

Sandpoint Nordic Club

Newsletter - November 2019



Ski Team Registration is Open!

Registration for the 2019/2020 Youth Ski Team is open at <https://www.sandpointnordic.com/skiteam>

Along with the recreation and race team, a development ski team option is also being offered this year which will be a three day per week program led by Rebbeca Dussault introducing athletes to both classic and skate skiing. This program will be a great stepping stone for athletes curious about joining the race team in the coming years.

Sign your kids up soon - Program fees will increase on December 10th. We are looking forward to a fun filled season on the new trails at Pine Street Woods!

Nordic Season Kick Off

Kick off the ski season with us at the Heartwood Center this Thursday, November 7th.

This event is all about reconnecting with your fellow nordies and building excitement for the season. A presentation on what to expect at Pine Street Woods and more for the coming winter will be given, and many local shops will be set up to show you what nordic gear they have to offer.

As always, food, beer, and raffle prizes will be present. Eat, drink, be social, and win a prize!

A Name to Remember

The Pine Street Woods Recreation Center construction is well on it's way to completion for the coming winter season. This is a space to warm fingers and toes after time spent on the trails, a space to keep shoes warm and a snack waiting for your arrival, a space to foster community, and a space to offer a stepping stone to winter physical activity. This dream quickly shifted into reality with funding from the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health "Community Transformation Grant".

The Recreation Center will hold rental skis, snowshoes, as well as the snowmobile and groomer, complete with a porch overlooking the meadow. This very special building needs a very special name. That's where you come in. We are looking to our community to come up with a creative name to call our new home. We invite you to submit names and what inspired the name. We are excited to see what you come up with, and even more excited to open this space up for our entire community! Click here to submit your name idea: <https://kaniksulandtrust.org/2019/10/16/name-recreation-center/>

Upcoming Events

Nov. 7th - Nordic Season Kick Off

5:00 - 7:30pm @ The Heartwood Center 615 Oak St. This is our annual fall kick off. Come join the festivities!

Nov. 7th - Dover Planning & Zoning

6pm @ Dover City Hall, 699 Lakeshore Ave., Dover. Public hearing for the special use permit to ensure the success of Pine Street Woods. For more information, click here <https://www.sandpointnordic.com/pinestreetwoods>

Nov. 9th & 10th - Trail Work Days

9am, 11am, and 1pm at PSW. Join for needed trail work. Come prepared with sturdy shoes, work gloves, and steel rakes, loppers or shears if you have them. RSVP on the PSW Facebook page, or just show up to work!





“Fine” Street Woods

By Jared France

Most of us Nordic skiers don't put much thought into the ski trails when we show up to ski. We simply lace up our boots, snap on our bindings, strap on our poles, and hit the trails. We all have our favorites, from the ease of the U of “High” trails on North Boyer to the stunning views and staggered climbs of Schweitzer's “Cloud Walker”.

Trail construction doesn't happen by accident. It takes careful planning and, more often than not, a group of dedicated volunteers to make them happen. The Sandpoint Nordic Club is moving from the flat terrain of the North Boyer U of I trails to the rolling terrain of the Kaniksu Land Trust's “Pine Street Woods”. For the move to happen, trails had to be developed in a relatively short amount of time.

The Pine Street woods trails are approximately 500' higher in elevation than the city of Sandpoint. Access is via a newly constructed gravel road off Pine Street Loop, just a couple of brief miles from town. The trails are designed to be multiple use, hiking and biking in the summer, Nordic skiing, snowshoeing and snow biking in the winter. There is a system which designates the trails as either wide or narrow. In the winter, the wide trails will be groomed for skiing and the narrow trails for snowshoeing and fat bikes.

Much of the trail design, layout and construction was completed by Sandpoint Nordic club president Ross Longhini and a group of as many as 50 volunteers. The trails were located on existing old logging roads and skid trails as well as a small meadow to keep expensive new construction to a minimum. Mr. Longhini spent countless hours 60-70' in the air sawing limbs off trees adjacent to the trails. This was designed to allow as much snow as possible to reach the forest floor. The limbs and an occasional small cut tree were then run through a wood-chipper, with the aid of numerous volunteers, and spread across the forest floor to reduce the slash and fire hazard as well as provide nutrients.



A small dozer was rented to smooth out the rough spots and bank a few corners. One trail is ADA certified and wheelchair accessible. Another was built to allow for an alternate, emergency access. Beginner and novice trails are located right from the parking lot to aid those new to the sport. If you're afraid all the trails will be too easy and you won't be challenged, fear not, a challenging hill climb awaits. For those looking for a beautiful view, there's a trail for you too. Dogs will not be allowed on the groomed ski trails, but there will be places for you to snowshoe with your canine companions. Trails will be free to Sandpoint Nordic Club members and a \$5 trail fee for non-member use.



The finishing touches are currently being completed for the Pine Street Woods Nordic ski trails. Trails need to be named and rated and signposts put up. The building that will house the grooming equipment and rental skis as well as serve as a warming hut is coming along nicely and should be ready when the snow flies. When the snow does arrive, the trails are groomed and you're ready to ski, take a moment and think about the volunteers, sponsors and grant providers who made it all possible. U of I ski trail fans don't despair, the Pine Street Woods trails are going to be just “fine”.



Wax On Wax Off... Changes In Equipment and Ski Prep

By Bill Tregoning

I had not formulated a plan for a lifelong vocation at the completion of high school. So, in 1970 I went to work in a ski shop. It was love at first paycheck. I enjoyed the business and spent 45 years there trying to figure out what to do with my life. During that time, I marveled at the new innovation that I saw coming each and every year.

Most changes in equipment, technique, and ski preparation come from advancing technology. These advances improved ski materials, wax composition, and allowed for better tuning techniques. Sometimes athletes can drive change. I remember Bill Koch winning an Olympic medal with a modified skate technique. It wasn't long after that there were specific skate skis on the market. I also remember riding the Sun Valley shuttle back to the village in the 60's when a gal got on the bus with BUCKLE boots. I had never seen them before.

Base preparation and waxing haven't been immune to changes in technology. Changes in ski construction and improved materials have allowed for improved ski preparation techniques. I can remember tuning skis with a dry belt sander, followed some years later by a wet belt sander, which kept the ski cooler while grinding, and finally a stone grinder in which a pattern could be carved into the stone to give the ski structure.

I purchased my first XC skis in 1971. Bonna 2400's with 3 pin bindings. They were beautiful, solid laminated wood with lignistone edges, also wood. Preparing these bad boys for skiing required impregnating the base with pine tar using a propane torch. This sealed the wood base and gave it a tackiness to bind wax. It took longer to clean up the mess (think molasses) than to do the application.

Laminated skis with a little fiberglass and ptx bases were hitting the market not long after I scorched my Bonnas. Many of these skis had stickers on them warning skiers not to wax them with an iron. The epoxies used in those days wouldn't hold up to high heat. I saw many skis with bubbled or delaminated bases from skiers who couldn't read. Glide wax was applied by rubbing it on the base, followed by a vigorous workout with a cork. We also melted wax in a pot over a backpacking stove and painted it on with a brush. The excess was removed with a scraper after the ski had cooled.

Waxes in those days were pretty basic, green, blue, red, yellow. You had to mix waxes for temperatures that were between the specific colors. Kick waxes were equally simplistic, plus there were some 2 wax systems for kickers. If you could make a snowball use red, if not blue.

Time marched on and skiers were looking for alternatives to kick waxing. Trac Skis came out with the solution, fish scales. These skis climbed great, having more scales than a 10 pound carp, but the scales did impair the glide. This technology made XC skiing less intimidating to those nervous about waxing and soon all ski manufacturers were experimenting with some sort of patterned base.

The 80's and 90's brought more improvements in fish scale bases and a dramatic increase in skating equipment. The technology in base materials took a leap from extruded bases to sintered bases. Extruded bases were soft and didn't absorb wax well. Sintered bases were much harder and more porous allowing for better wax absorption and durability. Along with the harder sintered bases came structuring.

Structuring is a pattern cut into the base using a stone grinder which helps eliminate the suction on the base of a ski as it slides across the snow. Until that time there were very few stone grinders in use because the base material was too soft. Structure patterns can be altered for different snow conditions. Once the ski was structured, it was waxed and scraped. This filled in the structure requiring brushing the ski base to reopen the structure. Until now brushing was unnecessary as there was no structure to worry about.



Waxes became more important with sintered bases as they took in so much more. Manufacturers began to narrow the temperature spread between waxes so instead of having to mix wax for certain conditions there was a premixed wax ready for it. There was also a proliferation of expensive waxes with higher fluoro content which are now being banned in parts of the world as it has been found that they can be toxic to the ski tech if he or she is not properly protected.

On the forefront is infrared waxing. Until now, using a hot box was the best way to achieve maximum wax penetration into a ski base. Skis are waxed and placed into a heated box for several hours, allowed to cool and then scraped and brushed. Infrared technology gives you the benefit of hot boxing without the wait. A microwave for your skis! The wait time is 3-5 minutes and no scraping is necessary. I don't believe that anyone locally offers this service, but it won't be long.

While writing this article it occurred to me that there have been a great many changes during my lifetime in all facets of life. Self-driving cars, on-line shopping, cell phones and on and on. Me, I'm waiting for self-climbing skis.

Ole & Lena

OLE AND Sven had been visiting some relatives in Norway. Now the two of them were on a flight from Oslo to Minneapolis when the captain spoke across the loudspeaker. He said that the number one engine went out and the arrival would be half an hour delayed.

"Dat's not so bad," said Ole.

A little later the captain spoke again and told the passengers that engine number two went out and there would be an hour's delay. Ole looked at Sven who was sitting next to him and said, "Vell, dis is strange. I hope ve don't get any udder delays, Sven. Do ya tink da pilot knows vat he's doin'?"

"Yust lay back and relax, Ole," said Sven.

Ole managed to take a little snooze. He was awakened when the captain interrupted for a third time to tell everyone that engine number three had just gone out. They would be an hour and a half late now.

"Uff-da!" exclaimed Ole, "I hope dat last engine don't go out, Sven. If it does, ve'll be up here da whole night!"