

United States Snowshoe Association, Inc.

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Press Release

Team USA captures International Division of 2006 European Snowshoe Championships in Italy!

A team of fifteen U.S. snowshoe athletes recently traveled to Fondo Italy to compete in the Fourth Annual European Snowshoe Championships during the prestigious 33rd Annual La Ciaspolada Snowshoe Race in the shadows of the Austrian Alps. Team USA, comprised of four members of the U.S. National Snowshoe Team and eleven other US Snowshoe Association members, under the direction of Team Coach Mark Elmore of Peru, NY, toed the starting line of the 7km snowshoe race with over 700 athletes from Italy, France, Morocco, Austria, Finland, Germany, Romania and Poland. An additional 6000 plus participants competed in the non-competitive division, making this the largest snowshoe race in the world.

Leading Team USA to the International Title, i.e. the best non-Italian team, was Greg Hexum of Minnesota. Hexum completed his tour of the course in 32:02.3 finishing in 33rd place. Giuliano Battocletti of Team Italy won the event in an outstanding time of 27:42.7. He was followed by Claudio Cassi (Italy) in second and Marco Agostini (Italy) in third place. Right behind Hexum was Vermonter Mark Churchill in 36th place in 32:23.1. National Snowshoe Team members Jesse Haynes of CA and Charlie Wertheim of CO placed 50th and 52nd in 33:42.7 and 33:59.8 respectively. Rounding out the scoring for Team USA was National Junior Team member Zachary Rivers of Rochester, NY. The talented fifteen year old placed an incredible 80th in 36:34.6. Also competing for Team USA were;

116th place: Jules Embry-Pelrine of MA and Paul Smith's College in Paul Smith's, NY in 39:57.5

143rd place: Ed Myers of PA in 41:03.2

147th place: Jim Graupner of MN in 41:27.4

290th place: Steven Rivers of NY in 49:23.6

308th place: Phillip Dybfest-Muha of MA and Paul Smith's College in Paul Smith's NY in 50:08.2

364th place: Paul Fiondella of NY in 54:42.6.

In the women's field, USSSA Membership Chairperson and National Women's Team member Cindy Brochman of MN, led the charge with her 18th place finish in 42:36.8. Cristina Scolari of Italy took the Championship title with her 34:29.6. She was followed closely by fellow Italians Maria Grazia Roberti in second and the 2005 champion Asha Tonolini in third place. Mary Fagan of Vermont, competing in her first Ciaspolada, finished in 26th place in 45:29.6. Cazenovia NY resident Chary Griffin completed the Team USA scoring with her 59th place finish in 1:03.11.2. Completing the Team USA squad was Charla Bikman of NY who participated in the Non-Competitive division.

The trip to Europe for these Championships was coordinated by the United States Snowshoe Association of Corinth, NY and also included day trips to Innsbruck Austria and Venice Italy. Next up are the 2006 U.S. National Snowshoe Championship Series Regional Qualifier events culminating in the Sixth Annual National Snowshoe Championships on March 24th-26th, 2006 at the Bolton Valley Resort in Bolton Valley Vermont. For more information on these events visit the USSSA's website at www.snowshoeracing.com.