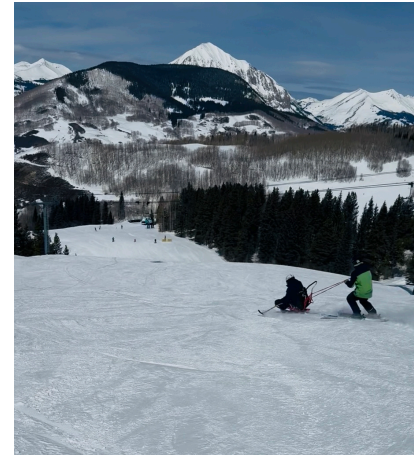


2025 Winter Ladies' Session held by the Adaptive Sports Center in Crested Butte was an absolutely incredible weekend where I got to not only improve my alpine skiing acumen, but I made friendships and connections I will have for a lifetime. Those moments are priceless to me. I just want to thank everyone at GoHawkeye for their support in this endeavor and allowing me to participate in this weekend that meant so much to me. Let me tell you a little bit more about it...

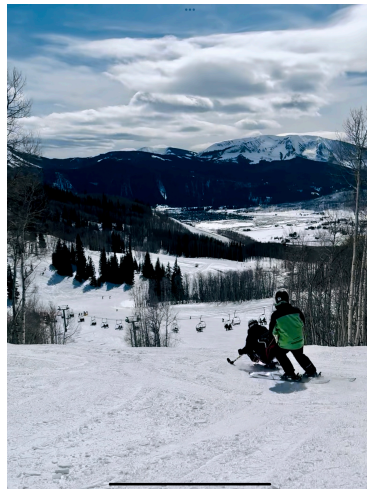


Thursday, March 20th, and due to my excitement I could not sleep hardly at all so I started my day off of excitement and adrenaline! I flew from my home city of Indianapolis through Dallas to Montrose where I met up with a few of some of the other ladies participating that weekend and we got to eat lunch together and converse as we drove through the beautiful mountains on our way to Crested Butte and the ASC. It was about a 2hr drive and after 2 flights, I could feel the tiredness and hunger, so was very excited to hear we were ordering pizza from a favorite local pizza joint called "the Secret Stash." While eating dinner we were briefed of the week and did some icebreaker activities as well as set some goals for the week. Then, it was more than time to hit the bunks, which was literal for me because I was sharing a room with bunk beds! My roommate was a lovely individual, Yulia, who was originally from Russia, but has Multiple Sclerosis and would also be sit-skiing on a bi-ski like myself which was a neat thing to have in common right off the bat.



Friday, March 21st, came earlier than anticipated. I used the elevator to get to the kitchen upstairs to make breakfast and talk with a few of the other ladies. Having impromptu conversations was one of my favorite parts of getting to know the other women on the trip. So many diverse backgrounds and circumstances, yet the commonality of resilience and perseverance through life's toughest situations. My ski instructor for this beautiful, bluebird day was Jack. I had Jack the last day of my January Veterans' Trip and to hear him say how much I had progressed in such a short time was incredible. I attest a lot of that to a fellow sit-skier/mono-skier, Uschi Hall, who volunteers at Telluride and also attended ASC's Ladies Session and just

watching her ski and getting her feedback made something click. I was able to accomplish skidded, linked turns, with controlled stops, balance, etc. My confidence had also risen, which said a lot as well. Just the constant encouragement from everyone was amazing. Friday evening was an evening where we had an evening to explore and get dinner on our own. I had friends in town in which I met through a support group I co-admin for a condition that we mutually shared called hip dysplasia. I was able to meet a friend, her name is Seana and her husband is Clint, and they were so kind and fun to get to know more! They were also skiing at the Adaptive Sports Center as well, so it was being able to meet so many amazing people on one trip!



Saturday, March 22nd, was a POW day! I had one of my favorite instructors, Tyler, that not only taught me how to sit-ski over 5 years ago at the ASC, but has instructed me every year since then, so it's a bit of a running joke that I need to have him at least one day per trip, which was accomplished. It was perfect too, because we got a completely different mountain covered in snow. Riding up the chairlifts felt like you were in a snow globe. I really had to work muscles that I forgot I had, but the day was not only amazing, but skiing with some of the other women and getting to watch others ski was so much fun! And of course, playing in fresh pow! We got a group picture in the pow as well, which will look pretty cool! Saturday evening we were actually invited to one of the young, local participant's home for dinner cooked by her mother! They had a stunning adaptive home with views of the Butte and we had charcuterie boards, pasta, sauces, salad, and pie for dessert. It was so sweet and a great place to fellowship even more!



Sunday, March 23rd, was another incredible bluebird day! It also meant I was skiing with Gabe, so another was possible! My roomie, Yulia, really wanted to ski together today-our last day together, so I happily obliged. In the morning, we did the backside of "Painter Boy" which included "Cascade", "Panion", "Prospector" and even "Little Lizzy!" They were all blues and I had a great time and I blasted down the runs, remembering to work on my turns, "turn for my life", but it was a fantastic AM skiing with a new friend. After lunch with the girls and getting refreshed Yulia and I headed back out to some other runs up the "Silver Queen" lift which would include the "Paradise Bowls". Even Uschi joined us for skiing the

Bowls together. Yulia wanted to watch Uschi and then myself ski to learn from watching us. It made me feel so proud someone was asking me for advice and looking to me for advice because my skiing had improved so much. That boosted my confidence immeasurably. It was such a blast skiing with the ladies that day and just made the ski day that much more fun when doing it with friends. After skiing, we all got our gear off and gathered back up to take back to the house and we went next door to the ice cream, shop called the "Tin Cup" which had traditional flavors and then flavors like lavender bergamot and crazy milkshakes called the "grasshopper," etc. It was absolutely delicious and the perfect treat after a great day of skiing. For dinner, we had a Hawaiian themed luau as our farewell dinner prepared for us by a group of amazing volunteer women. It was a beautiful and delicious meal and we shared stories and experiences during and after dinner. We



were all also trading contact information as well! After dinner, we had a group debriefing of the weekend; something we enjoyed, something we could grow on and something that could be improved or wasn't so great (which was not much) because the trip was amazing!

After the evening concluded, I got to re-packing all my gear and clothes from the weekend, got my clothes prepped for the travel day that following Monday brought and got cleaned up and hit the bunk. I came to Crested Butte with a group of women, but left with additional friends: Uschi, Alison, Kasyn, Kaylee, Rochelle, Wendy, Brandy and Yulia!

I just want to thank Go Hawkeye for the amazing opportunity to garner new friendships, improve my skiing skills and make memories for a lifetime!

