

WINTER 2013

red river nordic ski & biathlon club



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This is a corny but highly appropriate title for our club trip to Thunder Bay Jan. 1-6 2013. A chartered Beaver Bus loaded up with 44 Red River Nordic skiers, family, and guests for a trip to the Ontario Cup races which were run concurrent with the World Junior Trial races at Lappe Nordic. Our guests included Levi Warkentine from Boundary Trails, Levi Nadlersmith from Downtown Nordic, Ben Dearing from Whiteshell Ski Club, and 3 skiers plus coach Betsy from Kenora Nordic.

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Juvenile and older age skiers raced 3 days and midget aged skiers raced twice on the trip. Lappe Nordic did a great job of hosting the races on marginal snow. They had freezing rain in December and hundreds of volunteers had to shovel many hours to prepare the course for the races. This meant shorter race loops, but all of the big beastly hills that Lappe is known for were included in the courses for the juvenile and older skiers. "The grunt" was featured for 4 loops when Alex and Erik raced the classic leg of their 20 km skiathlon the first race day. Our guys put their mental prep skills to the test! That same day, juvenile and junior boy/girls raced a 7.7 km classic. Fortunately, the weather was decent for waxing. This was the start of Red River Nordic and Manitoba gaining some notice from the Ontario bunch . . . Levi Nadlersmith was 3rd in juvenile boys (racing up an age category) and Sean Carter managed a strong 4th place in Junior boys, in a field of 30 skiers. Lisle Compton from Kenora skied to a strong 9th in juvenile girls.

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Thursday Jan 3 night proved to be a very challenging one for our team. The hotel fire alarm rang at 1:15 AM and it turned out NOT to be a drill. There was a real fire in the kitchen and when Corey and Megan ran down to check on things, the lobby was filling with smoke! We ran back up to knock on doors and get everyone out. Kids were orderly and efficient. Everyone grabbed warm coats and we congregated in the hotel parking lot. Corey and Megan counted heads and gathered the group. The short version of the story is that after standing in the cold parking lot, then sitting on our bus, then getting shipped to a nearby hotel ballroom area, we were eventually allowed back into the hotel rooms at 6 AM. The original plan had been to have an early morning, and be the bus at 7 AM – so we all just stayed up and got ready to go. ALL skiers voted to race despite the night of no sleep. Seriously, these guys just wanted to race!! I heard many a skier voice the concern while the fire was still smoking . . . “can we still race tomorrow?” and “what will happen to our skis?” That’s a dedicated group!! Corey and Megan’s greatest moment of relief came earlier in the episode when we heard that it was a kitchen fire . . . i.e. not caused by something we had done in the wax room earlier! (the wax team had only finished waxing the group’s 20 pairs of skis about an hour before the alarm went off)

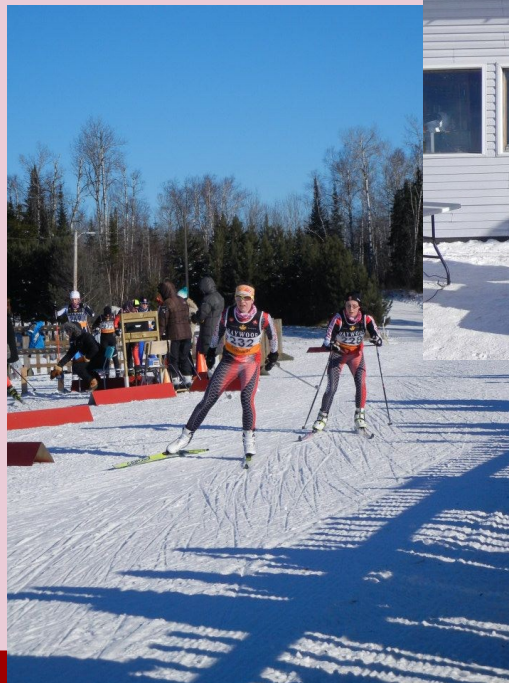
Friday following the hotel fire was Ontario Cup sprints. We thought it fortunate that it was not distance races that the skiers had to tackle on no sleep! This was the first day of racing for the midget aged skiers, and we found that Conor McGovern’s reputation had somehow preceded him. Several of his local competitors went around before the race searching for him, asking many of our skiers “are you Conor?” (Meanwhile the real Conor was off doing a focused warmup.) Erik Penton did a great job of psyching out the competition by talking up how fast Conor was! Conor ended up 3rd in the sprint A final, to much cheering. Also in the Ontario Cup Sprints that day, we had great results from Sean in Junior boys, as he finished 2nd in the finals, shooting his boot for the needed inch or two over the 3rd place skier. We chuckled the next day to see a photo in the local paper of a collapsed skier at the sprint finish line . . . the skier that Sean had just out-sprinted! Elora Adamson had a fantastic 3rd fastest qualifying time and skied into the A finals. Levi Nadlersmith won his B final, and both Paetra Adamson and Cam Roe qualified for their age group B finals. GREAT RACING in extreme circumstances! But I DON’T think we will add sleep deprivation to the race prep planning for future races!!!



The Saturday schedule allowed ALL but a few to catch up on some major sleep in the morning. Only Alex, Erik and Sean (and Jennie from Kenora) raced this day, the World Junior trails sprints. Our guys raced well but nobody advanced into the heats. The rest of the team arrived to watch some of the sprint finals action, which I hear was pretty exciting. Then they hit the trails for a training ski.

The last day was a distance skate race, interval start. Again, Manitoba made the other clubs sit up and take notice. Conor handily won midget boys by 20 seconds and Levi Nadlersmith won juvenile boys by 12 seconds! It was exciting to be on the end of the walkie talkies that day! All skiers raced well, with other result highlights including Maya Boivan (Kenora) 11th in junior girls, Lisle Compton (Kenora) 7th juvenile girls, and Paetra Adamson 6th in midget girls.

Other trip highlights? Finnish pancakes in the Lappe clubhouse, team-mates and parents covering the trails and especially the uphill with exuberant cheering . . . family side trips to downhill ski and snowboard in Loch Lomond . . . a group ski at Kamview, a trip to Fresh Air Experience, and lots of shared laughter and conversation. Corey was an awesome wax mentor, and had teams of coaches and parents working together most nights to prepare up to 23 pairs of skis. Claire was a great coach, and kept Megan sane by taking on many responsibilities like the all- important “counting of heads” each time the bus was loaded! It was great to have so much support from fellow coaches and parents, to make this trip a great success!



First: In this article the terms "Weight", "Center of Mass", "Mass", "Balance Point" are all used synonymously. Our weight is centered around our hips. Hips Fwd. Wt fwd. Lean Fwd. We've heard it all. Its all about moving our weight forward along the trail.

What makes an efficient skier? As we flail along the course our weight is repeatedly speeding up (from work/effort/power/propulsion) and slowing down (from wind resistance/friction/gravity/etc.). Efficient skiing maximizes effort and allows less slowing down of our weight as it is moving along the trail.

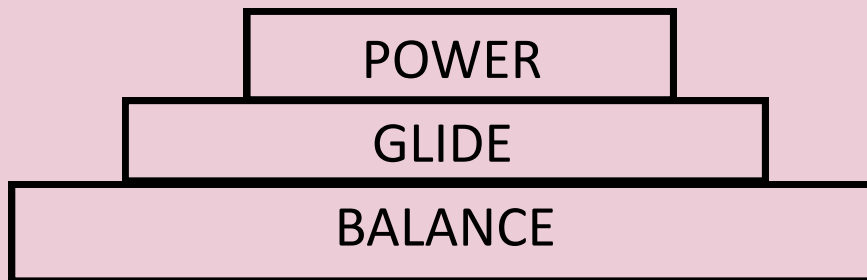
ELEMENTS OF PROPULSION	QUALITIES OF EFFICIENT SKIERS	COMMON QUALITIES OF LESS EFFICIENT SKIERS
Leg push	Complete extension of leg while keeping wt centered on ski.	-Less than full extension -shifting of wt off of ski before full extension
Arm push	-Weight and muscles apply force to poles. -full extension of all arm joints. -poles angled so that forces are transmitted in direction of travel.	-weight not loaded onto poles. -less than full extension of joints. -poles angled inward or straight up and down.
Arm swing	-Straight front to back , complete, fluid and continuous	-Out to side -incomplete -has a pause
Weight directed <u>forward</u> in direction of travel	-Body angled forward during force propulsion	- Body more upright

ELEMENTS OF GLIDE	QUALITIES OF EFFICIENT SKIERS	COMMON QUALITIES OF LESS EFFICIENT SKIERS
Balance	-Wt centered -Is able to control balance equally on each ski	Rides an edge Falls off of ski (is forced into next push cycle). Poor control of balance.
Weight forward	Hips and body go forward	

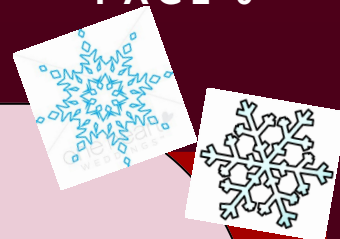
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The beauty of skis is that they **GLIDE**. The ability to glide allows our weight (mass) to keep moving along the trail while we prepare to apply more force. Efficiency is all about applying forces in the direction of travel and to allow good GLIDE. There is glide in ALL x-c ski maneuvers. To improve your skiing, pay attention to 3 things about your glide: Is glide present? When (in the technique) does glide occur? Can you control your glide? (nb.: Remember that it is our Center of Mass – centered around our hips - that we are letting glide.)

The process of learning to cross country ski well is like a pyramid. Equal balance control on each ski is the foundation, ability to glide while balanced is next, the application of power follows. **IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO MOVE UP THE PYRAMID OF BECOMING AN EFFICIENT SKIER WITHOUT MASTERING THE STEPS IN ORDER**, but isn't it is great fun working on it? Enjoy the rest of the winter!



CAMERON ROE



Hi my name is Cameron Roe. Skiing is my favorite sport and I have been skiing since I was one and a half, and before that my parents would carry me around in a baby carrier at Canmore for spring break, Grand Beach at the cabin and at Windsor park. I don't remember those times but my parents said that I smiled the whole way. Some of my favorite places to ski include the Canmore Nordic Centre, Peter Lougheed where I broke my pole last year, Shannondale, Birch with that 500 meter downhill, Moraine lake road in Lake Louise, and Grand Beach Trails.

A good memory of skiing for me has always been the dash for cash because everybody there is really nice and because it is an introduction to ski competition. Also it's just really fun. The first skis that I ever had were the Snow Party skis and I remember putting them on in the chalet at Windsor and trying to ski inside the chalet. I don't think those skis lasted so long.

Now I am a member of the Red River Nordic junior race team. I love to race. Some of my favorite races are Thunderbay (Lappe), Flin Flon Provincial and sprints. I like these races specifically because the courses are challenging and really fun to ski with all of the hills. I also like to go really fast over short distances which is why I like the sprints.

I am also a member of the Biathlon team. I enjoy the combination of shooting and skiing. Shooting adds an extra level of difficulty and focus. It makes me concentrate more on accuracy and breath control then on skiing and cardio. I would suggest that everyone try biathlon even if it is just for fun.

Not many people know that I used to sing with the Winnipeg Boys Choir. I have even sung in two Opera's. I had to quit so that I could participate in Biathlon. I play drums now with the school band. I like the rhythm and being able to play whatever I want and make it sound good.



Meet A Jackrabbit Coach

Scott Gibbons

You never know how you are going to end up in a sport. Sometimes you find it, sometimes it finds you. And sometimes, your parents just make you go outside - and quit your bellyaching by the way - and do it.

Fortunately, my introduction to cross-country skiing falls into the middle category. (My children might argue that, as a parent, I am guilty of the latter, but more on that later). It was the winter of 1979. Brandon just finished hosting the Canada Winter Games and part of their legacy was a small network of ski trails in a bump on the horizon south of the city known as the Brandon Hills or Blue Hills.

Me? I was a 13-year-old kid from Brandon's east end who loved playing basketball in the winter and baseball in the summer.

I didn't know the difference between a nordic ski and its alpine counterpart. Skate skiing hadn't been officially recognized yet - yes, Jackrabbits, I'm that old - and the only wax I could name started with the word Turtle.

It turned out my parents didn't know much more than me. But that didn't deter them from buying four pairs of Blue Hills Classic skis, which weighed (and I'm rounding down here lest you think I'm exaggerating) about 25 pounds each. You didn't so much glide on top of the snow as beat it into submission.

My family often headed to the Brandon Hills for a Saturday outing but my favourite memory of 'skiing' involved being whipped along the frozen Assiniboine River behind a family friend's snowmobile. I can't stress how indestructible those Blue Hill skis were. Those Canada Games also left a lasting thought with me personally — when it comes to volunteering, there is no job too small. Or, as it turned out, too gross. I was a volunteer at the boxing pavilion, held on the main stage at Western Manitoba Centennial Auditorium. Did I see any boxing? Of course not. My job, once the three-minute round started, was to collect the spit buckets from under the ring, run to a basement bathroom and have them cleaned and back in place before the round ended. A true story. Skiing behind a snowmobile was fun, but it turns out self-propulsion sports are more my thing. Much of my adult life has involved a healthy (some might call it obsessive) pursuit of running and I've been fortunate enough to qualify for and run the Boston Marathon the past three years. As a family, we love going mountain-biking and, of course, skiing.

Our first year was not much different than what a lot of parents experience. We thought after viewing a Jackrabbits video on YouTube - and I must stress our youngest daughter agreed - that it would be fun.

(Don't worry, Clara, I won't use your name here. Don't worry RRN, it was an enjoyable year).

Well, she didn't really like to play the games. She didn't really like to socialize with the other kids. She definitely didn't like the cold. There was, however, one thing she liked to do - move to the side and go up and down the hill where the Jackrabbits held their sessions. But that was OK. Neil Kornberger, the Jackrabbits co-coordinator at the time, said he was always just happy to see her out and offered her words of encouragement.



Meet a Coach Continued

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With that success story as a measuring stick, we did what most normal parents would do in this situation - we signed her up again, and included her older sister, too.

This time, though, it clicked. And continues to click. Clara is in her fourth year, her first with the Junior Sidewinders and has participated in a couple of Wednesday night races. She loves skate skiing. And as a family, we discovered we enjoyed spending our Saturday mornings at Windsor Park. It can be cold sometimes, but more often it is gorgeous, and I can't think of a better way to kick-start the weekend. That's the real beauty of living in a winter nation. That second year was also the year I was 'Pentonized.' Laurie wandered over at the first dry land session and asked if I would like to volunteer. I said yes, and helped that year with the Junior Sidewinders before spending the latter two seasons with Kenton Frith and the Jackrabbits.

I love seeing the children progress on skis - from the maddening first time going uphill to the beginning of a smooth glide. I love it, particularly at the end of the season, when it's almost impossible to hold them back.

Would I have ever seen myself as a coaching assistant way back when? Running, definitely; skiing, never. But I love it. After all, sometimes you find a sport, and other times it finds you.



Change is Good as an Athlete and as a Person.

By Sarah Tipples

My name is Sarah Tipples. I am a former athlete of Red River Nordic ski and biathlon club. Last summer I moved with my family from Winnipeg to Edmonton, Alberta. In Winnipeg, I was competing at the provincial level for quite a while. I then was hoping to join the race team, but that changed when I found out I was moving. When my parents told me the news, I took it as an opportunity. I was sad to leave the “peg” because of leaving my family and friends (a lot from skiing) but I was more excited.

Before I had even arrived in Edmonton, I had sent the head coach of Edmonton Nordic a letter (basically my version of a ‘ski resume’). I included my times from races the previous years and the awards I received from CCSAM and RRN. He replied back soon after saying Edmonton Nordic would like to have me. When I started training in the summer with the club, I met a couple older skiers who were on the race team. They were all nice kids, but the feel of the team I am on is different than RRN. The friendships I made in RRN were really great, but here as a skier I have had to work harder training and pushing myself than being pushed by others. The feeling as being part of a team was one of the things I miss about RRN. Everyone knew each other really well. Here, there is not as much of a

‘team oriented community’ that athletes felt a part of. I think this has helped me become a stronger skier though and has made me focus more on training and mentally pushing myself harder when I ski. I do enjoy having friends at skiing to make it more enjoyable on the really sluggish nights where it’s hard to find motivation to train.

As a skier, I had always wanted a chance to compete in Canmore, Alberta. After I moved here, within the first 4 months I had gone to Red Deer for a camp, gone to Canmore a couple times including (watching the World Cup in Canmore), competed in two regional loppet’s and gone to two Alberta Cup races in Drayton Valley. While I am racing in Alberta, I have found the competition to be challenging (extremely fast Canmore kids, more hills than I am used to and elevation). It is a different experience, but good for preparing myself for larger races (nationals, westerns, etc.).

Overall, moving to Edmonton has been a great experience and will hold lots of opportunities inside, and outside of skiing. Though I do miss Winnipeg, I can always go back there and I still call it home. But for now, I am a Cross-country skier in Alberta.



RED RIVER NORDIC COOKIES

From the Roe/Zonneveld Family

½ c butter (not margarine)

1 small container baby prunes or applesauce (Lesley Ball's suggestion)

½ c brown sugar ¼ c Burwalde honey

1 egg

1t vanilla

Mix ingredients well

Add

2 c whole wheat flour

1 c oats (quick oats or steel cut- I use Rogers with flax seeds)

1 pinch of salt

1 pinch of baking soda

¼ c sesame seeds

Mix well

Add

½ c chocolate chips (Cam Roe's influence) ½ c raisin (Chris Roe's influence) Mix by hand

Roll into balls and press flat in the palm of your hand.

Place on a ceramic cookie sheet or a metal cookie sheet with parchment paper.

Bake at 325 (350 if your oven is not a hot as mine) for 10-12 minutes.

Enjoy with as many friends and possible.