

February 2009

President's Newsletter

It's already February and the skiing this 2008/2009 season has been awesome!

As of January 30th, we have 896 members so we'll have more than 900 again this year, making us the 3rd largest Cross Country ski club in BC.

The 2 biggest loppets in BC have been skied. There were over 370 skiers in the Reino Keski-Salmi Loppet and at least 400 students in the Pirate Loppet. Thanks to all the volunteers who made these loppets such fun and especially thanks to Pauline Waelti and Brian Smith for being in charge of these loppets.

There were 120 children in Jackrabbits and over 30 Junior Racers this year. Thanks to Joan Bratty and Abbie May for organizing the Jackrabbit program. Phil Wallenstein also deserves our thanks for coaching the Junior Racers. All the others who help with the Jackrabbits and the Junior Racers are appreciated too.

Roy Decker, our treasurer, picked up an envelope from the donation box recently with \$50 in it and with this message. "Thanks for the use of such fantastic facilities. Truly amazing place and so well looked after by volunteers!! Please, can you come to Ireland and set the same example?"

I continue to be amazed by how much work our volunteers do and also by the way many jobs are done before anyone is asked to do it. For example, I thought our "Ski at Your Own Risk" sign was in the wrong place to be seen easily. Then, I noticed that someone had already moved it to be more conspicuous.

I would like to especially recognize some of our volunteers even though I know I'll miss many people who also deserve recognition. So thanks to –

Blaine Carson, Dave Brubaker, John Pagdin, Clint Smith, Don Huntington, Jim Beckner, John Thielman, Tom Peasgood, George Zorn, Mavis Jackson, Vivian Morris, and many more.

Phil McIntyre-Paul is calling a meeting on April 20th of all the Summer Use stakeholders. I expect a group will be formed at this meeting to co-ordinate what happens on our trails when we are not skiing on them.

The Annual General Meeting of LHNS will be March 3, 2009 at the Community Centre. Please plan to attend so that the LHNS can continue to deliver great Cross Country Skiing in the Larch Hills.

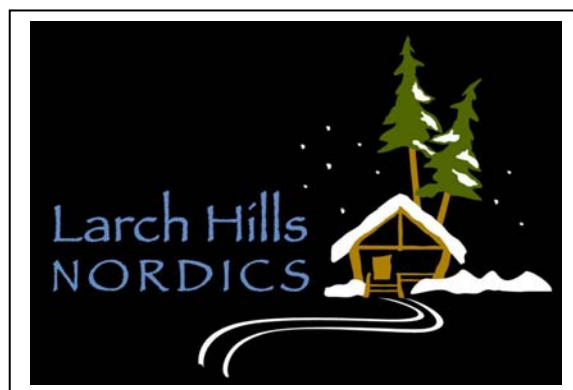
John Henderson

Larch Hills Junior Race Team Mid-Season Report

The junior race team is in the midst of their peak season now, and the skiers are training hard during the week and attending races most weekends. To start the season off, a group of 12 racers attended the B.C. Cup #1 in Prince George on January 3-4th. Despite the bitter cold which threatened cancellation, the team had great races and came away with several medals in both the classic and skating events.

For the past two years in a row the B.C. Cup races have coincided with the Reino Keski-Salmi Loppet, meaning many of the junior racers were unable to participate. This year there was no conflict, so the skiers were really happy to be participating in their home loppet again. A few of them were so excited that they decided jump out of their own age category to take on the 30km recreational route! Congrats to John Connor, Thomas Hardy, Jonathan Bakker and Kyle Flatman (12-13yr olds) for leaving behind the adults to be the top finishers in the R30. Many other race team members also enjoyed top place finishes in their age categories.

The same weekend as the RKS Loppet, two of our racers and one of our coaches were at the World Cup races in the Callaghan Valley acting as forerunners. The forerunners consisted of a group of young racers from the B.C. Provincial and B.C. Development Teams who were responsible for skiing the course ahead of the World Cup skiers. Their job is to ensure the course is completely free of any obstructions or inconsistencies immediately prior to the start of each event. Adriene Underhill and Spencer Jackson were selected as forerunners, and Brian May was the official coach for the forerunners. They also enjoyed watching the World Cup action when they were off duty. .../2



B.C. Cup #2 was held January 24-25th in 100-Mile House, with 18 Larch Hills racers participating. Whereas in Prince George the cold threatened to cancel the race, in 100-Mile it really happened. The racers managed to ski their qualifying round for the skating sprint races Saturday morning, but race organizers decided to call off the sprint heats in the afternoon. In this case, everybody's qualifying time was recorded as a final result. Luckily, the Larch Hills kids pushed hard in their qualifying rounds and coach Phil Wallenstein was all smiles over the team's results. On Sunday morning it was a crisp -25 at start time for the classic race, and after a bit of deliberation, the decision was made to cancel. It was a big disappointment for everyone involved, but this is just one of the risks of an outdoor winter sport. We still think the benefits outweigh the risks!

Next up is the B.C. Championships which will be held at Telemark Ski Area (Westbank) on February 7-8th. We expect to have almost the entire team attending this one as it is close to home and includes an evening banquet. Members of the greater Larch Hills Club are encouraged to come out and race also, as points are awarded to the clubs based on participation and a trophy goes to the club with the most points. For information and registration go to www.telemarkx-c.com.

Later in February, Western Canadian Championships will be held in Canmore, Alberta and a contingent of Larch Hills skiers is looking forward to racing there. And, especially for racers in the 9-12 age range, the always-fun Midget Championships is being held at Callaghan Valley February 28th - March 1st. This is a great opportunity for our younger racers to have the chance to ski the 2010 Olympic trails.

Tracksetting and Trails by Blaine Carson

A big thank you to all the volunteer tracksetters that operate our equipment and a particular thanks to Dave Brubaker who keeps everything running well. Thanks to the LHNS for providing new equipment and the funding for keeping the equipment in top shape. A commendation to Verne and Bruce for moving the Penttimobile on to its Vermont location where it will be treated as the museum piece it is. We will be happy to have the space for summer storage. Thanks to the people that put up the winter storage for the snowmobiles and their accessories.

The second snowmobile made a big difference in the early trail preparation and it has been put to good use by our newest Tracksetter, Wayne Buchanan. It is a heavy, powerful machine which requires a fair bit of expertise to operate well. As it was on break-in for the first 10 hours it was used mostly for packing, but now it has been out pulling the Ginzugroomer, our other new piece of equipment.

The new groomer is the correct width to go down the skating portion and freshen that up and it has a track pan that can be raised and lowered to set a classic track. There are cutters that can be raised and lowered to break up ice and bumps. The 4 cycle snowmobile seems fuel efficient and is fast enough pulling the groomer that it provides us with alternative possibilities. It has also allowed us to pack out the Animal Trails for Kids, big and little, by the Chalet as well as some short unnamed adventure trails by the old Chalet site. Yesterday the suggestion was made that one could be called Suicide Corner!

The regular setting of Woodlot Ramble to its full extent has been well received with many favouring the clockwise direction, but those liking speed going for the counter clockwise route. The new route connecting back to Skyview has some looking at the Clearcut and the road system down to South Canoe Perhaps something for the future?

The Joint Trail Committee with Shuswap Outdoors will be meeting prior to the AGM so if you are interested in trackset or non trackset trails, feel free to join us. There has been a meeting with the summer users and there will be more. I walked with Larry Scott, our cat operator, over the route to the North on Moonwalk so watch for a guided tour for those who are interested. About 3 days work would give us access to a major haul road and stunning views. Tolko has some logging plans north of Cec's Cabin which also may provide additional trackset trails. We also need to do a further review of snowshoe trails, so if you have an interest, we would like your attendance.

It has been a great year for skiing with lots of snow and only one melt which caused the underlying snow structure to give way and provided you with a few lumps and bumps. There will be more as Spring arrives, particularly on the Thielman Ski Out where a creek washes away the snow, so use caution. Another new trail for the older adventurer is 2 Tuff 4 U to be found off Metford or Ermine Frolic. It does have a water hazard and a tree hazard depending which way you go, so caution is advised. Enjoy the rest of the season!

LARCH HILLS SPRINTS

A Fun Event for Skiers of all Ages and Abilities

Date: Sunday, February 15th
Location: Larch Hills Ski Area
Times: Individual Sprints - 10:00 am
Relays - Early afternoon

Registration: **Pre Registration Only DEADLINE – Thursday, Feb 12, 10:00 pm**
By Email: pnhutch@telus.net By phone: 250 832-7242
To register, please provide Name, Gender and Age (as of race day)

Bib Pick Up: Sunday, Feb 15, 8:30 to 9:30am
Waiver signing and payment at same time
Parents not attending race must sign attached waiver

Distances: 100m, 200m and 400m (distances approximate)

Technique: Free Technique

Heats: Random Draw for first heat - no time trial
First two (of four, depending on number in category) advance
A and B Flights – everyone races at least twice

Fee: 15 and under – \$3 16 and over - \$5

Refreshments: Sport drink and water provided

Categories and Distances:

7 and Under	100 M
8 and 9	100 M
10 and 11	200 M
12 and 13	200 M
14 and 15	400 M
16 to 30	400 M
31 to 50	400 M
51 and Over	400 M

Ian and Kaarina James' pictures of the loppets

Ian and Kaarina James have posted over 200 pictures on their website. To view them just click on the link. <http://dancinggrebes.com> - It should be noted that they are not selling pictures.. They are available free (by return email in large file format) to the person in the picture (or parents) only –

Please note: none of these pictures will EVER be sold as no releases have been signed.
If anyone wants their picture our email is:
ian-kaarina@telus.net .

N.B. Most of these pictures will be removed from the website after about a month.

LHNS Calendar 2009

February 2009

Tues. Feb.3/09
General Meeting
Community Centre

Sun. Feb. 15
Sprint Races (see details above)

March 2009

Tues. Mar.3/09
Annual General Meeting
Community Centre

Sun. Mar. 8
Fun day windup

Sun. Mar. 29
End of Season Potluck
Chalet