

SPORTS & OUTDOORS

in the Western Mountains of Maine



Carrabassett Valley Academy Junior, Amie Rowland competes in the FIS Eastern Cup Alpine Race Series at Sunday River recently.

Rowland podiums season opening Eastern Cup

BETHEL — At the season opener for the FIS Eastern Cup Alpine Race Series, Carrabassett Valley Academy Junior, Amie Rowland, finished third in slalom. Competing against 120 of the top college and high school women from the eastern United States 16-year-old Rowland sealed her place on the podium by posting the fastest second run at the Sunday River race.

"I'm not completely surprised by the result. Amie takes care of the details required to be successful in this sport, skis a lot —often on her own— works hard in the gym and excels in the classroom. We could see last spring after she returned from Junior Olympics in Aspen, Colo. that things were starting to happen for Amie. I've said for a long time that she has a unique ability to make the skis go at the top of the turn," according to Head CVA Women's Alpine Coach, Martin Gray.

Kicking off the season with an Eastern Cup podium jump starts Rowland's 2008-09 competition season and earned her the opportunity to compete at a recent NorAm race in Canada. A NorAm start exposed Rowland to an international field of alpine racers.

Titcomb Mountain celebrates Community Day

WEST FARMINGTON -- Enjoy the slopes and trails of Titcomb Mountain in West Farmington this Sunday, Jan. 11, for free. For those who need to rent skis or snowboards, they will be available to rent for only \$5 from Northern Lights Rental Shop.

Organizers are urged to go early because there is a limited supply that will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Titcomb Mountain offers a variety of terrain for beginners to experts for both downhill and cross-country skiing enthusiasts. The terrain park, located on the Beagle Trail, offers a variety of features for beginner and intermediate skiers and riders. The mountain's "Pony Lift" handle tow is a great place for beginners and young families, noted a spokesperson for the mountain.

To make it a true community day, attendees are asked to bring three cans or packaged foods to donate to the Farmington Food Pantry.

For more information, visit www.titcombmountain.com or call 778-9031.



Seth Wescott cuts the ribbon on the new Sidewinder Snowboardcross Course at Sugarloaf on Saturday.

(Ethan Austin photo)

Seth Wescott unveils Sidewinder Snowboardcross Course

By David Hart
Irregular Staff

CARRABASSETT VALLEY -- Sugarloaf's Seth Wescott, Olympic Gold medalist from the 2006 winter games in Turino, is still on a roll and is now in the prime of his brilliant career. With a goal of regaining the title of world cup champion after shattering his arm in 2007, Wescott got a fresh start this season starting off with a world cup win in Arosa, Switzerland.

Local spectators will have the ability to see their local favorite compete for a world cup title when the global tour comes to the United States. Wescott, as a mentor to the U.S. course design team, continues to influence the national and international snowboardcross sport; this time at Sunday River where the best riders in the world will compete for the globe's top title. The U.S. Snowboarding World Cup comes to Sunday River on Feb. 26 through Mar. 1.

Those who are not among the seven who make up the quota of USSA's A team will be competing at Sugarloaf's Revolution Tour this March. Wescott noted that some amazing talent should be coming to Carrabassett Valley such as names as familiar as Ross Powers and perhaps even Jason Smith. Powers made his fame in the half pipe and Smith was fifth in Torino, second on the U.S. team Olympic standings.

Returning from Europe to his residence at the base of Sugarloaf for the holidays, the most decorated snowboarder in the world spent the week in a Sugarloaf snowcat putting the final touches on Sugarloaf's newest snowboardcross course now dubbed Sidewinder.

Wescott explained that he's been pushing for Sugarloaf to create snowboarding venues like the continued development of half pipes, changes to Haywire for a slopestyle park and now finally the snowboardcross course. "I can go out to all the world ski areas and see what people are doing for competition venues and bring

that knowledge back to these guys and push them to try to move things along."

"I think it's now great to have world-class facilities for not only the CVA kids, but for the public to be able to use. I think it was hard during the end of the ASC years because there was just no money to do it. The mountain is very reinvigorated now with Boyne here and they're giving us the capitol to do these projects. It's exciting to see that they see the value in it and want to help create those venues.

"We hosted the very first ever US Grand Prix and then we hosted the first ever US Olympic qualifier here in '96 and '97 and had a great relationship with USSA at that time ... for me, what I think is the Rev Tour is going to allow us to re-establish that relationship on the snowboard side."

Wescott pointed out that the alpine community sees a strong relationship between people like Jim McCormick of Sugarloaf and USSA's event director Calum Clark.

"What we are hoping to do is establish Sugarloaf as the home of some of the highest level competitions. While the Rev Tour is just a step below that, it's the perfect event for the CVA community for the riders that are there and for the younger generation.

"It allows us to establish that great competitive event for them while at the same time re-creating that relationship with USSA and hopefully getting grand prix venues back here and ultimately hosting world cups."

Wescott said the course right now is pretty user-friendly at first and for the majority of the ski and riding season will remain that way, but it will be ratcheted up as the Rev Tour nears. "I'm sure it will be pretty challenging at that time."

"It takes kind of a kinesthetic knowledge of how you ride the courses to go out and put stuff together in the

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