

Welcome to the

3ND ANNUAL

SARATOGA

SKIJORING RACES

SCHEDULE
OF EVENTS

FRIDAY
FEBRUARY 8:

2-7PM ★ SIGN-IN PARTY
BACK ROOM OF THE HOTEL WOLF

6PM-CLOSE ★ WELCOME PARTY
AT THE HOTEL WOLF

7:30PM ★ CALCUTTA
BACK ROOM OF THE HOTEL WOLF

SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 9:

8:30AM ★ VOLUNTEER SAFETY &
RULE MEETING
BUCK SPRINGS, TIMING BOOTH

8:45AM ★ COMPETITOR MEETING
BUCK SPRINGS, NEAR START GATE

9AM ★ COMPETITOR COURSE
INSPECTION

9:30AM ★ RACES BEGIN
NOVICE DIVISION RUNS FIRST

6:30PM ★ SEARCH AND RESCUE
SILENT AUCTION
PLATTE VALLEY COMMUNITY CENTER

7PM ★ CALCUTTA
PLATTE VALLEY COMMUNITY CENTER

8PM ★ CHANCEY WILLIAMS
AND THE YOUNGER BROTHERS BAND
PLATTE VALLEY COMMUNITY CENTER

SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 10:

9:15AM ★ VOLUNTEER SAFETY &
RULE MEETING
BUCK SPRINGS, TIMING BOOTH

9:30AM ★ COMPETITOR MEETING
BUCK SPRINGS, NEAR START GATE

9:45AM ★ COMPETITOR COURSE
INSPECTION

10AM ★ RACES BEGIN

WOLF HOTEL ★ AWARDS
CEREMONY & AFTER PARTY
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE RACES



Richard Raymer pulls Jackson skier Natty Hagood during the Jackson Skijoring event on Jan. 12 and 13.

Winning away

While visiting other skijoring events to both help out and spread word of Saratoga’s event, local riders and skiers bring home some awards

By Joshua Wood

Saratoga Skijoring is set to enter its third year this weekend. For many local competitors, though, this won’t be their first, or last, race of the season as they have been making the rounds both in Wyoming and south of the border. Richard Raymer, one of the organizers of Saratoga Skijoring, began going to other skijoring events this year and has managed to return with some wins along with getting the message about Saratoga’s skijoring races out to a wider audience.

You won’t be catching Raymer on skis at any of these events. As fans of the increasingly popular event are aware, skijoring requires both a skier and a rider—and that’s where Raymer comes in. The Saratoga resident attended a skijoring event in Jackson, held on Jan. 12 and 13, and an event in Steamboat, Colo., held on Jan. 25 and 26, as a rider.

While in Jackson, Raymer and a frequent partner, Natty Hagood of Jackson, claimed first place overall. The same duo also claimed second place in the top division in Steamboat. Following the races in Saratoga, Raymer will be attending races in Pinedale and Leadville, Colo.

Raymer may not be strapped into a pair of skis and pulled by a horse through an obstacle course complete

with gates, rings and jumps, but he still gets a kick out of the events.

“It’s a pure adrenaline rush,” said Raymer.

Some of the races that Raymer has been to are essentially a horse race. Others, like the one in Steamboat, are a little more difficult and require more horsemanship than just getting the horse to run as fast as it can.

“A lot of these races, especially last weekend in Steamboat, it was a combination of a skiers race and a horsemanship race,” Raymer said.

This required Raymer to either speed up or slow down his horse, depending on where he was on the track. Add to that the fact that the track was entirely snow. Until this year, Raymer has only ever run on the dirt track out at Buck Springs Arena. At Steamboat, the combination of deep snow and warm weather lead to lower race times on that Saturday and stalled horses.

“It was like hitting the snowbank in your pickup when you’d hit those deep pockets of snow,” said Raymer.

The next day, the organizers of the Steamboat event had groomed the track. This led to an increase in speed, allowing Raymer to shave two seconds off his finishing time. The excess snow on

Saturday, however, did not prevent Raymer from taking first place in the top division with another Saratoga resident, Craig Kopasz.

To run on the snow tracks, Raymer equips his horses with a cleated shoe that is treated with borium. These shoes are, essentially, studded snow tires for his rides. There are some riders, though, that simply won’t run on the snow tracks.

“These snow tracks, they are slicker and there’s a lot of guys ... that just don’t want to run their horses on snow,” Raymer said. “As far as Saratoga’s track goes, that is one of the draws is we are running our horses on dirt. Not very many places are and we always had our reputation for a such a great chariot race track because we never had any ice on the track and the dirt was always good.”

Raymer hasn’t been the only successful person at the other skijoring events. Skier Will Faust and rider Tom Chant, of Baggs, placed first in 3-D overall in Steamboat while Kopasz and Chant placed third in 1-D overall during the same event.

With the success that Raymer, and others, have been having outside of the Valley it won’t be surprising if Saratoga continues to make its mark on skijoring both in Wyoming and elsewhere.

Fees & Payouts

BUCK SPRINGS ENTRY COST

- **\$5 per adult** (participants will be given a wrist band that will suffice for entry)
- Youth - Under 12: **FREE**

REGISTRATION FEES BY CLASS

- Open 3-D \$50 per participant (\$100 per Team)
 - Amateur/Novice \$25 per participant (\$50 per Team)
 - Youth - Under 18 **FREE**
- All registration payments will be due at race sign in at the Wolf Hotel on Friday, Feb. 8.

WINNER PAYOUT

With the support of the Carbon County Visitors Council and local sponsors we have raised \$6,000 to be used as money added participant prizes. Winnings will be split between rider and skier! The winning teams will receive an envelope with two checks (proceeds split 50/50), one made out to the Skier, the other made out to the rider. All racer registration fees and money added will be paid back to competitors. We will pay day money to the winning team of each day. Day money will equal the division registration fee.

Open 1-D (\$2,750 added)

- 1st Place: \$1,375 plus 25% of Open Class Entry Fees
- 2nd Place: \$550 plus 10% of Open Class Entry Fees
- 3rd Place: \$412 plus 7.5% of Open Class Entry Fees
- 4th Place: \$275 plus 5% of Open Class Entry Fees
- 5th Place: \$137 plus 2.5% of Open Class Entry Fees

Open 2-D (\$2,250 added)

- 1st Place: \$1,125 plus 17.5% of Open Class Entry Fees
- 2nd Place: \$450 plus 7% of Open Class Entry Fees
- 3rd Place: \$337 plus 5.25% of Open Class Entry Fees
- 4th Place: \$225 plus 3.5% of Open Class Entry Fees
- 5th Place: \$112 plus 1.75% of Open Class Entry Fees

Open 3-D (\$500 added)

- 1st Place: \$250 plus 7.5% of Open Class Entry Fees
- 2nd Place: \$100 plus 3% of Open Class Entry Fees
- 3rd Place: \$75 plus 2.25% of Open Class Entry Fees
- 4th Place: \$50 plus 1.5% of Open Class Entry Fees
- 5th Place: \$25 plus 0.75% of Open Class Entry Fees

Amateur/Novice Class (\$500 added)

- 1st Place: \$250
- 2nd Place: \$125
- 3rd Place: \$100
- 4th Place: \$75
- 5th Place: \$50

County 6 Division

This division is open to only paired teams who are both from, or currently live in, Carbon County, WY. To enter this division requires an additional \$25/person, \$50/team entry fee.

This division will not have separate races. Results will be taken from the regular races with top placings taken from among those races.

Money will be divided as follows with first place also receiving belt buckles.

- 1st Place: 50% of pot
- 2nd Place: 35% of pot
- 3rd Place: 15% of pot



Saratoga Sun file photo

Sarah Hutchins, skiing, and Corky Stevens race during last year’s Saratoga Skijoring weekend.

From learners to leaders

Saratoga Skijoring organizers have gone from novices to resources in only three years

By Keith McLendon

“Essentially, thirty seven years of chariot racing has enabled us to put on the race.”

This, said by Saratoga Lions Club member and race track builder Richard Raymer, in describing how Saratoga Skijoring has managed to be so organized at skijoring in only their third year.

Skijoring organizer Will Faust agreed with the sentiment, saying that when Chariot racing began to wind down there was a structure of people in place that could be drawn on to get the new event going.

In the first year, Raymer and Faust said there were problems figuring the various aspects of the weekend out. Now other races look to Saratoga organizers for answers. But the organizers say there is still much to learn.

“The production of our event has evolved. We are not where we were with chariot races yet. We had 37 years of chariot racing where everybody knew their job,”

Raymer said, “In our third year of skijoring we are now to the point where everybody involved today was involved three years ago. The finite details are not as critical as they were three years ago—it is a more fluid movement.”

The first two years, the Lions Club and Jaycees borrowed rings and gates for the races. Last year, the Lions Club had an opportunity to purchase some equipment second hand from a group in New Mexico who was getting out of the sport.

Faust said, “Through a bunch of really good connections we had in the skijoring world ... we found out the equipment was for sale and got it for around \$700.”

Now the Saratoga group lends their equipment to other regional races.

“Jackson didn’t have the equipment available. Steamboat didn’t have the equipment available. We look at it as those are races that hopefully will turn into everything Saratoga is for the benefit of the sport,” Raymer continued, “As long as one of us is going, we will take the equipment because without the growth of those events, the sport doesn’t really go anywhere. This is a very fast evolving sport.”

Faust added, “I am in favor of having as many good races as we can close to Saratoga.”

To that end Faust and Raymer have offered their newfound expertise to fledgling organizers around the area.

ey to put this event on for the town is huge. We have volunteers from both organizations (Saratoga Lions and Jaycees) that are crucial in making this happen.”

75 Percent Solution

Both Raymer and Faust said they wanted around a 75 percent success rate in their races. Raymer explained that meant that a good success rate was 75 percent of clean runs with no penalties adding, “The way we are trying to set the track, because we don’t want this to be a flat out ski race or a flat out horse race, so we get an element from both sides.”

Raymer said that controllable horses do a lot better in these races because every skijoring track varies from place to place and year to year.

This year, Raymer said “Our track this year is going to be bigger than it has ever been because we have snow.” When asked how the track was bigger, Raymer replied, “The features will be bigger. Length will be the same at around 700 feet. Instead of three foot high jumps we may have seven foot jumps. It should all be manageable for anywhere from a five year old to a fifty plus skier. The course depends on speed. The faster you go the harder it is. The slower you go the easier it is.”

When asked if more experienced riders would be paired with novice skiers, Raymer said that would be the case saying, “If I need to walk down the track, I’ll walk down the track.”

Faust added that if some parents did not want their kids behind horses, there would be four-wheelers available to pull tykes down the course at a slower, controlled rate.

Eagerness Abounds

Saratoga Lions and Jaycees members have been meeting for weeks now—with animated and eager discussions held in planning this detail and that about the upcoming race. Watching these meetings and judging from the excitement in both Faust and Raymer’s voices and the twinkle in their eyes when talking about both the sport and Saratoga’s upcoming part in the sport, Saratoga’s third annual skijoring event should provide a weekend to remember.

Skijor USA 3-D Format

A new format is being utilized during the 2019 race season. The 3-D format provides for a uniform system which is self-sorting. Competitors do not need to “estimate” their skill level. Performance dictates which “D”, or Division, the finishing time falls within and appropriate points are then awarded, if earned. This is the preferred method for Skijor USA (SJUSA) and its member races. Individual races are allowed to run in the old format, if they choose, but courses and penalties must be uniform with the exception of divisions outside of the 3-D such as Youth, Legend, etc.

The 3-D is meant to be similar to the previous method of Open, Sport and Novice. Like the traditional format, the 3-D system identifies separate competitive classes, maintains three levels of competition, but effectively places teams in the proper division according to their race results.

All competitors, regardless of ability, run on the same track. The three divisions are then determined by time brackets. With the 3-D format, the OVERALL fastest time of the race is used to set the time brackets for the three divisions. Skijor USA awards points to teams that have nominated themselves IN ALL DIVISIONS on a 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 basis for first place through tenth place, regardless of the number of entries.

1st Division: These are the teams with the fastest times and the cleanest runs.

2nd Division: These are teams who ran ONE (1) SECOND or SLOWER than the OVERALL fastest time and cleanest run.

3rd Division: These are teams who ran TWO (2) SECONDS or SLOWER than the OVERALL fastest time and cleanest run.

Penalties

A minimum of a five (5) second penalty will be assessed per gate and/or jump missed. A two (2) second penalty will be assessed for each missed or dropped ring. Failure to cross the finish line on at least one ski, with rope in hand, will result in a disqualification. Both skis, must cross within the boundary of the finish/timing line. Thus, the 3-D system places a premium on clean runs.



Photo courtesy Will Faust

Youths line up to participate in Ridgeway, Colorado’s skjoring event in January.

‘Skied up’ for free

Kids invited to try on free ski equipment and give it a try

By Keith McLendon

The Saratoga Lions Club has been collecting skiing equipment for kids. Mark Rauterkus from the Trading Post in Riverside has donated several pairs of skis and Lions Club members have found other children’s skis, boots and other equipment while searching thrift stores and the like.

The purpose of the collection effort is so that if a youth would like to come out and try skjoring, they can for free.

Though a parent would have to pay the \$5 entry fee, participants in the youth division are free.

For parents worried about injury, Richard Raymer reiterated that a youth need not be pulled by a horse. Even though Raymer stressed that the horses to be used with little ones are very controllable, he said that there would be ATVs available to pull youth at reduced speeds.

Will Faust related that his 4-year old daughter, Martha, and 6-year-old son, Edgar would be skiing on the weekend and that his son had come to really look forward to the event.

Another thing to look for this weekend is a grandmother, Carol Hughes—who has not put on skis in 30 years, who will be skiing behind her granddaughter, Kelsea Raymer.

Given the untested nature of some of the participants, both Faust and Raymer stressed that safety is concern number one at and around the track.

If you have a kid who would like to come out and try on some skis and get an easy run in, contact Will Faust at the Hotel Wolf during Friday’s registration and he will get your kid sized up for some boots and skis. Currently there are 7 teams signed up for youth skjoring.

Saratoga Skijoring 2019 Rules & regulations

Rules are solely for the safety of the competitors, both horse and human and to ensure fair competition at the Saratoga Skijoring Races. All rules are required to be followed by Saratoga Skijoring Race competitors.

In our races the Starting Gate Judge has ultimate say in determining participant and equine safety. We reserve the right to disqualify any individual, team or competitor in the event unsafe actions are observed. We also reserve the right to cancel or postpone the entire event should unsafe conditions arise. Final authority in such matters lies solely with the Starting Gate Judge.

GENERAL RACE DESCRIPTION DIVISION AND COMPETITION CRITERIA

OPEN 3-D All teams that do not consist of Novice and Youth. A team consists of horse, rider and skier.

NOVICE/EXHIBITION CLASS (Beginners) Teams are considered to be new to the sport, beginning level competitors riding horses that may not have speed enough to be competitive in the Open 3-D.

Youth - Non competitive fun run, one participant must be under the age of 18

SKIER-OPEN & SPORT RULES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Rules:
- A skier can choose their division of competition.
 - A skier may compete in only one Division, unless assisting with the youth division.
 - A skier may compete up to

- four times in a day.
- All skiers must wear approved snow sport helmets.
- Any Skiers under 18 must have parent/guardian sign parental consent forms.
- Proof of insurance for minors is mandatory.
- Protective eyewear and helmet must be worn during competition.

Recommendations:

It is strongly suggested that bindings be tested by a professional prior to skiing.

RIDER OPEN 3-D RULES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Rules:

- A rider may compete in more than one division, but must compete on a different horse in each Division entered. i.e. if a rider has 2 horses they may be entered in the same or different divisions, a horse may not cross divisions.
- All riders must be on time for their runs. Any rider that cannot be ready on time due to running to many horses or horse difficulty will be moved to the back of the order. Second failure to be ready on time will result in a DQ for that run.
- Riders have four minutes to begin their run, time starts when the race is called by the Starting Gate Judge. If the rider has not started their run (forward progression towing the skier to the start line) by the four minute mark then the team will be moved to the back of the order. Second failure to

See ‘Rules and regulations’ on page 14



Map courtesy of saratogaskijoring.com

Skijoring in Saratoga at a glance

Held at Buck Springs just east of Saratoga (See map above). Course is 700’ long.

Snow track includes 3 jumps, Leadville-style rings and multiple slalom gates.

Horses run beside the snow track on groomed dirt surface.

Free onsite horse boarding is available at the Race Venue. Reservations are made when registering for the event.

Welcome Skijorers!

Stop by for
Preregistration,
After Race Party
and a special
Sunday night
menu!



Hotel Wolf

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Thank you for your business!
The Campbell Family

After the races



CHANGEY WILLIAMS and the Younger Brothers Band

Platte Valley Community Center
8pm • Saturday, Feb. 9
Tickets \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door



Tickets available at the Community Center (210 West Elm) or at pvcenter.org.

Produced in cooperation with the Carbon County Visitors Council



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**The staff of the
Saratoga Sun
welcomes you
to Saratoga’s
third annual
Skijoring event!**



THE PLATTE VALLEY’S NEWSPAPER SINCE 1888
THE SARATOGA SUN



Saratoga Sun file photo

Karim Bekka went for air in his exhibition jump at last year’s Saratoga Skijoring.

Rules & regulations ... Continued from page 13

be ready on time will result in a DQ for that run.

Recommendations:

- Helmets and protective vests are recommended for all riders.
- Any Riders under 18, must have parent/guardian sign parental consent forms.
- Proof of insurance for minors is mandatory.
- Helmet and protective vests must be worn during competition.

**HORSE
OPEN 3D RULES AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Rules:

- A horse can compete in only one Division.
- A horse may not run more than two times in a day.
- Use a standard western bit includes: 1.8 1/2” maximum length shank. Shanks may be fixed or loose. If curb bit is used it must be free of mechanical device and should be considered a standard western bit. When a curb bit is used, a curb strap or curb chain is required, which must be at least 1/2” in width, lie flat against the jaw, and be free of barbs, wire, and/or twists.

Recommendations:

- Leg protection (boots or polo wraps) and bell boots are recommended.
- Horses are encouraged to have a shoe that will increase traction (borium, calks, etc) but not required.

**GENERAL RULES OF
COMPETITION**

Rules:

- Timing; each team gets two runs per day, fastest time will be counted as the day’s best time and be eligible for day money prize. The teams fastest run on day one will be averaged with the fastest day two time, and ranked accordingly to the 3-D format using 1 second splits between divisions. A DNF on any one day will be ranked lower than a team with two daily qualifying times.
- All participants must sign a liability waiver prior to competition. These will be available at the race registration prior to race day.
- Rope length cannot exceed 33 feet in length, loops on the skier end of the rope are discouraged due to our unique track layout. Handles are prohibited. Overhand knot on skiers end of rope is acceptable, teams may use their own ropes, so long as they have been inspected by the starting gate judge.
- No dogs are allowed outside of vehicles at the race venue. Pets must remain inside the cab of vehicles.
- A missed ring will result in a 2 second time penalty, a missed gate / jump will result in a 5 second penalty. If a horse breaks the plane of a jump or knocks over timing equipment a 5 second penalty will be assessed.
- No aerial drone(s).
- Racers need to be vigilant about starting on time.
- Rules should be clearly posted and accessible to all competitors two weeks prior to the race.
- If a horse, rider or equipment are deemed unsafe the rider and horse can be asked to leave at any time by the starting gate judge or other Saratoga Skijoring official. This includes intoxicated / under-the-influence participants.
- If the Skier drops the rope BEFORE crossing the start line, he/she will be allowed a restart immediately after the team’s fault start. The four-minute rule restarts upon the Arena Judge’s determination of a clear course. If a delay or the skier drops the rope on the second attempt to start, that team is disqualified for that run. If the horse runs the course, the team should be dropped down (in the order at the official’s discretion) a few racers to allow for reasonable recovery time. If it is the last of the division, they should be scheduled to run 1st prior to the start of the next division.
- The skier must finish in an upright position and on at least one ski, with rope in hand when crossing the finish line. Both skier boots must cross the finish line.
- Both ski tips and both boots must go around a gate, or the gate is considered missed.
- Participants may use batons for ring spearing, if baton is required, dropping it will result in a 1 second penalty.
- All competitors must be informed of their time at the end of their run prior to the start of the competitive run. Times will be announced over the PA system.
- All performance-enhancing drugs are prohibited and will not be tolerated. The Starting Gate Judge and the event organizers have the final say in related matters.
- If a racer wants to protest, s/he will contact the nearest race official (Horse Gate Official, Timing Judge, Flag Judge or Saratoga Skijoring Race Organizer) and let them know they want to protest. Via radio, course and starting gate judges will examine the situation, with consultation with the timing judge and SJUSA designated official. After consultation with this three person committee, the ultimate decision rest’s with the Horse Gate Judge and will be final. Races must be protested immediately following the run, the race will stop until the protest is settled. Once the next race rolls, you can not protest the results

Recommendation:

- Rules should be reviewed verbally with all competitors prior to the start of the race.
- Horses will be randomly checked for equipment. The Horse Gate Official will check all tack and how the rope is attached to the saddle. If requested by the Horse Gate Official, a rider may be asked to drop their bit.
- Gates getting hit and popping off are not reason for a flag from officials. If the rope pulls a gate out of the ground, no gate penalty will be assessed.

SUBSTITUTIONS

Substitutions in any class are allowed for any team member (horse, skier or rider), ONLY under the following circumstances:

- That the team member being substituted is unable to compete due to injury, family emergency or other reason acceptable to the Starting Gate Judge, Race Director and Arena Judge, with final say being the Starting Judge Official.
- That substitute team member (horse, skier or rider) is eligible to compete in that class.
- No refunds will be given.
- Teams with substitutions will be considered an exhibition run and be considered out of the money with regards to the Saratoga Skijoring Race final prize, but can win day money. With regards to Skijor USA points, the circuit rules will apply.