

Scheduling conflict infuriates freeskiers



Reno freeskiier David Wise trains at Northstar. Photo/Provided

By Jason Blevins, Denver Post

ASPEN – David Wise of Reno battles gravity as an Olympic and X Games gold medal halfpipe skier. Now he's battling an equally stubborn force: the International Ski Federation, or FIS.

Widely embraced as the world's best pipe skier, Wise lost his world champion title last week when he, like most of the world's top freeskiers and snowboarders, opted to attend Aspen's Winter X Games instead of the FIS world championships in Austria.

The 24-year-old Wise, who skis for Northstar, blasted the international federation for refusing to reschedule the world championship halfpipe contest – which was put on the calendar five years ago – to accommodate the athletes whose careers have flourished thanks to the X Games.

The scheduling conflict is a symptom of a larger issue, freeskiers say. There's a perceived lack of respect for freeskiing and snowboarding from the sports' governing body. The fear is that new school freeskiing could see its

freewheeling style stifled by the decidedly old guard FIS.

Wise, who spent three years pleading with the FIS to adjust the schedule, wrote in a scathing post on his blog last week that it is an “unforgivable blunder; one based in arrogance and in a true lack of respect.” Dozens of the top-ranked skiers and snowboarders on the World Cup halfpipe and slopestyle circuit did not show up at Kreischburg, Austria, last week.

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