

Larch Hills Ski Club

February 2003

Larch Hills Ski Club - Box 218, Salmon Arm, BC - V1E 4N3
WWW.LARCHHILLSSKI CLUB.BC.CA

The Reino Keski-Salmi Loppet was a great success due to amazing good luck and amazing volunteers. Thank you to every volunteer who helped to make the event an enjoyable experience for everyone. There were 387 skiers age 2 to 75 who enjoyed the great tracks at Larch Hills. The



post race activities at the community centre were also well attended and fun or everyone especially the family dance. The loppet was a wonderful celebration of a heart healthy lifestyle and also raised \$17,000 for the Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC and Yukon.

**There were 3 reflector vests worn by volunteers not returned after the loppet.
If you have one please contact Pauline at 833-0325 so we can return it to the owners.**

Thanks!

What a great Reino Keski-Salmi Loppet! Those "Skiing Angels" Reino and Pentti were looking after us! Thanks to everyone who volunteered to host one of B.C.'s best cross country ski events. Skiers from neighbouring Ski Club have remarked how impressed they were with this year's event; especially the tracksetting – knowing that our PB 130 tracksetter was in Kelowna for repairs. Thanks to our dedicated tracksetting crew!

So..., we are facing major, unexpected equipment expenses this season. Our +40 year old Pentti-mobile's VW engine was replaced in January . We got a break on the price. Our 17 year old, +7000 hours, Pisten Bully 130 tracksetter has been in the shop for 11 days for repairs. The bill is coming. Most of our \$7200 Tracksetter Replacement Fund, established last October, will be spent on these repairs. Your Club's Executive and Tracksetters are gathering information about the PB130 to help us plan for the future. A Tracksetter Replacement Fundraising Committee will begin to develop a

plan this year which will establish goals, timelines and "how to's". This plan will guide our Club's fundraising efforts over the coming years.

Also looking ahead, a Memorandum of Agreement, for looking after the ski trails, is being developed between the Larch Hills Ski Club and the Ministry of Forests with the cooperation of Shuswap Outdoors Club. The term of this Agreement is proposed to cover a 10 year period. Your Club Executive will give this Agreement careful consideration before it is signed.

Thank you to the many Club Members who have volunteered their time and talents this season to improve our Club's programs, events and facilities. The silence and beauty of the Larch Hills Ski Trails is something we all enjoy! Working together, it is amazing what we are able to do toward making the "Larch Hills Skiing Experience" enjoyable for everyone!

Happy Trails! – George Zorn, for LHSC



To: larchski@telus.net

Hello!

I just wanted to thank the club for putting on an excellent loppet, as usual! It was great to ski it again. I especially like how you emphasize participation with a low key start and an MC doing the finish who acknowledges everyone. As well, while out on the course I was cheered on by many volunteers and spectators who I didn't even know! The Salmon Arm community is just so darn friendly! :) And of course the food afterwards keeps us going through the tough times! Thanks again to all the volunteers, especially those who stand around in the cold for hours and then have to pick up our drinking cups! Tobi Henderson

The Loppet organizing committee is looking for volunteers for chief of race and secretary. Descriptions of the jobs follow - please consider joining our committee.

Secretary

The Reino Keski-Salmi Loppet is a vibrant and exciting event.

As a committee member it is wonderful to work with warm and friendly volunteers and skiers each year.

We are looking for someone who is attracted to the role of loppet secretary. This person works closely with Pauline, the Loppet Coordinator and Tina, the Registrar. It is a chance to combine innovation with tradition. The job entails different tasks and projects throughout the year culminating with the final Registration Day before the loppet. Satisfaction is guaranteed!

If you find this role intriguing, please contact Christine 832-7242. I will be happy to walk with you through the preparations for next year's 20th loppet.

Chief of Race

The Loppet organizing committee is looking for someone to replace me, Stan Thiessen as Chief of race. Larch Hills Ski Club provided training for me to fill the position and will assist with training someone willing to take on this role. The organizing committee is filled with experienced people who have done the job for many years who can assist in teaching the duties. If you are interested please contact me at stanat@telus.net There are 3 particular requirements:

1. Enthusiasm!
2. Level 2 officials course
3. Good communication skills.

Duties: The Chief of race acts as a coordinator, working as part of a team of exceptional volunteers to ensure that all jobs of the race are appropriately allocated. Communication is the key in this volunteer position. There are people in place who handle the course, registration, finances, timing, refreshments (aid stations), medical aid, results calculations, parking, radio communications and get all the equipment up and back down again. The Chief of Race is responsible for facilitating these positions to ensure that people have what they need to put on the race. The group working on the loppet has years of experience and local knowledge that can only be described as legendary. The group's positive attitude and love of cross country skiing are inspiring and make putting on the race a real pleasure.

Thanks, Stan Thiessen



HEART DISEASE - - - - -THREE IS ENOUGH - - - - -Blaine Carson

After attending the dedication of the Pentti Vakeva Memorial Shelter I am prompted to write an article warning of the dangers of undetected heart disease and not heeding the warning signs. As skiers we often take our training seriously, working our bodies hard for any number of reasons. Consequently, we develop strong hearts, which may mask heart disease. We may go to our doctors with vague complaints. They listen to our hearts, take our blood pressure, check our cholesterol, and may make a referral. But, we have three skiers who have died prematurely in the last while who had seen their doctor. They all presumably could have been saved if appropriate action had been taken, or in two instances, if they had slowed down.

I write about this as I had undetected heart disease, having vague chest pains climbing Metford Hill, which disappeared after skiing across Bilbo's Bog. I thought it was my breathing and so did my Doctor. I had some pain when running, but it also disappeared after a time. When I finally looked at my medical book and compared my symptoms to those of angina, they seemed similar. The book directed me to go to emergency where I was given a thorough examination, but nothing

obvious was found. I was kept in that night for observation and a stress test was arranged. It showed a problem, even though I felt no pain during the test. I was referred for an angiogram, which showed blockages of 90%, 70% and 50% leading to a diagnosis of exercise-induced angina. This brings me back to the point of this article. My three friends were also continuing some of their activities. One died while running and another had just had a great day of skiing.

Don't continue your heart stressing activities when your body is giving you messages! For more information, please feel free to contact the writer at 250 833 4008 or bcarson@jetstream.net. We also have a Heart Support Network of other Club members who have survived heart disease.

P.S. I sent this article to Dr. Brian Ayotte to ask his opinion. He was kind enough to respond, and I quote; "See your doctor when you feel your endurance is dropping for no good reason. Don't settle for any brush off! Keep insisting on good solid answers until you are satisfied. If necessary, ask for a second opinion or a referral. Medicine is not an exact science."

Looking at European Cross-Country Ski Culture:

Some LHSC Members Talk About Skiing in Scandinavia

by Tammy ThielmanLHSC Newsletter Contributor

This winter is one of the best for skiing in forty years -- if you live in Norway. Or Russia, Finland, Sweden or Central Europe.

According to an on-line BBC news report, a long cold spell in these Scandinavian countries has sent cross-country ski sales soaring, even more than during the '94 Lillehammer Winter Olympics.

"Norwegian langlaufers (skiers) are expected to buy about 300,000 pairs of cross-country skis, or almost a quarter of global sales - not bad for a country with no more than 4.5 million people," says the report, which also states the Finns are expected to buy just over 200,000 pairs of xc skis, "while in the US about 150,000 pairs will likely be sold."

So, for those of us who haven't skied in Europe, what's the experience like?

Here, some well-known LHSC members share details about skiing in their homeland:

SKI TO THE NEXT TOWN Avid local skier **Stig Keskinen** describes skiing in his hometown of Purmo, on the west coast of **Finland**.

"Skiing (in Finland) was great," he recalls, "but we didn't have modern equipment like we have now. There were fun races almost every week, and alot of family skiing outings."

According to Keskinen, "we didn't have modern tracksetters, people would ski through the bush and make tracks, just in and around the trees," he chuckles. "Sometimes we'd follow an old logging road -- it was quite primitive, but nice."

At that time, skiers used wooden skis, bamboo poles with large baskets, and wooden skis with "a leather toe strap and rope or piece of inner-tube over the ankle, with any type of boot -- there weren't any fancy boots."

Keskinen returned to Finland in 1996

for the World Masters Championships in Kuopio.

By the site of the Masters competition, ski trails crisscrossed several lakes. At night, trails were lit with fires in 45 gallon barrels.

"There were road signs and you could ski across the lakes from town to town," Keskinen recalls.

THE 90 KM. LOPPET

LHSC member **Curt Otterstrom**, of Eagle Bay, was born in Ostersund, in northern **Sweden**, "not too far from Arctic Circle." Otterstrom learned to ski at about age three, on trails only minutes from his family home.

"Skiing was the most popular sport, I think because it is a family thing," says Otterstrom who has also skied in Worlds Masters Championships in Alaska, the U.S., and Finland. Otterstrom skied seven times in Sweden's historic 90 km. Vasa Loppet.

"Fifty years ago, forerunners would set trails in a race -- we didn't even have snowmobiles in those days," Otterstrom laughs. Many trails in Sweden, Otterstrom explains, are colour-coded and layed-out five km. loops.

SKI RACE AT SCHOOL

Ahti Takamaki's hometown is Kuortane, **Finland**, about 150 km from Vasa, the home of the 90 km. loppet. "In wintertime, we all skied," says Takamaki, from Salmon Arm. "We skied to school, and during recess, we'd ski around a track a few times. Many schools have ski races and relays."

Takamaki explains that many small villages have lit tracks and in areas where there is little snow, cooled pavement layered with sawdust, then snow.

Year round paid skiing is available in two tunnels.

"They take their skiing very seriously. Even people who aren't considered

athletic still ski -- it's what everybody does when there's snow."

Takamaki points out that, though the older generation still skis, many young people like to snowboard, "much like here," he says.

When Takamaki was a young boy in Finland, "everybody had skis," he recalls. "Not many skis were bought in the store, there were many people who made them."

FRUIT SOUP, RYE BREAD AND GLOG

It's famous. **Gullan Hansen's** "glog" -- a warm, invigorating, spicy, fruity drink with a hint of red wine. Many of us grateful skiers have sampled Mrs. Hansen's delicious Swedish glog, simmering in a pot on the woodstove in the Larch Hills chalet.

The warm drink also has raisins, cloves, cinnamon sticks, orange peel and almonds.

Hansen, originally from Sigtuna, **Sweden**, describes what a typical lunch might be, if you're a skier in her home country.

"Blueberry Soup is very popular," says Hansen, "Blueberries are cooked with water and sugar, to make a fruit soup that is thickened with potato flour."

This soup is served hot in the winter, and cold in the summer months. Rosehips are also made into soup: after being picked, dried, cooked and pureed, "rosehip soup is a nice warm drink to take on a ski."

Rye crisp and rye bread is usually paired with soft, spreadable cheese, sliced hard cheese, or a whey-based product that is like 'Sweden's peanut butter,' says Hansen. Swedish skiers might also snack on Swedish cinnamon buns.

Hansen got her first skis when she was eight years old, "that's a Christmas I'll never forget," she laughs.

February 2003 newsletter - Membership

Membership fees provide the revenue for Larch Hill Ski Club to operate and maintain our ski area. Each year the list of generous contributors expands, as more skiers enjoy the trails. **Thank you, one and all, for your continued support.** Memberships are accepted throughout the ski season and close at the end of March each year. Please take the time to update your membership now. Forms are available on our website www.larchhillskiclub.bc.ca, at Skookum Cycle and Ski, at John's Ski Shack or call Christine at 832-7242.

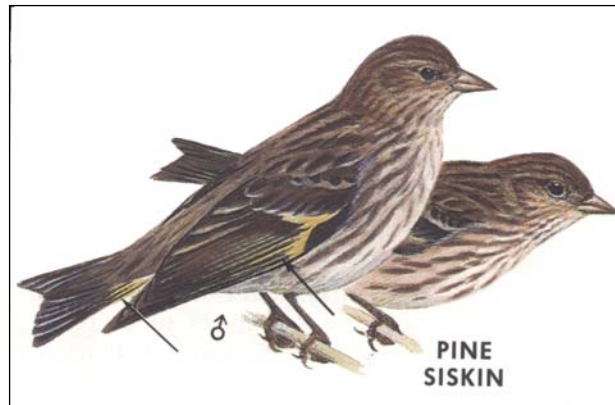
Please note that if you do not renew your 2001-02 membership this will be your last newsletter.

On the way up to the ski hill on recently, I noticed several flocks of little birds on the road just below the parking lot. I slowed down and honked my horn, most flew away, but several remained on the road until it was too late and I hit one - killing it instantly! I felt awful, and not without some guilt, because I was aware that I had contributed to an issue that occurs at an alarming rate all across the southern interior of the Province.

The bird I hit was a Pine Siskin, a small member of the finch family that weighs only 14 grams (about the same as two toonies!) and is 4½ inches long. At a glance they remind you of a sparrow, being mostly dark brown on top with a streaked underside. On closer inspection you will notice they have a touch of yellow in the wings and at the base of the tail which is diagnostic.

Like other winter finches such as the white-winged crossbill, red crossbill and the common redpoll, siskins are nomadic migrants (no fixed home range), that are seed eaters and use the coniferous forests of North America as their home. They travel enormous distances (some banded in New Jersey and

New York, have been spotted near Revelstoke!) In winter, they are often seen in small flocks on the roads, presumably attracted to the salt and grit that they need to digest their food. Scientists don't know the exact effects, but it is thought that the salt they consume could be toxic at certain levels. This causes disorientation, and may be a reason for their slow reaction to oncoming vehicles. They often rise too late, and become another statistic on the grill of some transport truck! As many as 250 birds have been recorded killed by one truck! Annually, many thousands of these small birds are killed on our roads and highways.



Careful driving and attention can make a huge difference in the number of birds killed. Watch carefully, especially after a snowfall, and if you see a flock on the road ahead, don't count on them getting out of the way in time! Start **honking** at them from a distance. You may have to honk more than once to get them to abandon their fatal attraction! Slow down too, if you can, but check your rearview mirror first! You don't want to become a grill bird yourself!

Treasurer's report

John Pagdin

Revenue is down in most budgeted areas over last year. The two things that have really helped us out are the \$5.00 surcharge per member for CCBC fees that used to be paid by the club and are now paid by members, and the Gaming Commission Grant. These two items have generated \$3000 each. Total revenue as of the last general meeting (Jan 28) was \$38,483. Significant upcoming expenses include \$1050 for the Junior Racing Team, approximately \$1800 for snow plowing to date, and a sizable bill, possibly over \$3000 for the repairs to the Pisten Bulley. To insure that we have the funds available to cover these and other upcoming expenses, the Replacement and Reserve term deposit will be cashed in as of Feb. 16th. Total expenditures as of Jan 28th were \$33,047. Bank balance totals were \$5436.

"Welcome to the Larch Hills Cross Country Ski Trails!"

This is the message our Club will convey to skiers who arrive at Larch Hills to ski on weekends during the month of February. Our new Welcome sign & trails map, north of the Parking Lot, carries that message too! Club Volunteers will be representing our Club at the Trail Host Hut (aka Loppet Timers Hut) also located north of the Parking Lot.

Club Trail Host Volunteers are Adult or Teenage (16 and older), members of Larch Hills Ski Club. Trail Hosts provide a friendly face to greet newcomers. They also provide Trail and Club information to new skiers such as Trail maps, Club Newsletters, Club membership forms, Club Programs and Events, tracksetting reports and maybe even wax of the day info.. Trail Hosts may also receive donations from non-Club Members using the trails and answer questions. Hosts will be based at the heated Hut.

21 Volunteer Club Trail Hosts have come forward to each serve for 1.5 hours on Saturdays or Sundays, February 1 or 2, February 8 or 9 and Feb. 15. It's only 1.5 hours!

If you would like to Volunteer as a Club Trail Host for 1.5 hours here are the dates and times that were still "open" at presstime for which Volunteers may sign up:

1. Sunday, Feb. 16: 11:30 a.m. or 1:00 p.m.
2. Sunday, Feb. 23: 10:00 a.m. or 1:00 p.m.

Please contact John Henderson, our Trail Host Coordinator, (832-4127) if you are interested in Volunteering as a Club Trail Host. Thanks!



“Ermine Frolic”, “Bobcat Bounce”, “Bruin’s Ramble”, “Lynx Trot” ... many of the Larch Hills Ski Trails are named after our animal friends who live in the forests of the Larch Hills. It’s exciting to suddenly come upon a pair of Moose as you ski down “Skytrail” or to see their deep tracks in the snow. Maybe you’ve heard an Owl hooting in the distance, while you’re out on a night ski? The trees and forests we see along the Larch Hills ski trails are as varied and beautiful as the elusive animals that make their homes in those forests.

Cedar, Hemlock, Larch, White Pine, Douglas-fir, Spruce, Birch, Cottonwood, False Box, Huckleberry, Lichen.... names of trees and other plants we experience in winter form along the ski trails. Experienced as massive, shady “old growth” Cedar-Hemlock heaped with snow at the North Hub; or as hoar frost laden “new forests” of Larch, Douglas-fir and Cedar along Woodlot Ramble; or as maturing, early seral forest “ghosts” in white at South Hub, along Larch Lake Loop and Sky Trail.

Our December 2002 Ski Club Newsletter featured an interesting article by Tammy Thielman, “Logging Established Original Larch Hills Trails”. Let’s look briefly at three new forests along the Larch Hills Ski Trails where, in more recent times, a variety of Silviculture and Research projects have been initiated with the aim of managing these gifts of Nature.

1. South Hub/Pentti’s Shelter/“Plantation Place” trail: This area (opening 82L075-36, 86 hectares in size) was logged in 1970 by Hoover Sawmills of Vernon. A portion of the area was planted in October 1970 as part of a 58,000 seedling project. The remainder of the area was planted in the Spring of 1971 – with Douglas-fir, Spruce and a small percentage of Lodgepole Pine - part of a 203,000 seedling planting project. (Here’s a comment by the Planting Foreman: “... crews should be made up of more mature planters. Younger ones seem to take a great deal more supervision as period extends.”)! Many of the trees you ski past on your

left, as you head up “Larch Hills Road” past Pentti’s Shelter, have been growing there for over 30 years. Over that period of time the new forest has diversified to include natural regeneration: Cedar, Hemlock, Abies, White Pine, Birch and Aspen trees.

The most recent survey of the area, done in 1992, measured tree heights averaging 5 meters with average leader heights of 35-38 cm. Currently, average tree heights are estimated to be in excess of 10 meters. The survey also measured a desirable density of 1033 well spaced “crop trees” per hectare. Along the way, in 1984, about ¾ of the new forest area was manually brushed by a local crew using power saws and hand tools to reduce competition by birch, willow, aspen and other deciduous trees. Despite that “crop treatment” (a Silviculture investment) the current forest contains a healthy mix of Birch, Aspen and many other species. What animals might like this area? Part of this area may be thinned sometime in the future depending on funding and other investment options and priorities.

2. “Larch Lake Loop” trail: area south of the “junction” with “Larch Hills Road”: A favorite section of the ski trails, this forest has been thinned and pruned to improve it’s end product value. Opening 82L075-39, was logged in 1968 and planted in 1969, ’70 and ’71 in conjunction with the South Hub area described above. On a 19 hectare area located both above and below the road south of the “junction”, trees were chain saw spaced at about age 20 years. Ninety percent of the remaining 5-6 meter tall trees were “first lift” pruned with shears to 2.4 meters height by the same forestry crew. Pruning aims to increase the amount of clear, knot-free wood in the stem. In 1997, in the same stand, trees taller than 9 meters were “second lift” pruned to 5.6 meters height using extendable pruning saws. That’s quite a reach, eh! North of the “junction” an 18 hectare area of trees was spaced in 1992 and first lift pruned in 1998. As you ski along the great terrain at the south end of “Larch Lake Loop” have

a look at these new forests Do you like what you see?

3. “Stig’s Loop” south of “Frodo’s Bog” junction: This area (opening 82L075-96, 1.3 hectares in size) was logged in 1990 in response to a Hemlock Looper outbreak that killed a small area of trees. Logging slash in the block was rough bunched and burned in the late fall of 1990 and planted in 1991. Because of its proximity to the Interpretive Forest Trail the small area was planted (as a local trial) with 10 different conifer species in 13 distinct sectors. The latest survey, done in 2000 and 2001, shows the area is fully stocked with a mix of 5 conifer species, averaging close to 3 meters in height. Although they would not be planted on a site like this normally, see if you can identify the Yellow Pine and Yellow Cedar.



The “Maple Leaf Plantation”: About 3.5 K east of “Frodo’s Bog”, as the crow flies, there’s a 34 year old Larch and Douglas-fir plantation (part of 82L075-51) that was planted in 1969 in the shape of the Expo 67 Maple Leaf with the number ‘69’ below the leaf. An aerial photo of this plantation was taken 20 years later in October 1989 when the Larch trees had changed colour from green to yellow. In 1992 the trees were 6.2 meters tall. Root rot (a naturally occurring disease) was seen to be causing mortality in many more Douglas-fir trees than Larch trees. Are you able to identify the “Maple Leaf Plantation” in the photo?

Our Young Racers

Alysson Marshall and Jesse Heckrodt have been selected to compete at the 2003 National Championships on the BC Team! Congratulations to these two fine young athletes and Larch Hills Ski Club skiers! All the best in your training for this upcoming event! For more info. on the National Championships, being held March 2-9 at Highlands Nordic, in Duntroon, Ontario go to: <http://www.skinationals.com/english/index.htm>



The Larch Hills Team that raced in Kelowna. Missing from the picture are Alysson and Jesse

BC SKI TEAM SELECTIONS 2003 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Alysia Garmulewicz (Hills Nordic Ski Club)
Alysson Marshall (Larch Hills Ski Club)
Cameron Egan (Sovereign Lake Nordic Club)
Chris Werrell (Omineca Ski Club)
Davey Mitchell (Bulkley Valley Cross Country Ski Club)
Elliot Holtham (UBC Nordic Ski Club)
George Grey (Black Jack Cross Country Ski Club)
Greg Egan (Sovereign Lake Nordic Club)
Jacqui Benson (Caledonia Nordic Ski Club)
Jesse Heckrodt (Larch Hills Ski Club)
Kelsey Thomas (Wells Grey Outdoor Club)
Leanna Mitchell (Bulkley Valley Cross Country Ski Club)
Micheal McMillan (Bulkley Valley Cross Country Ski Club)
Nellie Dow (Bulkley Valley Cross Country Ski Club)
Peggy Howard (Bulkley Valley Cross Country Ski Club)
Raymond Sabo (Ft Nelson Cross Country Ski Club)
Rob Spiller (Sovereign Lake Nordic Club)
Robin Simms (Nelson Nordic Ski Club)
Sean Palumbo (Caledonia Nordic Ski Club)
Stefan Mueller (Snow Valley Nordic Ski Club)
William Dean (Telemark Cross Country Ski Club)

Please address enquiries to the CCBC Athlete Development Committee c/o Chairperson Dianne Strimbald at 250-696-3672 or dstrimbald@ngis.ca

Hello!

We had our first race today! I did ok considering that I was jet lagged and tired still. I'm not sure what place I finished in (75th out of 84), but I was closer to the end of the group. I'm not allowed to use the computer for very long because there is only one computer in the entire hotel, and its connected to a slow internet connection and costs lots of money to use.

The roads here are really windy and the busses drive very slowly. It takes us about an hour to get from the hotel here in Stella Nevea to the race course in Tarvisio. The busses arrive here every 20 mins which is pretty good! The food is really good, and we can eat as much as we want at breakfast, lunch, and dinner! I'm staying in a room with Matt {Cummings from Vernon} and it's really quiet at night which is good. The Canadian hockey, downhill, and some other country's teams are staying in our hotel. The other teams are a long ways away from here.

We are going to watch the Canadian hockey team play the USA tonight, and tomorrow we are planning to go up to the top of a really tall mountain near the hotel on a gondola and ski around where its a really cool!!

Thank you for helping me with the finances to allow me to have this experience.

Luke :)

FROM Blaine

I would also like to see a Thank You to Rod Charlebois for preparing a video on the dedication of the Pentti Vakeva shelter which has been sent to the Vakeva, Wood and Bisette families. Copies are circulating among Club members who wish to see it.

A Thank You should also go out to Linda Irvine for allowing us to store the Tracksetter machinery on her property and to the Thielman families for allowing us to go across their property. Sorry I'm so late on doing this. I look forward to the Newsletter. You guys do a great job.

Blaine

Tracksetting Report by Blaine Carson

Tracksetting has been a bit of a challenge this year due to weather conditions and machinery breakdowns. The year started off with the Snowmobile in two pieces, but the Tracksetters repaired it. Next to stop was the Penttimobile with a damaged engine after over 30 years of service. The VW engine has been replaced with a rebuilt and it is now purring like a kitten. It was a bit of a mad rush to have it ready as a back up for the Loppet just in case it was needed. It turned out that it was, as the PB 130 started over revving more frequently. It was sent to All Cat services in Winfield with the expectation it would be back prior to the Loppet, but it turned out it wasn't an easy fix, so it is still not back. The Loppet tracks were set by packing with the Penttimobile and tracking with the snowmobile. We expect the PB 130 back early in February with a bypass for its erratic electronics. The Club can be proud of all the extra work the Tracksetters performed.

The Tracksetting Course in early December was a great success as we were given some new ideas and had the opportunity to test-drive some of the new machines. As we eventually have to look at a replacement for the PB 130, we now have a few more ideas about innovations and safety features.

Trail Committee Report by Blaine Carson

The new trails in the south are getting used now that we have lots of snow. Sunshine, Woodlot Ramble and Skyview were part of the Lantern Ski and were used in the 30K recreational Loppet. We try to set a skating track as well as a classic track around this loop. Going clockwise on this loop you climb a long hill, when going counter-clockwise you have a fairly challenging descent. Rollercoaster hasn't been set very often because of machinery difficulties.

Panorama has been packed two times this year. It is a challenging route up or down. We hope to do some bulldozer work on it next fall to make it more skier friendly.

The non-track set trails of Blue Sky, Pole Camp Way and Ridge Run are skiable either way with a few steep sections going downhill. We have tried to provide run-out space and clear sight lines, but they all can be improved with some pruning.

The Trail Committee has been asked to provide input by Feb. 17/03 to Glen Ritchie regarding six proposed cut blocks on his woodlot.

RACING REPORT FROM LIZZIE

December and January have been exciting months for the Larch Hills Ski Team. On January 4th and 5th we went en masse to the 1st BC Cup Race in Kelowna. Eighteen Larch Hills racers entered the event and represented us very well. On Saturday's race Marina Flatman came home with a bronze in the Pee Wee Girls, while Taylor Bahen was close behind her in 4th. In the Pee Wee Boys Larch Hills dominated the field with Kashtin Mair in 2nd, Spencer Jackson in 3rd, Ari Bruns in 4th, Sergio Pike in 5th, and Eric Gignac in 7th. Alysson Marshall was 4th in the Juvenile Girls while Jesse Heckrodt was 2nd in the Junior Boys.

The Pursuit Race on Sunday proved to be very exciting with the kids doing a classic race in the morning and then continuing with a skating race in the afternoon. The team brought home more medals on Sunday with Jesse Heckrodt 1st, Alysson Marshall 2nd, Ari Bruns 2nd, and Kashtin Mair 3rd in their respective categories. Also representing our club with outstanding races over the weekend were Carmen, Adriene, and Jocelyn Underhill, Heather and Jeff Savage, Andres Pike, Tuie Cleveland and Sonia Domarchuk-White.

In mid January the kids enjoyed participating in our local loppet, and on January 25th and 26th we sent a crew of racers up to the 2nd BC Cup Race in 100 Mile House. During the weekend in 100 Mile House Jesse Heckrodt had a 1st place finish, Alysson Marshall had a 2nd place finish, and Spencer Jackson had a 4th place finish. Sergio Pike and Andres Pike also had very good races over the weekend.

Coming up in the next few months, both Jesse Heckrodt and Alysson Marshall will be representing BC in the Canada Winter Games in Bathurst, NB and at the Canadian National Championships in Duntroon, ON. We wish them all the best at these races, and as a team we are very proud of them.

Our younger racers are looking forward to some fun races in Kelowna and Vernon over the next few months and hopefully some more snow to let the ski season last a bit longer.

Anyone who wishes a direct email blind copy of the daily trail report which indicates trail conditions and recent tracksetting can request it by emailing bcarson@jetstream.net

To unsubscribe use the same process. The trail report is posted on the rolling banner on the website and is faxed to the local ski shops. It is usually sent out before 8:00 am unless there is no change or I am uncertain about conditions.

If you are planning a special event in the Larch Hills an email indicating location and dates will allow the Tracksetters to do their best to provide appropriate tracks. We try to not set tracks in soft wet snow as they will freeze into boiler plate as soon as the temperature drops. A reminder that nowax skis will often be sticky in fresh warm snow. There are a number of commercial products that will help including silicone sprays. They wear off quickly so carry something with you. Hotwaxing also helps. Blaine

Conditions permitting, Larch Hills Ski Club's Valentine's Lantern Ski is planned for Friday evening, Feb. 14. Peter Mair is looking for your help with the following jobs.

Please call Peter 833-1941 or e-mail him: peterm@bellpole.ca if you are able to help.

11 pairs of Lantern Lighters/Tenders - a 1.5 hour job starting at the Chalet around 5 p.m., Friday, Feb. 14 (time to be confirmed)

3 Chalet Hosts - each a 1 hour job starting at about 6 p.m., Feb. 14

3 Event Hosts - each a 1 hour job starting at about 6 p.m. at the heated and lit "Trail Host Hut" at the Trail head

4 pairs of Lantern Gatherers - each a 1.5 hour job starting at the Chalet around 9:30 p.m. (time to be confirmed)

Candle Bag Makers

2 Chalet Bon Fire Tenders - each a 1.5 hour job starting about 6:30 p.m.

Musicians: Accordionists, Guitarists, Recorder Players, Fiddlers or...? ...to entertain Valentine's Sweethearts-Skiers at the Chalet (and maybe at the Chalet Bon Fire).

People to bring Valentine's Treats to share with other skiers at the Chalet

Thanks to Peter for coordinating this Club event and to you for considering how you might help make this a successful Valentine's Lantern Ski!

If there's room, LHSC received the following a letter dated Jan. 10/03 from Shuswap Second Harvest, Box 628, Salmon Arm, B.C. V1E 4N7:

"Dear Skiers; Shuswap Second Harvest would like to thank you for your generous donation (of \$120 plus 50 lbs of food from the Jan. 4 Lantern Ski) to our program. Now that we are in to the winter months when little fresh produce is being donated, it is really helpful to receive cash so that we can make bulk purchases of potatoes, carrots and onions. Last Wednesday, we distributed 150 lbs of potatoes, 100 lbs of carrots and 50 lbs of onions to our more than 100 clients, so you can see there is a great need.", the letter continues, "...we expect to continue averaging from 100 to 125 requests each week. We are heartened by the wonderful community support we have received, and by the number of kind-hearted people who wish to share with the less fortunate. We really appreciate your support. Thank you once again. Yours sincerely", Signed Kay Braby,

Please direct Newsletter Readers to our Club website for updates to Club Policies, Club Member Notices, Club Member Buy & Sell, Tracksetter and Tracksetting Equipment Info., Trail Maps, etc. Noelene Whippy and June Bryson.