



Yellowknife Ski Club

Newsletter

February 2010

It is nearly Spring and the best skiing of the season is just ahead. This year however, skiing in February has been an absolute treat with the incredibly warm temperatures. What a difference the weather can make. The Club has been very busy most weekends with lots of people out enjoying the trails!

March and April will also be very busy months, with many ski activities and events happening in Yellowknife, around the north and elsewhere.

Building News

It would appear that the new access door on the side of the building has been a big success. Many members appreciate having access to the building when they want and there have been positive comments about the coded entry. The



Ski Club would like to thank **Ollerhead NWT Locksmithing Ltd.** for the generous discount they gave the Club on the new access key pad.

Remember, in order to help pay for the building, the chalet is rented out for meetings and other functions. The cadets have used the building since it was built and

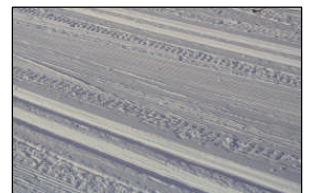
have rented from us since we purchased the building about 6 years ago.

They use the building several nights a week, with Tuesday night being their busiest, utilizing both the up and downstairs of the Club. Please be respectful of their schedule and their use of the space.

It is important that members respect the access to the building. Please report any problems as soon as possible. Leave any areas you have used clean, vacuum in the wax room if you have been waxing and make sure lights are off and windows closed. Your help in keeping the place tidy is crucial.

Trail News

With the nice weather, grooming has been happening on various trails four nights a week on a regular basis. Groomers are out on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights. The ravine is continuing to provide a fair amount of anguish for both groomers and skiers. Old Tow Hill is nearly impossible to access because of the ice overflow. This means a sharp turn is required at the bottom of the ravine, which can be difficult when the weather is warm and skiing conditions are fast. Please use caution when skiing there.



At the other end of the Ski Club, a track has been set around Fault Lake. It is about 1 kilometre in distance around the lake and a lovely place to practice balance exercises by skiing without poles.

Program News

Jackrabbits - The **Jackrabbit** program has been busy this year. More recently the weather has been great for lessons. But on the few occasions when it has been cold, rather than cancel lessons they have opted for some indoor sessions including games, waxing stations and core fitness training.



Jackrabbits meet on Saturday afternoons. This photo is of JR leader **Patty Baldwin** and her group enjoying their snack out on the deck on a sunny day after lessons.

Several Jackrabbit groups have skied to the ice falls/caves down in the ravine, with many reports back about how different it looks each time. We are lucky to have these special off trail places to visit so close to the Club. Other special events have included the ever popular “Chocolate Bar Ski” where kids are encouraged to ski farther for chocolate rewards.

Track Attack (TA) - This winter an enthusiastic group has been tearing up the trails with the **Track Attack** program. **Seth Lippert** and **Stephen Dunbar** are the coaches. Both these young guys learned to ski on our trails with the Jackrabbit Program.



Thanks to the Track Attack parents who have been taking turns volunteering to make hotdogs and cocoa after the Saturday morning ski sessions. Many Track Attack skiers are also in the biathlon program so this gives them a chance to re-energize prior to the next program.

Biathlon – The **Biathlon** program is enjoying the refreshingly warm February temperatures and the biathletes have been out on the range every Saturday practicing their shooting.

Paul Green (shown below) is coaching the biathlon program. Originally from Hay River, Paul has been a competitive biathlete and coach for many years. Paul's brother Brendan is a member of Team Canada for biathlon at the 2010 Olympics.



The Ski Club would like to thank **Wolverine Guns and Tackle** for their support of the biathlon program. They provided a discount on several gun lockers purchased for the storage of biathlon rifles. These gun lockers mean more shooting time for the kids and less equipment moving and set up for the coaches and parents.



Camille Rourke and **Kirianne Ashley** are keen 11 year old athletes spending time speed skating, skiing and at the biathlon range. It is strongly recommended that girls this age participate in a maximum of three sports and to keep it FUN! This picture shows them as they practice shooting in

the prone position with the aid of wooden blocks.

Go Girls Go - Go Girls Go is a recreational ski program for girls aged 14-18. The Girls ski on Saturday morning at 11:00 am, and while they each have different skill level, they all share a great attitude. Pictured in this photo are (from left to right) **Emily Smith, Ingrid Loftas, Kaitlyn Menard** and Coach **Cayley Thomas**.



Emily Smith “graduated” from the Jackrabbit program, before moving on to be a competitive speed skater. She has come back to skiing with this group and is the unofficial “organizer” of activities.

Ingrid Loftas, from Tromso, Norway, is living with Ross and Cayley Thomas for the year. Ingrid skied a lot when she was a young child, and was surprised to find out that she can still do it – and that it is fun!

Kaitlyn Menard is brand new to skiing this year. Kaitlyn has gone from learning how to snowplow down a hill, to trying to skate the biathlon trails. She is willing to try anything and always has a smile on her face.

Cayley Thomas says she absolutely loves coaching this group of girls and has found her skiing niche coaching young recreational skiers in the **Go Girls Go** program. Cayley's past contributions to skiing include being a member of the Board of Directors and Coordinator for Jackrabbits. Cayley is certified as community coach instructor and has trained many of the clubs JR coaches as community coaches.

High Performance (HP) – The **HP** group has been very busy already this year. They ski four times a week and are enjoying the return of the longer days so that their Tuesday and Thursday practices aren't completely in the dark! When at the Club on Saturday morning, you can often find many of them in the wax room. Here High Performance athlete **Oliver Hodgins** gives JR Coach **Tasha Stephenson** some waxing tips.



Many of the HP skiers went to Canmore in December 2009, participating in Alberta Cup races. Oliver Hodgins won a gold medal for the classic sprint in the Juvenile Boys category. The kids also visited with NWT ski alumni, **Mike Argue**, **Thomsen D'hont** and **Sarah Daitch**. The HP group enjoyed a particularly special trip to Mt. Shark where they had fun skiing the winding, hilly trails and were accosted on the road by moose that wanted to lick salt off the rental cars!



Adult Lessons – Adult lessons have been extremely popular this year, with several sessions of classic and skating technique taught by Karen Johnson and Susan Fleck.

As shown in the photo below, Karen gives Margit a lesson in the fun of bob sledding down a hill. Karen is a level 2 Canadian Association of Nordic Ski Instructors (CANSI) and has been instructing adult lessons for many years.



Margit is visiting Canada on a one year work visa from her home in Germany. Margit spent a couple of months at Blachford Lake Lodge in the fall and now is working for Guy Architects in her field of landscape architecture.



A few HP skiers, along with several youth from the Track Attack program, also traveled to Grande Prairie for the Alberta Cup 3-4 races in early January. This “road” trip

provided the skiers with a quick preview of the Arctic Winter Games ski trails and the weather provided the parent chauffeurs with some driving excitement in heavy snowfalls!

The HP group will be traveling to Edmonton for another set of Alberta Cup races and then they are off to Grande Prairie for the **Arctic Winter Games**. After that, a few HP skiers will be heading straight north to Whitehorse for the Nationals. Despite all the competitive talk of “racing”, this group really has a lot of fun skiing together with regular game days as part of the training!

Chix on Stix - Girls’ night out doesn’t get any better than whooping and hollering with a bunch of women under the northern lights. Join them for Chix on Stix on their new night, **Tuesdays at 7:30ish** (heavy on the “ish” - i.e. whenever it works for you to sneak away for some personal time!). They do a few loops of the lit trail, the Snowflake trail or wherever strikes their fancy and then head over to the Explorer for a social beverage around 9 or 9:30. All levels of Chix are welcome and there is no temperature cut off



because they are hardy northern Chix. In fact, some of the best skis have been below minus 30 C. For more information, contact dana_britton@theedge.ca.

What's Been Happening

Christmas Activities – Over the Christmas holidays, a trail was “blazed” to a special tree overlooking Back Bay. Seed pine cones, berry garlands, fruit slices and fleece decorations were on hand for adorning the tree for any feathered friends at the Ski Club. The Club also hosted a potluck dinner on December 27th. Paper bag lanterns lit a small loop for skiing and the 35 members that gathered all felt the food was fantastic.

Loppet Chili Cooking – On January 30th, a small group of cooks met at a local school kitchen to make the soups and chili for the Loppet. Dressed in funky aprons and armed with piles of fresh vegetables and a pantry of canned goods, there was lots of chopping and can opening. It was a cold morning perfect for cooking chili!



Many thanks go out to **Natasha Bhogal, Rhonda Buckland, Ava Hoechsmann, Riah Hoechsmann, Amanda Johnson, Aurora Nind, Jennie Rausch, Emma Seddon, Laura**

Seddon, Linda Whitford and Kathi Woodward for helping to chop, stir, season and create the loppet lunch. Thanks also to Jennie for providing the great prizes for cooking apparel, the fine tunes and the delicious treats.



February Loppets - Congratulations to all the Yellowknife Ski Club members who trained long hours this year for the **Canadian Birkebeiner** (the Birkie) and the **Keskinada** loppets. The Birkie was held on February 13th, with several options of 18 km, 31 km and 55 km distances with or without a backpack. For complete results, check out this link <http://www.canadianbirkie.com/>.

The **Keskinada** (or the **Gatineau Loppet**) consisted of several distance options up to 53 km. This event includes one day of classic skiing and a second day of free technique. Their website is <http://www.gatineauloppet.com>. This year's event was held on February 20th and 21st.

If you have an interest in skiing in loppets, many individuals with the Ski Club train and compete in such events and could offer suggestions and advice. The Cross Country Canada website also publishes training plans specifically for women working towards loppets. You can check it out at www.ccski.com under Women On Skis.



Canmore World Cup – Congratulations to **Mike Argue** of Yellowknife and **Sarah Daitch** of Fort Smith. They were both chosen to represent Canada in the classic sprint event at the World Cup held in Canmore on February 6th. You can see photos of them on this photo gallery, <http://picasaweb.google.com/xcgeek/WCSprintQualifying#>. You'll be able to spot Sarah and Mike by their bright blue NWT ski suits! These photos were snapped by **Dan Roycroft**, former Team Canada skier and developer of the Zone 4 program that we use for online registration and races.

High Performance Athlete Grants - In January, **Sarah Daitch** and **Mike Argue** also received 2009-2010 High Performance Athlete Grants from the **Sport North Federation**. Keeping them company on that list was Yellowknife Ski Club member **Thomsen D'hont** (skiing), **Brendan Green** (biathlon) from Hay River and former YK skiers, **Michael and Jill Gilday** (speed skating) and **Denise Ramsden** (cycling). You can read all about it at http://www.maca.gov.nt.ca/resources/newsroom/2009_hpag_recipients.html.

Toonie Team Sprints – On February 14th, thirteen teams met at the Club in the afternoon for a fun Team Sprint race. A team sprint is like a 2 person relay but each person skis the sprint route 3 times alternating with their team mate. The Toonie sprint distance was 500 m around the stadium. There was a mad mass start and



the entire race was over in 15 minutes. It gave us a chance to try this format and a reason to use the relay bibs from the 2008 Arctic Winter Games.

There were several “competitive” teams but also many that were in it just for fun, including moms and dads skiing with children and one couple with a baby watching on the sidelines. Because it was Valentines Day, chocolate prizes were awarded for participation!

Upcoming Events



Brendan Green's Biathlon Relay Race - Friday, February 26th is the biggest day of the 2010 Olympics for the Northwest Territories.

Hay River biathlete, **Brendan Green**, races in the biathlon men's relay. Make sure you wear **GREEN** to celebrate! The event is scheduled to start at 12:30 pm our time.

What a proud moment for Hay River and congratulations to their ski club...all of their volunteer efforts in running a fantastic biathlon program and hosting great events helped contribute to this Olympic debut by an incredible athlete! The Yellowknife Ski Club wishes Brendan the best of luck. Shoot straight and ski fast!

YK Invitational Races - Saturday, February 27th will be an individual start classic race and **Sunday, February 28th** will be a mass start free technique event. These races provide a great opportunity for officials to practice or learn skills and skiers to see what is involved in such an event. Everyone is welcome to participate. The goal is to have fun and we even have some Olympic gear to give away.

You must register by noon on Friday, February 26th on www.zone4.ca. These races depend on



weather and will be cancelled if the temperatures are below -20 C. Please note that the Saturday race is in the afternoon but to make skiing hockey fans happy, the Sunday race is in the morning so people can get home to watch the Olympic gold medal hockey game.

Don't feel like skiing in the races? Then why not help out as a volunteer instead....please call **Mindy Willett** at 873-9873 and let her know how you can help. Cheering squads are also welcome!



This picture shows **John Stephenson** (Chief of Course), **Peter Maguire** (Technical Delegate) and **Sean Levenson** (Chief of Competition) deciding on the choice of trails to be used for the races.



Arctic Winter Games 2010 - Many of the Yellowknife High Performance skiers are participating in the **2010 Arctic Winter Games** in Grande Prairie, Alberta from **March 6 – 13th, 2010**. Several HP parents are volunteering as officials as well. The Club wishes everyone the best of luck with their competitions. You can follow the results at <http://www.awg2010.org>.

Fitz-Smith Loppet - The Fort Smith Ski Club welcomes everyone to join their 30 km loppet

from Fort Fitzgerald in Alberta to Fort Smith, NWT on **Saturday, March 13th, 2010**. The trail, track set for classic skiing, runs along the Slave River and is reported to be absolutely fantastic for scenery. There are checkpoints along the way with food and refreshments and a potluck dinner in the evening to celebrate the day. Adults pay \$20 and youth under 14 and those over 60 pay only \$10. Billeting is available. **Northwestern Air Lease** is offering a 20% discount on return airfares.

There are some posters up at the Club with information about the Fitz-Smith Loppet if anyone is interested. For more information, you can also contact Cam and Melissa at camandmelissa@northwestel.net or Dave and Diane at dave_diane@northwestel.net.

Canadian National Ski Championships - This year the National Ski Championships are being held in Whitehorse, Yukon from **March 13th to March 21st, 2010**. There are several races, from individual distances in classic and skating to team sprints and relays. A few of the High Performance team will be attending these, some for the first time – we wish them all the best of luck. For more information or to track results, please check out <http://www.skinationals.com/2010>.

Rock & Ice Ultra

– This year the Rock & Ice Ultra will consist only of a one day race on **Saturday, March 21st, 2010**.



It is open to individuals and teams who can complete the course either on skis or foot/snowshoe. The race will start and finish at the Ski Club and utilize parts of the trails. For more information on this event and how to register or to volunteer, please see <http://www.ykmultisport.com/rock-and-ice-2010/>.



PTUB Races and NWT Ski Championships.

The Hay River Ski Club is hosting the popular PTUB races again this year on **March 27th and 28th, 2010**. With beautiful trails and great hospitality, it is always a fun time.



Several families usually drive down to this event and there is almost always room to spare. This year's event will be combined with the NWT Ski Championships so it will be double the excitement!

For more information about the PTUBs, please check the Hay River Ski Club website at <http://www.hayriverskiclub.com/home>.

Fast & Female Weekend - Fast & Female is a program initiated by 2006 Olympic gold medalist **Chandra Crawford**. The mission is to empower young girls from 9-19 through sport, particularly skiing and biathlon. The Fast & Female event takes place **April 2-4th** and will include a day of skiing, leadership activities, dance and yoga along with inspirational time with Fast & Female ambassadors **Sarah Daitch** and **Sharon Firth**. In addition, the girls will have several dinners together, a fire pit and games night, then wax skis for and participate in the **Northwestel Loppet** on April 4th. This program is geared towards girls 9-19 years of age that already participate in skiing.

There may also be opportunities for moms to partake in some separate activities, both on snow and in the "classroom" learning about nutrition and how to support young girls in sport. If you have a young female skier in your household and you might be interested in this, please contact **Donna Mulders** at dmulders1@gmail.com.

Fast & Female is for girls all across the north and it is hoped to have upwards of 25 girls from various communities participating. To help with this endeavour, Fast & Female is looking for people who can billet young female skiers and chaperones from about April 2-4th. If you can help, please contact **Dot van Vliet** at hodgins@ssimicro.com.

For more information on this event, please check out <http://www.fastandfemale.com/>.

Northwestel Loppet -

It's almost that hippity-hoppity-loppety time of year again! The 32nd Annual **Northwestel Yellowknife Ski Loppet** is **Sunday, April 4th**. Mark your calendars! Watch your emails and the *Yellowknifer* for more details as the loppet day approaches. It's Easter Sunday, so perhaps the Easter Bunny will be spotted on the trail...



If you would like to volunteer for this year's loppet, please contact Jennie at jennie.rausch@ec.gc.ca or call 873-3936.

Volunteer Dinner and Awards - At the end of the ski season, the Club likes to celebrate the many volunteers that have made the year and the Club such a success. If you think a particular individual, youth or company deserve a nod for their great contribution and/or volunteer enthusiasm, please email **Margot**



Jennings at margot_jennings@gov.nt.ca with your nomination. The Club has four ski awards that we hand out annually. They include:

Wooden Ski Award – for long time service by a member(s) with a tradition of involvement and dedication to YKSC.

Double Poler Award – adult volunteer(s) that made a significant contribution to YKSC in the past year.

Stellar Snowflake Award – junior volunteer(s) who made a significant contribution to YKSC in the past year.

Herringbone Award – for a business that contributed in kind services to the YKSC in the past year.

These awards are presented at the Volunteer Appreciation dinner, scheduled to be held **Saturday, April 17th, 2010.**

Looking Ahead...

The **General Election Meeting** of the Ski Club will be held in May. This is a perfect opportunity for anyone who is interested in helping the Club to continue to be a strong and vibrant organization to step forward and commit to a board or coordinator position. Having the next year's board in place early is key to planning for the upcoming season. Members can have their name put forward for any position but the Club has gone without a **Vice President** for several years and the Club will definitely need a new **Secretary** as well.

In addition to board positions, numerous coordinator jobs need to be filled. We need a new **Email Coordinator**. It would be nice to have a **Website Coordinator** and **Donor Recognition Coordinator**, to name a few. If you have an idea for a new program or if you

want to help coordinate an existing one, we will gladly use your volunteer energy.

Please contact the Club by email or phone and let us know how you would like to contribute a bit of your time.

CONTACT US

Remember, for information about the Ski Club, please check our website:

www.skiyellowknife.com

And if you need to contact anyone, email the club at yk_ski_club@yahoo.com or call 669-9754 (669-XSKI) and leave a message.

