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Lumberjack World Championships Announces New Event Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hayward, Wis. (December 26, 2022) – For over 62 years, Hayward, Wisconsin, has been home to the greatest and most prestigious lumberjack and lumberjill competition worldwide, the Lumberjack World Championships (LWC), a three-day celebration of lumberjack sports. The American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation (ABSF) has been managing the event since 2017, in collaboration with the LWC Board of Directors. During the fall of 2022, the LWC board approved a proposal by ABSF to hire a dedicated event director for the annual competition.

ABSF is pleased to welcome Samantha (Sam) LaSalle to the team as the new LWC Event Director. Sam grew up in Hayward and has been log rolling since she was five years old and has been competing for an impressive 25 years at the Lumberjack World Championships. She has competed in the women's boom run, log rolling, Jack & Jill double buck sawing, and Jill & Jill double buck sawing. Her husband, Adam LaSalle, has also been competing for 20 years as a lumberjack. The two live and breathe lumberjack sports, making Sam an ideal fit to continue the generations-old tradition of the Lumberjack World Championships.

Sam, alongside her husband, has coordinated the Sawyer County Wood Chop competition in Hayward since its inception, with 2023 marking the fifth year. Traditionally held during Musky Fest weekend, people are able to get a taste for lumberjack sports free of charge at the woodchop. Spectators have the opportunity to watch professional competitors from across the country face off for their chance to take home the title of all around lumberjack or jill. This event has provided excellent exposure to lumberjack sports for both locals and visitors. The competition entails many of the same events that take place at the annual Lumberjack World Championships. This year the Sawyer County Woodchop will take place at the municipal lot during Musky Fest weekend (June 24-25, 2023).

Sam's passion for and commitment to lumberjack sports is apparent and ABSF is excited to welcome her to the team. "We're honored to have Sam joining our team with her real-world experience as an athlete and clear dedication to the sport," said Kristy Maki, Event Director for the ABSF. "We know there is a bright future ahead for the Lumberjack World Championships and we will continue to take steps to ensure that it is around to preserve this important part of Hayward's history."

Sam would love to see the sport continue to develop and grow in Hayward and throughout the country. She will take on leadership roles for the competition and festival aspects of the event. Under Sam's leadership, both spectators and competitors will have an organized and fun weekend full of world-class competition, vendors, food, and entertainment. Spectators and athletes can expect Sam to keep the competition running at a high level and keep the experience alive for everyone. She has challenged herself to explore additional activities that can be added to LWC in the future to pack even more fun into the weekend. "I can't wait to be a part of this historic event," said Sam, "especially now that I'm on the other side of the dock, so to speak."

Lumberjack World Championships athletes compete in a combined twenty-four events, including, logrolling, boom running, sawing, chopping, axe throwing, and speed climbing. Information on each unique timber sports discipline is available at www.lumberjackbowl.com. Stay tuned for more information on the 2023 Lumberjack World Championships.

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