

## Homeowners group hears about 2015 Championships

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VAIL — The 2015 World Alpine Ski Championships will be a big, expensive party. The person in charge of organizing that event recently had a chance to meet a lot of prospective helpers in one place.

The Vail Homeowners Association — a group of people who own second homes in Vail — held its annual meeting Dec. 29 at Vail Town Hall. A nearly packed room full of members heard reports from town officials, Vail Resorts executives and Vail Valley Foundation President Ceil Folz, who gave the group a rundown on the progress so far in getting the event organized.

While most of the races will be at Beaver Creek, Folz made sure to stress Vail's role in the championships to this audience. A year ago, Vail's role in the event wasn't clear, Folz said. But that role is now more defined.

"Vail will host ski races in 2015," Folz said, outlining the schedule that includes a "Nations Team" event and qualifying races at Golden Peak.

Folz said the Nations Team event will feature head-to-head racing. The qualifying, she added, is more important than it might sound.

"About 70 countries will send teams, but only 20 will qualify for the finals, so this is their championships," Folz said.

Beyond the racing, Folz said, the opening and closing ceremonies will be in Vail, and all the ski teams will have their headquarters in Vail.

"I highly recommend visiting the Italian team if you have a chance," she said.

Folz also gave the audience a rundown on what it's going to cost to bring the championships to Vail, currently estimated at \$53 million. About \$10 million will need to be raised from donors, with most of the rest coming from television rights and sponsorships.

A \$53 million budget sounds like a lot, but Folz said other resorts hosting the championships have had budgets that have exceeded \$150 million and even \$200 million. The reason the Vail Valley can bring the event for so much less is due to the facilities already in place, and the cooperation between the foundation, Vail Resorts and local governments.

Folz said that cooperation, and the fact that the foundation was able to raise \$1.4 million in the first three days of its fund-raising drive, "Says a lot about the community spirit we have here."

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