



new england NORDIC NEWS

SUMMER 1999 VOL. 4, NO. 5

A PREVIEW OF THE CROSS COUNTRY 2002 WINTER OLYMPIC VENUE

by Anne Donaghy

At the 2002 Winter Olympics the cross country venue at Soldier Hollow, just a few minutes' drive from Park City, Utah, will be the largest and most complex of all the venues. Soldier Hollow will also host the most events during the two and a half weeks of the Olympics, since nordic combined and biathlon will race there as well as cross country. The Paralympic Games cross country events will be held at Soldier Hollow only ten days after the Olympics. The chiefs are already in place — Chief of Race, Chief of Course, Chiefs of Stadium, Chief of Timing — now the braves are being recruited. Roughly 500 volunteers will be needed to run the events, the majority of them coming from the surrounding area to help keep down the cost of housing and transportation, and to ensure that after the last 2002 Olympic event there will be a seasoned group of race organizers ready to continue to host top notch events on the Olympic trails for many years to come.

I learned these things at the outstanding wrap-up presentation at this spring's USSA cross country committee meetings by John Aalberg, chief planner and Chief of Race for the 2002 Winter Olympic cross country events. John also showed us schematics of the main building — an 8,000 square foot building that will remain at Soldier Hollow as a legacy to future cross country race and training events. He highlighted diagrams of the trail system at Soldier Hollow, which offers sweeping wide-open terrain that will make for wonderful race viewing. The terrain isn't easy though. John says the first of the five kilometer loops that has already

been laid out offers rolling ups and downs and hills that are quite challenging but skiable. Once the trail system has been completed, there will be sprint loops of 1 and 1.5 Ks (2002 marks the debut of the Sprint as an Olympic xc event), several 2.5K loops, four different 5K loops, and then longer trails of 10, 12 and over 16 kilometers. Nearly three quarters of these trails will be covered by permanent snowmaking, with pipes buried below the frost level and hydrants handy to efficient fan blowers along the trail. The rest of the trails will have snowmaking by above-ground hoses. Only 150 hours of snowmaking time are needed to completely cover the trails, should there not be enough natural snow.

This will be a busy venue in the next six months leading up to the first Test Event, the 2000 U.S. National cross country championships in January. The Biathlon Nationals follow a month later, and the NCAA cross country ski championships in March. A cross country World Cup race will be held at Soldier Hollow in 2001. By the time the 2002 Olympics roll around, the venue and its organizers will be more than ready. Aalberg, a Norwegian before he decided to reside in the U.S., truly understands the social, festive side of the sport. This will be a spectator friendly, festive venue with room for over fifty thousand spectators. Tickets will be cheap. Make your plans now to be there in February 2002!

NENSA is still looking for

- a digital camera
- a laptop computer

Can you help? Phone the Administrative Office at 802-879-2270 or email Fred Griffin at nensagr@sover.net.

Soldier Hollow 2002 Preview	1
From the Editors	2
BKYSL	3
Cross Country Committee Meeting Report	4
NENSA Elite & Development Teams	4
NENSA Works!	5
NCCSEF Awards Travel Grants	5
Calendar	6
Engadine Ski Marathon	6
Strength Training	8-9
A Modest Proposal for Growing Our Sport	9
Club News	10
From the Archives	11

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NEW ENGLAND NORDIC NEWS

NENN is published six times a year as a membership benefit of the New England Nordic Ski Association.

If you are not yet a NENSA member, please join

— support nordic skiing in New England!

To request a NENSA membership application, contact the NENSA Administrative Office. For fastest processing, send your membership fee in with your request for the membership form — as of 4/25/99, it's \$30 for the first member of the family (\$40 if not affiliated with a club), and \$20 for each additional family member (\$30 if not club-affiliated), payable to NENSA. When you return the signed membership form, you'll receive the NENSA competition guide and other membership benefits.

For information about life membership in NENSA, contact the Administrative Office.

DEADLINES

Articles and pictures submitted for publication in

NENN must be in the editors' hands not later than:

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Spring (May) issue: March 25

Summer (July) issue: May 25

Early Fall (September) issue: July 15

Late Fall (November) issue: September 25

Photos and graphics are always welcome. If related to an article, photos or graphics should be submitted with the text.

ADVERTISING

For complete particulars on advertising in NENN and/or the NENSA Competition Guide, contact the Administrative Office.

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FROM THE EDITORS

Those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer

Are here....

And with them, NENSA skiers are busy getting ready for next season. Clubs are planning their summer calendars. Remember, the great cross country skier is born in the off season. If you don't already belong to a club, contact any in your area, or the club where you plan to vacation this summer, to join in the fun. NENSA's web page has a listing of all the NE clubs and their contact people.

Here at NENN, there has been an abundance of activity on the part of our contributing writers to provide members with anecdotes, reports, humor and some advice on training. You'll get a glimpse at racing in a large, European marathon from Murray Banks on page 6. The first of a two-part article on strength by Zach Caldwell appears on page 8. Club news is replacing Around New England in this issue. Let us know how you like this new format. Don't miss the listings on the calendar page. NENSA's Coaches Clinic, Gaining More Ground, is sure to be a repeat of last year's resounding success. Register early; it filled up quickly last year. For kids, BK camps are listed as well. These camps provide great opportunities to build friendships along with developing great activity habits that aid in furthering the BKL goal of promoting lifelong participation in the sport. Your best bet is to read NENN from cover to cover: that way you won't miss anything!

If the end of May is any indication, this summer is going to be a hot one. Does this mean next winter will be cold and snowy?

Have a great summer!

Anne and Mary

Last-Minute Calendar Addition:

"Ski With Smirnov" — A Special Opportunity for Junior Skiers

Sunday July 11th 1:00-4:00 pm

Vladimir Smirnov and his family will be in the U.S. this July, and he will be coaching at the NENSA coaches' clinic on July 9-11 at Jericho, Vermont. Smirnov was one of the top Soviet cross country ski racers, coached by Nikolai Anikin. After the breakup of the USSR, Smirnov skied for his country of Kazakhstan and became one of the best cross country skiers in the world before his recent retirement. Here is a chance to meet him and train with him!

\$50 fee includes a signed t-shirt.

Contact Fred Griffin at the NENSA administrative office to sign up. 802-849-2270 or nensagrff@sover.net

BILL KOCH YOUTH SKI LEAGUE

IT'S SUMMER, ENJOY IT!

by Ed Hamel, Berkshire Trails Junior Ski Coach

O.K., so you want to be a good skier. Well, there's been no snow for two months now and it'll be another five months before you can ski again. But still, you can feel the desire to ski. What do you do from now until the snow flies? First, enjoy the summer and all the outdoor activities the summer brings. Choose activities that you really like and are fun for you. Soccer, baseball, softball and basketball are all fun team sports that'll keep you active. Biking, rollerskiing, running, hiking, gymnastics, swimming, canoeing and even fishing are individual sports that will get you outdoors to enjoy the summer.

Have you ever noticed that during fun activities the time just flies by? If you're really enjoying an activity, hours will pass as if time stood still. Maybe you rode your bike to your favorite fishing hole, met your good friend, didn't catch any fish, went for a quick dip to cool off, and now you're late for supper! Next time, try being on time; parents like it better when you come home when you're supposed to.

When you choose sports like biking or hiking, keep in mind the old adage, "the more the merrier." Whether it's a team sport or not, don't be afraid to include grown-ups. They're often big kids in disguise. Recently some members of the Berkshire Trails club got together for a ski cleaning party combined with a pot luck supper and a hike. About thirty people were there from Bill Koch age through college and masters. The ski cleaning part got the skis prepped for next year and the hike turned into a soccer game. The game was 10-~~against-10~~ in the rain, slipping and sliding everywhere, it was

so much fun! We just kept on playing and guess what? We were an hour late for supper!

Another good way to be active together is for someone to set up a weekly meeting, time and location clearly set well in advance. For instance, your club could meet on Wednesday evenings at 6 p.m. at your favorite trail system. Make it a point to be there every week, it's a good way to stay in touch with friends and enjoy being outside. It's also a good idea for that meeting spot to be near a swimming hole. One of the Berkshire Trails favorite night spots is along the Westfield River. If the weather is hot, or we just feel like a quick dip, we go for it. It's refreshing, cool and offers a restful break before continuing on.

Some important things to remember when exercising in the summer: Keep yourself hydrated, drink plenty of water before you start and always bring a big water bottle with you. Wear sun screen and sun glasses when you will be exposed to the sun for long periods. Wear the necessary safety equipment for the sports you choose. Finally, make sure you do things with at least one buddy, and

let your parents know what you're up to.

COMING IN THE NEXT NENN:

Our Annual Four Fall Hikes

In the fall issue, the BK page traditionally has a list of four hikes: one from each member state. Would you like to share your favorite local hike with the rest of New England? You can write or call Mary Hamel at the address or phone listed on page 2. We'll need a description of the hike and directions for getting there. We'll mention your name and club in the article.

USSA

CROSS COUNTRY COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT

by Anne Donaghy, Eastern Representative

The spring meetings of the USSA Cross Country Committee were held in Park City on May 20-22. Present at the meetings for the CCC were Lee Todd (Chair), Pete Johanson (Officials), Bob Matson (Coaches), John Aalberg (Athletes), Anne Donaghy (East), Gary Larson (Central), Rick Kapala (Mountain), Bill Sterling (Pacific), Miles Minson (Development), Luke Bodensteiner (Nordic Program Director). The meetings were open to the public and a number of ski coaches and officials were in attendance.

Regional representatives gave reports that covered issues such as committee structures within their regional organizations, regional elite teams, upcoming camps and competitions, coaches' and officials' clinics, fundraising strategies and numbers of members within regional organizations. Discussion centered on what is working in our goal to develop xc skiing in our country and where things are not working. Every region reported a significant increase in membership and in numbers of cross country skiers participating in regional programs. Something to celebrate!

The Coaches subcommittee and the Officials subcommittee both spent the entire second day in meetings. The Coaches subcommittee established guidelines for the Junior Olympic sprint race, a full medal event and counting in team scoring at the 2000 JO's in Jackson, New Hampshire. The folks there have been planning an exciting week — this will certainly be a highlight of the racing season for everyone in the East. The Coaches subcommittee also approved the schedule for the 2000 U.S. National cross country championships to be held at the Olympic venue at Soldier Hollow, not far from Park City (see related article in this issue). They also approved selection criteria for the 2000 Goodwill Games, the World Junior Championship team, and the Scandinavian Cup team. The Officials subcommittee reviewed and approved the National Ranking List races for year 2000, assigned Technical Delegates to such races and set dates for race officials' clinics. They support the work John Estle has done in compiling all JO rules into one document that will be reviewed throughout the summer and voted for approval in the September committee meetings. They adopted the USSA Event Development Pipeline as the standard for all USSA sanctioned events from year 2000 onward.

The full committee met on the final morning to hear subcommittee reports and vote on action items. Lee Todd also gave a short report on the exciting Aroostook County project, a nordic ski center in northern Maine made possible by significant grants from Maine's Libra Foundation and strongly supported by area residents who will participate in its development programs. Up there they have snow from early November through mid April, a great location for future Spring Series races. John Morton of Thetford, Vermont, has been hard at work designing Olympic quality trails there. And speaking of the Olympics — the Spring Meetings were wrapped up by John Aalberg's outstanding presentation on the 2002 Olympics cross country venue (see related article). Still over two and a half years away, but work at the site is shifting into high gear and excitement is already in the air!

For full minutes of the CCC meetings, see the USSA web site: www.ussskitem.org.

NENSA

NENSA ELITE AND DEVELOPMENT TEAMS

by Zach Caldwell, NENSA Program Director

A couple of years ago NENSA began to name Elite and Development teams after every season, for the following year. At the beginning, the idea behind this was simply to provide some recognition for those athletes who excel during the season, and to provide some incentive for the folks who come close, but don't quite meet the criteria. While NENSA doesn't have tremendous resources to plow into individual athlete support, these teams will also give us a structure through which to provide support, if any becomes available. Since we got this program off the ground it has received some attention on the national level, and is now recognized as the regional development pipeline to US Ski Team development programs. As the NENSA Program Director, and USSA Eastern Regional Coordinator, it's my job to keep the national team apprised of the progress of our top developing athletes. This past year we've seen three of our Elite Team athletes, Ethan Foster, Kris Freeman, and Andrew Johnson, named to the US Development Team.

Currently the benefits that we offer our Elite and Development athletes are limited. We organize a series of physical testing camps in cooperation with Dr. Ken Rundell at the Olympic Training Center in Lake Placid. We try to offer a couple of training camps as well: opportunities for the top skiers in the region to get together and bang heads in some tough workouts. In addition, we ask the organizers of our Eastern Cup events to waive entry fees for our Elite Team athletes. This year we'll also be asking our Elite Team athletes to go through the process of outlining goals and markers for progress that the US Team has identified as a critical part of the athlete tracking process. This will allow Eastern skiers to move to national-level programs with greater ease.

In spite of the relatively minor support that these top skiers receive, the Athlete Development Committee puts a great deal of thought into constructing the programs, and the criteria for qualification to those programs. Elite and Development team criteria say a lot about what we as a region consider to be important markers of success. It is critical that we focus attention on success in the appropriate arenas. The attention given to this is evident in the written criteria (available in the NENSA Competition Guide).

The Development Team criteria focus on regional success, and use the NENSA Points system to name the top athletes from each age group. The use of the NENSA Points system is intended to focus attention on the bigger, more competitive races on the New England calendar. The criteria, as written, will not pick a dominant high school racer who doesn't ski any Eastern Cups. But the hope is that the program will give that racer a reason to focus on Eastern Cup competition in the future. The Elite Team criteria focus on national-level success. An athlete may be dominant regionally, but until the athlete turns their attention to success in a larger arena, they aren't ready for the Elite Team.

NENSA is growing, and our sponsorship negotiations are more fruitful every year. In the very near future we'll be faced with the pleasant problem of deciding how best to use development resources. Programs like European racing trips and exchanges are high on everybody's list of priorities, and as these programs become reality,

NENSA WORKS: A MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FRED GRIFFIN

NENSA Works

Show up in Rumford and you'll see a no-nonsense team of folks with drainpipes, snow shovels, banners, and fencing working like a well-oiled machine to set-up, run, and take down a race. Cruise the back roads almost anywhere in New England in summer, or hike the mountains or bike the trails, and you'll see NENSA skiers out of uniform, working up a sweat for winter. Come to our spring or fall meetings and you'll find people taking notes, making presentations, contesting points, explaining plans, hard at work at the business end of having fun. And while there are over 2000 NENSA racers, there are easily twice that many people who support their competitive efforts by running grooming equipment or collecting bibs or making sandwiches or driving vans or cheering racers or providing instruction. NENSA people are everywhere, working.

NENSA Works

The works of NENSA — its programs and projects — are many and multiplying. Of all the works of NENSA we should be most proud of our growing network of ski clubs. Increasingly their membership is recreational as well as competition-based, and includes all age groups. Their growth has meant that in 1999–2000 NENSA will host a Club Championship Series built around family participation, ages 4–84. Its centerpiece will be a Relay Revival Weekend that has the promise to be the centerpiece of the winter.

Last year's 40-plus event schedule was a work of engineering and next year's version is being constructed to rival it. The media network, still a work in progress, plans to expand TV advertising to 400, 30-second ads to cover selected events over the course of the winter, while race results will be faxed to over 25 newspapers. Some said last year's NENSA Event Poster was a work of art. This year there will be another like it as well as a New England Bill Koch League poster. Back in print will be a revised edition of "The NENSA Coaching and Training Resource Guide" and the "New England Bill Koch League Manual" should be available by late summer. It leads the reader from start-up meeting through club organization and pages of games along with 12 weeks of activity plans. As for our New England Nordic News — well, each year's volume of NENNs adds to an already impressive body of work.

Another piece of work that continues to grow in healthy ways is our Clinic Program, offering instruction on demand for NENSA clubs. We are building it around our three-day NENSA Coaches Clinic at Jericho, VT, July 9–11: "Gaining More Ground — a Hands-on Approach to Building Speed". Making all of the many works of NENSA available to members is our newly designed, comprehensive, easy to access web site. The works of NENSA are everywhere around us.

NENSA Works

The bottom line is that NENSA is working and working well. Look anywhere and you will see good things are happening

in our sport and for our sport. More people are skiing. More people are racing. There is an excitement you cannot deny, a feel that our time has come. It's happening because the conviction a few people once shared has become the belief that many now hold. NENSA works because of the people working for NENSA. I cannot thank each of you enough.

HELP WANTED: NENSA MEDIA COORDINATOR

Part-time position. Responsibilities include gathering and disseminating information concerning NENSA events and activities to the appropriate media outlets. Must have skills in information processing and photography. Contact the Administrative Office for more information at 802-879-2270 or nensagr@sover.net.

NCCSEF AWARDS TRAVEL GRANTS

The National Cross Country Ski Education Foundation would like to congratulate the following skiers for qualifying for the 2000 Senior Nationals Travel Grant. Skiers will receive up to \$500 in grant money to pay for travel and lodging to the 2000 Senior Nationals /World Junior Tryouts.

2000 will be the third year of the NCCSEF Senior Nationals Grant program. During the past two years over \$10,000 in grants have been awarded to help the top U.S. Juniors get to World Junior Tryouts.

The NCCSEF points list is based on performance at World Junior Tryouts, Junior Olympics and the USSA final points list. The best two out of three point totals are added together to get the final tally. J2 grants are awarded to the top J2s at the Junior Olympics.

NCCSEF 2000 Senior Nationals/World Junior Tryouts Grant Award Winners:

Older Junior/Junior 1 Men

- 1 Kris Freeman
- 2 Ethan Foster
- 3 Dylan Prosser
- 4 Chris Cook
- 5 Matthew Weier

Junior 2 Man

Zach Hill

Older Junior/Junior 1 Women

- 1 Rebecca Quinn
- 2 Tara Hamilton
- 3 Caitlin Compton
- 4 Melissa Oram
- 5 Aubrey Smith

Junior 2 Woman

Kristina Trygstad

CALENDAR

SUMMER EVENTS

July 8-11: SMS Junior Camp / NENSA Elite & Development Camp. Stratton Mountain School, Stratton, VT. This camp is aimed at skiers age 15 and older. The camp runs from Thursday afternoon through Sunday afternoon and is scheduled to be part of a hard week of training. The camp emphasizes good training and technique and includes talks on these subjects. The camp includes roller skiing, running, specific strength and variety workouts. Cost of the camp is \$150. Note: There will be a special price for NENSA elite and development team members to encourage their participation. Camp will be filled on a first come, first serve basis. Contact Sverre Caldwell at SMS: (802) 297-1886 x104.

July 9-11: Coaches' Clinic — Gaining More Ground. This multi-level 3-day clinic highlights speed on skis as the product and goal of all technical, strength, and ski-specific training. Staff members include Olympic champion Vladimir Smirnov and former Soviet national team coach Nikolai Anikin, as well as US Development coach Miles Minson, US Biathlon Program Director Max Cobb, and NENSA's Zach Caldwell. The clinic will include hands-on time in drills and on roller skis, as well as classroom modules. Cost is \$175 for the 3 days at the Ethan Allen Firing Range in Jericho, Vermont, \$150 for NENSA coaches.

Additional details are available on the NENSA web site and at the Administrative Office (802)849-2270.

July 17-21: GNA Roller Ski Training Camp #1 for junior skiers. Ethan Allen Firing Range, Jericho VT. Contact Alexi Sotskov (603)524-9484.

July 26-August 4: GNA Summer Trip to Europe. Vuokatti, Finland, at the Vuokatti Ski Center, home to the world's only ski-tunnel. Cost approx. \$2,200. Alexi reports that this trip has already filled, with 18 skiers, and he promises a good article and some photos for the Sept. issue of NENN!

August 14-18: GNA/Sugarloaf camp for junior skiers. This camp will focus on roller skiing. Contact Alexei Sotskov (603) 524-9484.

SKI TRAVELER

THE ENGADINE SKI MARATHON

by Murray Banks

Ever since I saw that wonderful poster of the Engadine Ski Marathon in Engadine Valley, Switzerland, I was captivated! You know the photo, thousands of skiers in a serpentine line crossing a high mountain lake with long shadows cast from the early morning sun. I've got to do that race some day!

So, as soon as we made our plans to compete in the Masters World Cup in Grindelwald, Switzerland, I checked the date for Engadine... perfect, one week later. Sign me up!

The Engadine draws 13,000 skiers from all over the world. World Cup caliber skiers get the first of three seeded start waves. Anyone finishing within 6% of the winner's time in the previous year gets the second seeded wave. Other top skiers who petition and are accepted, get the third wave. I sent my racing resume and was accepted for the third seeded wave...awesome, I'm in there with the top guys.

Friends who have done it before told us to get there early, place our skis in a good position at the line, then hit the portajohns, stretch, relax etc. I'm psyched! One and a half hours before start time I'm jogging to the start area (about 1/2 mile long and 500 meters wide) and I know I'm going to have a good start position...wait a minute, where'd all these skis come from? These people must have slept here! 7:00 AM and there are thousands of skis sitting behind the start lines while their motors sit on the throne! I'm in the eighth row of the third wave, behind what must be 2000 others. This is not what I had in mind!

When the start gun goes off at a NENSA event mass start, it's hectic for a K. At Engadine, it was 10K! My primary goals became: don't fall down; don't break a pole. You have a liter of adrenaline and no place to go!

For 5K I carefully weaved my way through the pack, looking for holes and sliding through....level one touring, taking it all in. By 8K I was passing hundreds and by 12K felt like I was racing. I remember coming up a hill at around 15k, having passed what seemed like 1000 skiers and thinking I must be in the top 100. As I crested the hill and looked out over the next lake, I saw the serpentine line that had been pictured on the poster...there must have been 2000 skiers in front of me. Where had they all come from?

At St Moritz, the pack slows to a walk as we climb minor hills and wind through the city streets. It was really cool to ski through alleys and side streets with people hanging out windows and sitting at cafes cheering us on. Once we cleared St Moritz everything opened up. I hooked up with some fast young guys and we started flying! It had been 50 F during the days and 20 F at night. The snow was hard and rocket fast!

The last 20 K were flat/downhill into a slight headwind, so hundreds of racers settled into pace lines and drafted. Our "chase group" literally flew up the side of the trail like the passing lane of the Interstate. Every once in a while, someone would jump out and hop on. At various times we had a group of 15 or 3. During the last 22K we must have passed a million skiers. We were now in the top 400 and passing bib numbers from the second wave. "How'd these slow guys get such a good start seed?" someone hollered! The course was still littered with broken poles and every aid station looked like a middle school cafeteria.

The end was a 2K zig zag with great hairpin turns and a 200 meter wide finish area. Timing was by bar code.... pick any one of 20+ chutes. What a show.

Because the course is flat and downhill and the snow is so icy, the times are incredibly fast. Our group did 42K in 1:36! The winners (6 ELNGADINE, see p. 12

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TRAINING

STRENGTH TRAINING

by Zach Caldwell, NENSA Program Director. This is the first of two parts. Part 2 will follow in our Sept. issue.

In the last issue of NENN I offered some of my thoughts and impressions from a trip to the World Junior Championships last winter. My primary impression from the trip was that we all — even the best of us — need to be stronger and faster. This is old news to some of the folks that have been watching the sport for a long time, and I've recognized the need for quite a while, but that trip was an eye-opener! The realization of just how deficient we are in the ability to make speed served to focus my attention on some ideas that have been brewing through personal thought and conversation over the past couple of years. The NENN editorial staff asked me to follow-up my trip report with an article on strength; they may be getting more than they bargained for. What follows is an attempt to identify the components of speed, and to build a training structure focused around the development of those components. It may challenge some of the conventional ideas about planning that are floating around out there, but then, we can all see where that approach has taken us!

The ability to go fast on skis is central to long-term success, and should be a primary consideration in athlete development. It is important to recognize that there are a number of contributing components, or factors, that figure into the speed with which an athlete can move along the trail. Speed is the combined product of technique and power. Broken down further, speed is comprised of basic, or foundation motions, technical refinement, core strength, motion-specific strength, rate of force development, and neuromuscular coordination. It is a fallacy to believe that any of these components of speed can be optimally developed without appropriate integration and coordination of the other components.

For many years the basic framework for a year-round XC ski training plan, available from a number of different sources to all athletes and coaches in the US, has employed a fairly standardized system of periodization. More specifically, the plan has been built around, at a minimum, a basic endurance period, a pre-competition period, and a competition period. While variations abound, the majority of the training programs written in this country look very similar, and reflect this basic structure. While provisions have been made to build strength training into this basic plan, the periods themselves are organized almost entirely around balancing the development of peripheral and central physiological systems, and the related aerobic and anaerobic energy systems.

There are a number of problems with this system. While the smaller problems of individual needs and variations in development priorities can be addressed to a large degree by modifying the basic plan, the more significant problem is that this structure doesn't draw attention to the development of speed. Furthermore, the detailed structuring of hours into levels of intensity goes far beyond anything suggested by exercise science. Dr. Rundell, the resident physiologist at the Olympic Training Center in Lake Placid, recognizes a certain level of good common-sense to the approach taken by most periodized plans. But he also points out that the only proven way to improve race

pace is to train at a pace higher than race pace. Dr. Rundell has given the example of the Norwegian National Team women doing multiple weekly sessions of hard intervals in June (according to the former head women's coach) as evidence that nothing is cut and dried.

Taking all of this into account, my approach has been to rethink the concept of periodization and planning around optimal speed development, with secondary (but still important) consideration given to aerobic/anaerobic periodization. I've been working on a plan structured around developing the basic components of speed, and working toward the integration of these components in specific training sessions as the season progresses. I have tried to take into account my understanding of the physiological nature of strength development, and my understanding of the basic nature of technique.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE COMPONENTS OF SKIING SPEED

Specific power is the ultimate objective; the application of foundation strength & technique at speed. Impulse is defined as force applied over time, and results in a change of momentum ($F\Delta T = M\Delta V$). It doesn't matter to the laws of physics whether it's high force over a short period of application, or a low force over a long period of application, the impulse must be generated. In the pursuit of skiing speed we're looking for acceleration (ΔV), which, applied to the constant mass of the skier (M), is going to be determined by impulse, or force applied over time. Depending on the technique applied, terrain, and conditions, we may be looking for relatively low force applied over a relatively long period of time, or relatively high force applied over a relatively short period of time. The most technically proficient skiers will have a range of possibilities at their disposal. When you get right down to it, the major variable is the application of force. There are a lot of different ways to ski fast, but all fast skiers have an effective and efficient application of force. Good technique can be defined as the effective and efficient application of force, and good strength can be defined as the effective and forceful implementation of technique. In the final analysis, technique and strength are inseparably defined together as the application of force.

A closer look at some of the components of applied power yields:

Foundation technical strength

This is the aforementioned "application of force" — the basic link between strength and technique — the basis for applied power. It can be developed by doing strength training with specific attention paid to the foundation movements associated with effective ski technique. It can also be developed by doing technique work against resistance. In the end, the distinction is not necessary. Technique work and specific strength work are the same thing.

Core strength & coordination

These are physical attributes common to successful athletes in all sports. These can be developed over the long term through involvement in a variety of sports, especially during the earlier stages of physical development. They must also be maintained with a diversity of activities in "play"; and with a general strength program that emphasizes the link between core strength and

A MODEST PROPOSAL

DOWNHILL ROLLERSKI RACING: ITS TIME HAS COME

by Dorcas Wonsavage, for the Lewiston Sun Journal

coordination. Multiple-joint exercises using the body-weight for resistance work well, as do physical tasks that require coordination, such as wood-splitting.

Neuromuscular speed & recruitment efficiency

These are physiological components of specific power. Recall that Specific Power is defined as force applied over time. Rewritten as an equation we're given $\text{Specific Power} = \text{Applied Force} \times \text{Time}$. We've defined applied force, and identified its strength and technique components. But applied force is only useful to us at an appropriate speed, which is where the time factor in our equation comes into consideration. Under conditions where it is advantageous for impulse to be created of high force over short application (say, classic skiing in fast tracks), we've got to generate and apply that force quickly. Rate of force development is critical to the equation under these conditions. Also important is the ability to move quickly through a range of motion, or neuromuscular speed.

It is difficult to draw a sharp line of distinction between recruitment efficiency and neuromuscular speed, as both involve the improvement of synchronization and the engrammatic imprint of specific motions. But in practice the neuromuscular component of specific power can be addressed from two directions. Neuromuscular speed work, through low-resistance tempo training, isolates the speed of motion. Recruitment efficiency work, against considerable resistance, isolates rate of force development.

Technical refinement

Probably the most commonly addressed component of specific power application, technical refinement is truly secondary in significance to other components. Given a solid foundation in strength and technique, refinement of specific motions can yield additional gains in economy.

Let me be blunt in making this point: Addressing technique on snow in the early season is the very last step in a long process of developing strength and specific motions. Without the foundation work the refinement of technique on snow will yield little or no improvement in performance, especially compared to the improvement available through a long term approach to building speed.

It is a dilemma of national importance: How can we get more people cross country ski racing? Perhaps we should introduce rollerskiing, the summer version of cross country skiing, to the people in the sun belt, not the snow belt, of America. By popularizing rollerskiing with the younger generation everywhere, and unbeknownst to them, getting them to exercise, we would encourage more people to settle in our northernmost, snowiest regions, and develop into competitive cross country skiers. Elsewhere in the Nordic world, the national history is tied directly to history of this sport. In the United States, however, we have a short, 200 year tradition of rebellion, the need to be the best (Superman, SuperMom, the bionic theme, "Better, Stronger, Faster!"), the belief that the grass is always greener in another city, another state ("Go West, young man!"), and the Puritan ethic of purging the flesh ("No pain, no gain"). None of these character traits have created success for the Norwegians or the Russians. So how to approach the youth, and the corporations, of America, and make them interested in this endurance winter sport?

The X-Games are coming to Mount Snow, Vermont, this summer, a site close to the birthplace of our only Silver Medalist, Bill Koch. I propose an inaugural rollerski race, downhill. Youngsters are attracted to three things: Speed, the possibility of Blood, and the Untraditional or Rebellious (Dad didn't do it in college and you can't letter in it in high school). As long as they don't know that this would be part of a subversive mission, intent on luring hyperactive kids into the summer sport, only to casually introduce them to the (real) winter version, the plan could have a certain degree of success.

Speed. No beginner skiers go to the Monadnock (NH) mountain rollerski race. Go uphill? Work against gravity? Look slow? Uncool. Going downhill, however, no technique is (apparently) necessary. All that is required is 1) lack of a planned future, and 2) to be young enough to be covered under your parents' health insurance. In other words, nothing to it. For speed, start the races at the top of the access road of Mount Snow and race it all-out to the bottom. If there is a flat, add speed bumps, a jump, a slalom course. Any hint of road rash, broken bones, skiers falling like an eggbeater of poles, skis, and limbs all a-blur, will encourage spectators and sponsors to gather five deep at the orange fencing marking the race course. That's the money word in America today: Speed. It attracts not just the racers, but spectators and sponsors, too.

And so it follows, as the Americans have the French (on the cross country circuit — how galling), that after speed comes the probability of blood. Road rash should be rampant in order to attract skiers-to-be! (And with the expected mass turnout of racers, we'll be able to afford a certain attrition rate.) Dress the rollerski racers in mandatory helmets, knee and elbow pads and gloves, so they'd look like a mountain bike downhill racer, or a street luger. People would say, "It must be dangerous," and kids would do it. Of course, the kids don't know that the insurance underwriters would never let happen the death or dismemberment that we all so hope (advertise) for. Those hay bales on the corners and the ambulances at the ready are partly for show, but mainly to insure against lawsuits and loss of sponsorship dollars next season. Despite the automatic increase in the sport's popularity after a terrible accident, every sponsor would still need to distance themselves for an appropriate period of disapproval, before rejoining

CLUB NOTES

CLUB GOSSIP FOR SPRING 1999

The following is a mix of truth and fantasy. Try to figure out which is which!

Spring is the time for ski clubs to gather to celebrate the past season and make plans for the season to come. Putney Ski Club partied down in style this year with endless bottles of Dom Perignon guzzled from their elegant Club Championship trophy cup. They had to post Zach Caldwell as Designated Diver to stand ready to fish the bodies out of the Caldwell sauna pond before they drowned. Don't think that PSC has let their success soften their resolve to win again. They are bringing in Vladimir Smirnov for a summer coaching session and barbecue.

Jim Anderson of Upper Valley Nordic Club doesn't need to wait for the barbecue. While rollerskiing on the favorite UVNC loop he rolled over and killed a snake. Seeing the chance for a good feed in the midst of a 50K workout, he gathered firewood, struck a spark with his diamond hone and carbide tip, and had reptile shish kebab cooked on his pole. Anne Donaghy, doyenne of UVNC says they're hungry to take Putney's trophy away and had 24 people at their spring potluck.

Fred Griffin will take a short break from the NENSA cubicle this summer and lead his Northeast Nordic Club members on a hike through the Mahoosucs in Maine. Remember, Fred, the hike leader doesn't have to carry a pack. Let the kids take the weight! Speaking of kids, JO coach Scottie Eliassen reports that she's letting her stellar Ford Sayre juniors take a break this spring while she puts in enough face time at work to keep her day job. But once the black flies take wing those kids will be back to training hard.

Sverre Caldwell of Stratton Mountain School reports big moves this year as the school puts their old barn of a building to the torch (make way for condos!) and moves into its palatial new building. Putting his ideas to the real test, Sverre simultaneously expanded the SMS program into a full club for all age groups. Seniors and Masters can work out twice a week with SMS all summer and up to eight times per week during the school year. (Eight per week? Does he think he's still at Putney?) With a high-speed internet connection in each room, will students waste all their time looking at pictures of themselves on the web or continue the winning ways that saw most of them reach the JOs? They've established a strong tradition with one current and two

alums making the World Junior team and one alum making the Senior World team.

Off in the Northeast Kingdom we get reports from John Brodhead that Craftsbury Nordic Ski Club is setting a standard for hard work combined with fun. Already planned are weekend BKL hikes with special features like blueberry pancakes served on a mountain top. Juniors through Masters can meet twice weekly for coached technique and intervals sessions as well as informal overdistance weekend workouts. And no rural isolation for the CNSC as they have traveled regularly to race and train in Quebec and have already established a junior exchange program. Avez-vous un peu de klister, mon ami?

Cambridge Sports Union had a quiet spring banquet after being so totally humbled by PSC in the Club Series. The Club Chairman could tell it was time for desperate measures and called for the first organizational meeting in several years. The Junior team has seen great success under coach Bob Fitzpatrick. Plans will be drawn up for regular workouts and coaching for Seniors and Masters to raise the level of the rest of the club. If they can convince former Olympic Biathlete Duncan Douglas to drop his scalpel at B.U. medical school and do some races next winter, perhaps they can challenge PSC.

Meanwhile in Maine, Kirk Siegal tells us that Bethel Ski Club is planning for the long term by focusing on expanding its BKL program. While they wait for the little stride-n-glidiers to grow up, they still organize the famous Flying Moose classic race and training programs for all age groups. Another big club for Mainiacs is the Maine Nordic Ski Club where impresario Chris Dorion has just published his Maine Nordic Gazette newsletter. He reports definitive plans for summer training and social events and in typical Maine fashion invites everyone to come Down East and join in. Ayuh.

Funny stories from your club? Big plans you want to brag about? Vicious rumors about other clubs? Send them in and see your lies in print. It's better than the Starr Report! Send email to robb@instructionset.com.

ROLLERSKI, from p.9

the following year.

Rollerskiing certainly fits the untraditional definition of sport. All the cool sports started out as training for the real sports: in-line skating started from street hockey, street luge from winter luge, mountain biking from road cycling, snowboarding and the freestyle sports from alpine skiing. It is a relatively new (1970s) invention, and we have our own rollerski manufacturers right here in New England: Jenex and their V2 series. So it's not likely any adult you know has had much experience or knowledge in rollerskiing. Cross-country skiing itself is rather untraditional, even in New England, so rollerskiing has an offbeat image. The equipment is expensive — that's a plus on the cool meter. And you can carry scary-looking ski poles with sharp carbide tips, able to penetrate pavement even on the coldest of days. A pair of the bad-a— looking sport glasses will polish your appearance. Since it's a summer sport, the standard training attire includes short-shorts or below-the-knee snowboard shorts. On top you can wear jog-bras, singlets with name brand advertising, ragged T-shirts, or go shirtless and show off your washboard stomach and latissimus dorsi. Drivers-by and people on the ride-on mowers will stare, hoping you will trip on a stone or frost heave and 'get yours' falling on the pavement. It's

the same stare you get when you ski in a bikini on summer corn snow. Therein lies the rebellion factor: an in-your-face, I'll prove to you that I'm too cool to fall and I won't spend hours in the ER having pavement debrided from my flesh.

Downhill rollerski racing: its time has come. We don't get enough snow in the winter to attract potential skiers, so we must snow the sponsors, the insurance underwriters, and the general populace. Convince them that this is the next sport for the summer X-Games. With the elements of speed, blood, and rebellion attached to its image, downhill rollerski racing is certain to grab the attention of racers, sponsors and spectators, and draw more athletes to the sport. I would gladly attend the event, earplugs already in place (I'm not ready for the X-Games type of music, yet). But I'd be in there cheering with the rest of the mayhem, scouting for the next Bill Koch.

From the Archives

In this issue, we present a quiz:
Who are these two skiers?

Hint #1: He's definitely not looking back!

Hint #2: She was the top woman skier for the US in the 1970s.

Email your entry to Anne Donaghy. Winner receives free tickets to first Olympic downhill rollerski race, tentatively scheduled for 2044.

Earn extra credit for identifying the events, dates, and locations!

CALLING JUNIOR OLYMPIC COACHES

Coaches interested in coaching at JO's in Jackson, NH, in March of 2000 should send a written letter of interest to Dennis Donahue, PO Box 63, Norwich, VT, 05055-0063, or via email at Dennis.A.Donahue@Dartmouth.EDU.

Please include a summary of coaching experience. NE staff coaches must be current USSA coach members. Also, if interested in serving as the head coach, team leader, assistant head coach/team leader, or wax coach please make your wishes known. These are responsible positions and important

to the success of the competition for New England athletes.

All coaches should be aware of the opportunity to participate at JO's, whether on the regular staff of seven, or as an 'intern' coach for part or all of the JO week. We encourage you to be part of the group, but please express your interest to Dennis Donahue in writing.

Deadline for regular staff coaching positions is Sept. 15.

FOR SALE: Regnly Timer RT3 split timer. Includes charger and adapter. Used two seasons. In excellent condition. \$600 or best offer. Contact Cami Cardenali at 603.646.2787 or cami.cardenali@dartmouth.edu.

NEW ENGLAND 1996-99 JO UNIFORMS FOR SALE:

One-piece suits \$100, mid-weight warm-up jackets \$65. These are brand new extras from the VOMax stock of '96-'99 uniforms. Contact Scottie Eliassen (scottie.eliassen@dartmouth.edu or 603.795.3165).

ENGADINE, from p. 6

men in 2 seconds) did 1:25.

As you can imagine, with 13,000 people, this race is festive. People finished 4-5 hours later with their wineskins empty. Gotta go back. It is always more fun when you know what you are doing!

ELITE & DEVELOPMENT TEAMS, from p. 4

the Elite and Development team folks will be the first to hear about them. Meantime, we'd like to congratulate everybody who met the criteria this season, and encourage all developing racers to think in terms of future recognition for their accomplishments. The goals and motivation for success in this sport belong to the racer; we just try to give them a little kick from time to time!

[Ed. Note: See the NENSA website for a listing of the '99-'00 Elite Team and Development team members. Congratulations to these skiers!]



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