

OUTDOORS

Skier notches national title No. 3

The Daily Inter Lake

Reid Sabin of Whitefish won his third national telemark title last weekend at Schweitzer Mountain ski area in Sandpoint, Idaho.

Sabin, competing in his only race of the season, won the U.S. National Telemark title by winning the giant slalom and sprint portions of the race and placing second in the slalom and classic races.

Chris Rice of Salt Lake City won the slalom and the classic events in the men's division. Women's results were not available at press time.

Sabin helped put Whitefish on the map as the hotbed of telemark ski racing when he won his first national title in 1998.



REID SABIN

Several other Flathead Valley racers competed at nationals last week, including Natalie Angel, Pete McMahon and Jef Elliot.

Glenn Gustafson, fresh off a World Cup series in Switzerland and Norway, had to miss the race because of a death in the family.

Sabin, 39, has all but retired from telemark ski racing, but was able to put together four solid races to capture his overall title.

"It was the tightest competition

I've seen in a long time," he said. "I was happy to come away with a win."

Sabin credited his telemark technique, refined by years of training, as the key to the win.

"For so long I worked extremely hard at it. It's something that you don't forget. But I barely won."

Sabin said he battled it out on each race with Rice, New Yorker Andrew Minier and former Whitefish racer Matt Beedle. "I was really fortunate to do as well as I did," Sabin said. "It could have gone a number of ways. It just so happened it went mine."

Sabin said he enjoyed racing and seeing all his old friends.

"With family obligations, etc., it's not in the front of my mind, but you

show up and realize how much fun it is to compete and be a part of it all," he said.

Gustafson, McMahon, Carrie Johnson and Quinn Lewis — all Whitefish skiers — are now off to Norway to compete in the World Cup telemark finals.

Gustafson has been racing and training in Norway, Switzerland, Slovenia and Austria for the last three months, and has compiled several top 20 World Cup finishes.

Big Mountain last year was host for the World Championships, a race that occurs every two years. In the off years, the world champion is determined by the World Cup overall winner.

The World Telemark Championships will be in Norway next year.



Inter Lake file photo

REID SABIN, pictured here in 2002, won his third national telemark title last weekend at Schweitzer Mountain in Idaho.