

Sandpoint Nordic Club

Newsletter - February 2020



SNC Race Team Recap

Our Sandpoint Nordic Club race team has been very active this winter! They have raced in Rossland, BC, Bend, OR and at Mt Spokane. They will race this weekend in Winthrop, WA and then will race at Kimberley, BC, Libby, MT and close out the season at West Yellowstone.

The races in Bend, Spokane and Winthrop are all Junior National Qualifiers. If the racers place well in those races, they are named to the Pacific Northwest Ski Association (PNSA) team and compete at Junior Nationals which will be at Donner Summit, CA in March. Only racers 14 years and older compete at Junior Nationals.

The race at Mt Bachelor in Bend, OR, was an absolute blizzard. The team braved 40 mph gusts and 2' - 3' of snow falling each day. Nonetheless, the skiers had a great weekend with some of their best place finishes. The races at Mt Spokane also had plenty of falling snow and very difficult kick-waxing conditions. We had our largest field of racers ever at ten: Izzy & Callahan Waters, Jett & Kai Longanecker, Jonas & Jude Benson, Fletcher Barrett, Clara Cave, Kasten Grimm and Winslow Cox. We skied against seven well established teams and had some great results including several podium finishes. The SNC race team's administrator is Vicki Longhini and the coaches are Dan Patterson and Ross Longhini. In our March newsletter, we will share more race news with you.



Upcoming Events

Feb. 8th - Learn to Ski Day

9 - 11 am and 12 - 2 pm @ PSW. Beginner classic and skate lessons offered with ski rental for only \$10. Registration is full.

Feb. 8th - Clinic with Rebecca Dussault:

Mastering the classic technique for beginner to intermediate skiers. 10am @ Lakeshore Trails. Contact Rebecca to reserve your spot 970-209-4823

Feb. 14th - Valentines Day Couples Clinic with Rebecca Dussault.

10am @ Lakeshore Trails. Contact Rebecca to reserve your spot 970-209-4823

Feb. 15th - Learn to Ski Day

9 - 11 am and 12 - 2 pm @ PSW. Beginner classic and skate lessons offered with ski rental for only \$10. Go to sandpointnordic.com to register.

Feb. 16th - Clinic with Rebecca

Dussault: Learn to skate great, beginner to intermediate, no first timers. 11am @ Pine Street Woods. Contact Rebecca to reserve your spot 970-209-4823

Feb. 16th - Clinic with Rebecca

Dussault: Advanced Techniques for experienced skiers - 1 hour classic and then 1 hour skate. 10am @ Lakeshore Trails. Contact Rebecca to reserve your spot 970-209-4823



Ski With A Neutral Spine For Less Wear and Tear On Your Body

By Bill Tregoning

I started Nordic skiing about 20 years ago. During those 20 years I have seen technique evolve in an effort to make a skier more efficient. When I started, I learned that prior to a pole plant, bring the hips forward and round the upper torso which also pitched the shoulders forward. It worked fine for me and others were winning medals with it. I was happy. A half decade later I was visiting my physical therapist for help with the tendinitis in my shoulders. I still use those exercises when it flares up.

Earlier this season I was checking out xcskination.com, which is an online Nordic ski school designed for all levels of skiers. The website is hosted by a Canadian national team coach, a top level instructor plus others. They offer videos and commentary on anything connected to improving Nordic ski technique. Their library contains over 700 videos. While perusing the new video offerings I came across a new video called "Olivia's Backstory". Olivia was a former world cup skier whose prior auto accident and current ski technique collided causing her to drop out of the Worlds competition. The concept of skiing with a neutral spine was the technique change that allowed her to ski pain free again.

A neutral spine just means that you ski with a relatively straight spine. This spine alignment gives more strength to the bodies core and doesn't overtax the joints. I watched the video showing footage before her technique change and saw that I was making similar mistakes. The after video showed a slightly different forward lean as she hinged at the hips to get forward rather than bending the spine to get there.

There are some visual clues that indicate that a skier is skiing without neutrality. When the arm comes forward to begin the pole plant look for:

- The back arches and the rib cage elevate.
- The torso angle is more vertical.
- Hips press forward and your shoulders go back.
- The head bobs excessively.

The neutral spine solution is pretty simple. Instead of thrusting hips forward and rounding shoulders, both of which cause the back to lose strength and stability, concentrate on hinging at the hip joint to bring your weight forward. The hip joint is a stronger connection than a curved spine. In addition, try to prevent movements that push the hips forward. A neutral spine is stronger and allows the body to work with less wear and tear.

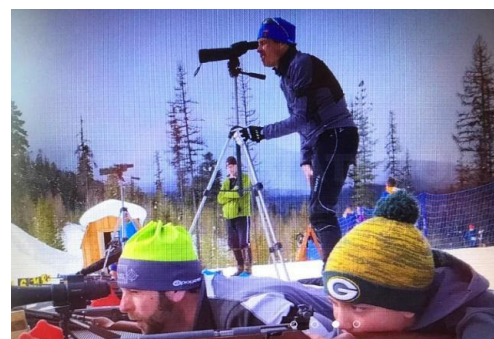
If you are interested on watching instructional Nordic ski videos on every conceivable subject, take a look at xcskination.com. They have topics from biomechanics, dry land training, rollerskiing, and even skiing on snow.

Introduction to Biathlon, pt. 2

By Jared France

How do you get kids interested in Nordic skiing? One way is to introduce them to the sport of biathlon. Ben Scott, a former junior national biathlete located in Libby, Montana has succeeded in growing the Kootenai Nordic Club to as many as 150 members, many of them kids. The creation of a biathlon range certainly didn't hurt. The Kootenai Nordic Club grooms and maintains approximately twenty kilometers of Nordic ski trails in the Flower Creek area only a couple of quick miles from Libby as well as 4.5 miles on the Cabinet View Golf Course. Trails are located on a combination of city, state and Forest Service property. The club offers programs through the local schools to teach kids to Nordic ski as well as gun safety and shooting techniques. The after-school program has approximately 45 participants while the Nordic club program has another 40.

Both programs are designed to keep activities fun while getting kids outside and keeping them active. The trail area includes a visitor center, maintenance shed and a new 1 kilometer paved roller ski loop adjacent to the biathlon range which should be completed next summer. The biathlon range itself provides up to twelve separate shooting stations with five targets each. Scott,





who learned his craft with the help of a couple of older, biathlon coaches in the Seattle area is trying to give back to the sport. His goal is to create opportunities for the youth in Libby area to excel in both Nordic skiing and marksmanship. Building a strong youth program will eventually lead to a competitive team that will travel to events in the Northwest and parts of Canada, but for now the goal is teaching and making skiing fun.



The Flower Creek area Nordic trails and biathlon range are part of a larger, master recreational trails plan which is just starting to take shape. One future addition is developing the historic Snowshoe Road trail that leads to one of the most popular trailheads in the Cabinet Wilderness. This trail could be used for skiing in the winter and biking in the summer. The trails initiative includes updating information on existing trails and developing new trails for mountain biking, skiing, horseback riding, hiking and snowmobiling. Much like our own Pine Street Woods, the Flower Creek trails and biathlon range were a community effort with support of both Lincoln County and the Libby City Government. Grants provided money for materials while the county provided crews to do some of the work enabling grant money to go a lot farther.

The Kootenai Nordic club offers a signature event in February known as the Wolf Chase. The event includes a classic ski sprint competition as well as a free style biathlon race for kids of all ages. Guns and training are provided and it's a great way to introduce kids to the sport. Last year 13 skiers from the Sandpoint Nordic Club competed in the event. This year's Wolf Chase is scheduled for February 15th.

Ole and Lena

Ole is on his deathbed and is expected to last for only a few more hours. His wife Lena is right beside him. Ole says his last words to Lena. "After I die Lena, I want you to marry Erik Yonson". Lena is shocked and says "But Ole, you hate Erik Yonson". Ole takes Lena's hand and looks deep into her eyes and says "Ja, and I still do".

10 Great Reasons for a Midseason Ski!

1. Cross country skiing uses a large percentage of your muscle mass, and is more efficient and effective than activities using legs alone or arms alone.
2. The low impact nature of the activity reduces impact loading on joints; this is particularly important for individuals with arthritis or joint surface defects.
3. Gliding over uneven surfaces increases your "kinesthetic sense," in other words, your body's ability to perceive its location in space.
4. The weight shift in ski-skating and the diagonal stride techniques while gliding on snow increases your balance, and balance is critically important in all sports and as we age to prevent falls.
5. Skiing increases your cardiac output (your heart's ability to pump blood) and increases your oxygen carrying capacity (your body's ability to take in, oxygenate, transport and extract oxygen at the working muscle), or stated another way, increases your cardiovascular fitness.
6. It improves your visual acuity, which is your ability to sense terrain changes and snow undulations in bright and low light conditions.
7. Skiing improves self esteem and confidence. Enjoying a ski will help you feel healthier, happier and more invigorated due to increased blood flow and heightened senses.
8. It helps cultivate an appreciation for our surroundings and environment. Quality time on a ski trail in glorious winter conditions helps us all appreciate the natural world we often take for granted.
9. Skiing with family and friends is a great bonding opportunity, resulting in stronger friendships and relationships; this reduces stress and provides an opportunity to re-charge our tired batterie.
10. Idaho, BC and Montana have some of the finest cross country ski trails in the country. We encourage everyone to, "Get out, have fun and enjoy your winter on cross country skis."



News on Norwegian Nordies

By Dick Sevenich

Recall that, for this season, I am following two Norwegian cross country skiers, Johannes Høsflot Klæbo and Theresa Johaug. At this point I'll look at where they stand in the World Cup after the most recent event in Obertsdorf, Germany on Jan. 26:

Therese Johaug

- overall - 1st place
- distance - 1st place
- sprint - 24th place

Theresa is now tied with Marit Bjørgen as the most decorated Nordic skier (male or female). Although Theresa is not a sprint specialist, she does gather points there.



I should at least mention the American women who lie in the top 10 places:

- Note that for Overall points, Jessica Diggins (USA) lies in 4th place and Maubet Bjornsen (USA) in 7th.
- In the Distance category, Jessica Diggins (USA) lies in 5th place.
- In the Sprint category Sophie Caldwell (USA) lies in 4th place, Jessica Diggins (USA) in 7th place, and Maubet Bjornsen (USA) in 9th place.

Johannes Høsflot Klæbo

- overall - 2nd place
- distance - 5th place
- sprint - 1st place

The Russian, Alexander Bolshunov, has a commanding lead in the Overall and Distance categories. He won this year's Tour de Ski, won by Klæbo last year. Will Klæbo be able to challenge Bolshunov this season?



Calling for Newsletter Contributors!

Have a ski topic you would like to write about or something you would like to know more about? Article and article topic contributions are always accepted. Email sandpointnordic@gmail.com if you are interested in contributing.