

Haines 2017 Free Ride Event Report.

5/1/2017

Unlike last season the event and process was drastically different..

The event organizers, FWT, Alaska Heliskiing, and SEABA their safety staff decided to host the event in the same location as last year. This was in part in the cooperative effort put forth by AH and SEABA to work together to put the best efficient and affordable event on by moving it to 35 mile.

3/19/2016 preparing the Venue

This is near the border and is called the Venue in the little Jarvis drainage.

Unlike last season snow pack was not as reliable and did not have a well formed structure. It was assumed to be in poor to Fair competition condition. The plan was to get the equipment and overnight crew up on the mountain asap. This occurred on 3.19.2016.

Guides worked the face on the 19th and we forecasted the event for the 20th seeing a solid weather window, that could produce a good competition. Lead guide Ted Purdee for SEABA along with Chief Safety officer Scott Sundberg were hopeful that settling in the snowpack over the last week's snowfall could become reliable to accommodate the good weather that was forecasted for March 20.

SEABA Lead guide, Ted Purdee and FWT safety crew, deliberated and took photos of the face. Made suggestions about closures on the face for safety and cleared the area for any visible wildlife. The crew placed positions for safety and photographers for the day for emergency response. At no point during the event was there any sighting of any wildlife besides Ptarmigan.

3/20

All crews were dispatched to mile 35 the heliport used for this year's event. Guides and event organizers met at 35 at 5:45 am and proceeded to prep for the 6:30 start.

All ehli loads, 18 loads were lifted into the field along with the starting gates. By 10:20 we had reached an agreement with SEABA staff that snow pit results were not providing enough confidence in the snowpack to have a full blown event. We called the event. FWT organizers were furious and fired SEABA LEAD guide because of his safe call. SEABA and FWT organizers came to an agreement about continuing the event, as of 4:00 pm 3/20/17 it was not going to be held. Seaba staff figured out a way to bridge the discourse and proceeded with planned event.

3/24 Event day

All groups flown in from 35 mile helibase. total of 88 people on mountain.

9:45 event started and the forerunners ran the course, shortly after a large cloud shrouded the upper mountain while 26 athletes waited to start the course.

At around 11 the cloud broke free and without any other delays, or injuries, the event was held. All participants enjoy good conditions and respected SEABA decision to delay the start of the event by the 4 days to let the snowpack heal.

The last female rider cruised through the finish gate around 12:50 pm and an great awards ceremony was held. All event planners we engaged and very happy about the outcome.

Attendance:

A total of 98 people were flown to the site for the day. All materials from the area were flown out by 5:30pm on the 24th. There were 72 other user's days associated with this event. Between 3/19-24/2016

Spills: None were noted, all fuels removed from overnight location. Photos are being collected of the area. Before during and after the event. Should be attached to corresponding emails. All visible and trash, personal items and property were removed on 3/24/2016 with an intent to revisit sight in July when Constantine offers a flight for free.

Event dinner went well with the Mayor speaking on behalf of Haines. Support for the State and the Haines Borough was acknowledged. I think it is also worth noting that this was the last contracted year, and the Haines Borough needs to be thinking about what is can do to keep them coming back.

More terrain, more options, more financial support. Any of these would help!

Scott Sundberg SEABA GM

Date 5/1/2017