunate to ski in many new places. One experience that stands out is Mount Mauna Kea: it brought me back to my early days of having to hike the hill, but it was absolutely a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

## **■Who was your favorite teammate, coach, or training partner?**

Lexi Jorgensen is one of my lifelong best friends. From her choosing me to be on Team France and beyond, she has been a steady source of support through years of training. Even after she moved on to college racing, our friendship grew stronger. She helped me through many difficult moments and has always been someone I could rely on. Coaches Atanas and Ron played a key role in helping me get through my physical injuries. Their support was essential to my recovery. Without them, I wouldn't have made it as far as I did in FIS. They helped me work through injuries and return to the level I needed to continue my ski career.

## **■Our motto is "Building champions for life through ski racing." What does that mean to you?**

This motto was something I saw every day on the whiteboard, and it became a constant source of motivation for me. It pushed me to work hard, hold myself to a higher standard, and always strive to be "above the line" - both on and off the hill. That mindset has stayed with me long after racing, teaching me to set high goals and believe that nothing is out of reach. Everything is achievable - it simply comes down to how hard you're willing to push yourself to reach those goals.

## **■What advice would you give to current athletes?**

Remember that everyone starts somewhere. Set your goals, work toward them, achieve them, and then set new ones. Keep moving forward. Lean on your team and the strong support system around you; you have the resources, guidance, and motivation to help you reach whatever goals you set. Above all: Remember to show respect and gratitude to everyone who supports you on the way. When you're older and look back, you'll truly understand how much time, effort, and care people put into helping a single ski racer succeed in such a demanding sport.



## ARE YOU AN ALUMNI?

We'd love to hear where you are now!

Reach out to [info@gpst.org](mailto:info@gpst.org). We'll feature you in a future newsletter!



## LUNCH SIGN UPS

Saturday lunches are an important part of our weekend training! 😊 January dates are taken care of, but there are several openings in February & March.



Thank you to all who have signed up! Our athletes appreciate it! ❤️



## ABOVE THE LINE SHOUTOUT

This month's shoutout goes to Grace Kallio - U18/FIS athlete

Grace Kallio (U18/FIS) answered the call on CHRISTMAS DAY to deploy B-net on our new jump after receiving a request to cover it up from GP management on Christmas Eve. Thank you, Grace!

## SIGN UP FOR DEVELOPMENT NOW!

👉 Second session begins 1/25/26

Development is our entry-level program designed to give skiers age 6-12 a solid skill base and the fundamentals they need to grow into successful ski racers and lifelong skiers.

Practices for our Development team take place on Sunday afternoons and Monday evenings. Athletes can also participate in our club races on January 25<sup>th</sup>, February 13<sup>th</sup>, March 1<sup>st</sup>, and March 8<sup>th</sup>.

Register your child [here!](#) ✨👉



ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT:

# FINLEY SHARON

- U14 - TRAVEL TEAM -



## 1. HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A PART OF GPST?

This is my 4th year on the team and my first year on the travel team. Before that, I did racer development for 2 years.

## 2. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SKI RUN AT GRANITE PEAK?

My favorite run is Gem Stone because it's really fun with the terrain.

## 3. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PLACE YOU'VE EVER SKIED? WHAT IS ON YOUR BUCKET LIST?

My favorite place I've skied is either Schweitzer in Idaho or Red in Canada. The powder in the trees at Schweitzer was really fun. At Red I hit a jump way bigger than I thought it was and went higher and farther than I ever have. And landed it! My bucket list is anywhere that there is a lot of snow and it's not too cold and not too warm.

## 4. WHAT GOAL ARE YOU WORKING ON THIS SEASON?

I want to get better at every practice and get on the podium at a travel race.

## 5. WHAT'S THE BEST ADVICE YOU'VE EVER GOTTEN FROM A COACH OR ATHLETE?

I get a lot of advice from all the coaches. Coach RJ tells me to attack. Grace Kallio helped me this year with the jump on Exhibition and I was able to get better at that.

## 6. WHEN YOU AREN'T SKIING, WHAT OTHER SPORT/HOBBY DO YOU LOVE?

When I'm not skiing, I play volleyball for school and I like to golf and water ski in the summer. I also like to hang out with my friends and cousins.

## 7. WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE GOALS (SKIING OR OTHERWISE)?

I would like to be in the Olympics, and I want to be an engineer.





# MIDWEST MASTERS RECAP

After a wonderful few days of racing, we appreciated the kind note of thanks from the Midwest Masters organization. Thank you to all of our Granite Peak Ski Team coaches, families, and volunteers who helped this event run so smoothly!

Granite Peak Ski Area and GPST,

On behalf of the entire Midwest Masters Community, I want to say thank you! It was nothing short of amazing that we were able to pull off a safe and competitive SG race only hours after 1+ inches of rain. It was a true team effort from Friday through Sunday, and we received numerous compliments from our racers on the condition of the snow and proficiency of entire race operation. Ron, thanks for smurfing the SG hill and all of the assistance from you and the athletes with the B-Net. Amy, thank you for making the ticketing smooth and going out of your way to make sure our race crew ticketing was expedited. Michael and Steve, thanks for all of your help setting up and taking down the race arena as well as helping on the hill. I really appreciate all of your hard work and the time that was invested into our event.

We are looking forward to returning next season and hope we can convince more of your adult racers to join in the fun. I'll communicate preferred dates a little later in the season and I look forward to securing a weekend that is mutually beneficial to Granite Peak Ski Area, GPST, and Midwest Masters.

Kindest Regards,

Jason Gergen

Midwest Masters Registration Admin & Central Division Coordinator





## SPONSOR SHOUTOUT *thank you!*

Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA) is a regional airport located in Mosinee, serving the cities of Wausau, Stevens Point, and the surrounding communities. It offers convenient access to domestic flights through major airlines like Delta and American Airlines, providing connections to larger hubs such as Chicago O'Hare and Minneapolis-St. Paul.

CWA has been a solid supporter of the Granite Peak Ski Team for several years. As with all our sponsors, please consider patronizing local businesses who support our team.



## GPST APPAREL STORE!

- Hats
- T-Shirts/Polos
- Jackets/Vests
- Joggers/Sweatpants
- and more!


**SHOP HERE!**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Jan 25 Development Session #2 begins
- Jan 25 Club/Development Race
- Feb 13 Friday Night Duals Race
- Mar 1 Club/Development Race
- Mar 7 Badger State Games
- Mar 8 Final Club Race/Cookout
- Mar 28-29 Skills & Thrills Camp

## OUR CALENDAR



**BOOKMARK** our team  calendar so you can always find our upcoming practices, camps, races, and events. Practice plans are posted for each practice so athletes know what to expect and what gear to bring.

We are still in need of a bookkeeper to help manage invoices/payments etc. If you can spare some time and help the team out, please send an email to [info@gpst.org](mailto:info@gpst.org).



## KWIK TRIP CARDS



We love Kwik Trip! The funds we raise through these sales really add up! Orders placed through December 15 will arrive in time for holiday gift giving!

 **ORDER HERE.**