



Report: USCSA Summer Conference

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Season of Adaptation and Innovation Ahead; Nordic Retains Momentum

The United States Collegiate Ski and Snowboard Association (USCSA) held its annual Summer Conference on Saturday June 13th, with over thirty coaches, athletes, coordinators and board members connecting to review the 2019-20 season and discuss plans for 2020-21. While the Summer Conference recognized the successes of the past season – notably, the 2020 Collegiate Ski and Snowboard [National Championships](#) in Lake Placid, NY, and the [expansion of USCSA Nordic into the Midwest](#) – it also reckoned with the challenges posed by a tumultuous spring and summer.

USCSA President Adam Stark's opening remarks set the tone for the day's proceedings, calling attention to both the physical changes demanded by COVID-19 and the national issues of race and racism amplified by the murder of George Floyd. While he emphasized that the coming season will undoubtedly be one of adaptation and evolution for the USCSA, it will also give the league "an opportunity to lead [...] snowsport organizations" in cultural, public health, and competitive innovations and best practices.

Race, Racism, and Snowsport

Echoing earlier statements by the Board of Directors, Stark was unequivocal in articulating the USCSA's position that racism "will not be tolerated in any way, shape or form by any athlete, coach or official". In order to foster a snowsport culture that is open and inclusive, and that seeks to actively educate itself on issues of race and social justice, the USCSA announced a partnership with the Wyoming-based community organization [SNOW](#). The USCSA plans to pursue further organizational and institutional partnerships and learning opportunities in preparation for the 2020-21 season.

New Executives, Student Representatives

In advance of the Summer Conference, the USCSA elected Chris Shumyeko as the new President of the USCSA Board of Directors and Bo Bigelow as Executive Vice President, with their tenure beginning July 1st. Also recognized at the conference were the incoming class of [National Student Representatives](#), including Luke Dykowski (Nordic, University of Minnesota), Lili Bauer (Snowboard/Freeski, Lees-McRae College), Katie Brust (Alpine, University of South Dakota), and Charlie Naples (Alpine, Syracuse University).

Continuing Nordic Successes

The USCSA indicated continued, national-level commitment to expanding and strengthening Nordic skiing, particularly in the Midwest. With outreach to new institutions already underway, the USCSA's Midwestern Collegiate Ski Association (MCSA) aims to capitalize on its inaugural

season's strong participation and competition and increase its number of member teams and skiers in 2020-21. In summarizing the progress in the region, Dykowski noted that attentiveness to student athletes' active "desire and capacity to create and shape their competitive environments" had been, and would remain, critical to ensuring the success of MCSA/USCSA Nordic.

In an additional prong of this campaign, the USCSA is also exploring plans to revive its Nordic programs in the Pacific Northwest. The example set by the MCSA will be useful in guiding this endeavor.

Nationals 2021 Venue Announced

Public health conditions permitting, the 2021 US Collegiate Ski and Snowboard National Championships will be held at Mammoth Mountain, CA, from March 7th - March 13th. Nordic events will be held at the Tamarack Nordic Center.

In addition to noting their continued dedication to hosting world-class competitions, conference attendees discussed the importance of establishing an experienced core of Nordic volunteers at National Championship events.

COVID-19

The Summer Conference concluded with a wide-ranging discussion on the challenges to recruiting, registration, and competition created by COVID-19. To address these challenges, the USCSA will be forming a COVID-19 task force, which will advise the Board of Directors, coordinators, and appropriate action committees on best practices to ensure athletes remain engaged and safe throughout the 2020-21 season. The recommendations of the task force will be discussed further at the USCSA's tentatively scheduled Fall Conference.

The USCSA is the sports federation for collegiate team ski racing and snowboarding in America. The USCSA believes that student-athletes of all levels and abilities should have access to quality and exciting venues of competition. USCSA athletes agree that our team orientation fosters a collaborative approach across their collegiate athletic and academic careers, and often this mentality proves indispensable in their adult lives and careers. The organization includes 162 colleges from coast to coast, fielding 4,954 male and female, alpine, freestyle, cross-country, snowboarding and Nordic ski jumping athletes in over 300 events annually.

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