



# new england NORDIC NEWS

LATE WINTER 2001 VOL. 6, NO. 3

## MY FOOT'S ON FIRE!

by Will Lange, originally for VT Public Radio

As I stood beside the Rivière Rouge in the Ottawa Valley of Québec, my boot burst into flame and people scattered helter-skelter in alarm. "I really hope," I thought to myself, "that this is the low point of my day."

I should have known better. How many times have I watched a warm front from Georgia collide with cold air sweeping southeast from Manitoba? After sixty years, you don't have to be a rocket scientist to know what's going to happen. So I should have foreseen it. But we've had such lousy cross country skiing conditions lately, I figured they'd stay that way for this weekend's Canadian Ski Marathon. Bad mistake.

We drove about five hours to get here. Gray skies in Vermont, rain in Montreal, and slush on the roads for the last thirty miles in the dark. So that night I waxed my skis with klistner. Klistner is a last resort. You have to experience it to appreciate it. It comes in tubes like toothpaste, and it's the stickiest stuff ever devised by humankind. You dab it on with the tip of the tube, then spread it into a film that covers the bottom of the ski just under your foot. It covers anything else it contacts, too, virtually forever.

There are hundreds of klistner horror stories: like the young skier who, embracing his skis, fell asleep on a bus, and woke up with his long hair completely involved. I was careful, but still I managed, while on the bus, to get it on my mitts, my whiskers, and my seat mate.

To my dismay, when we got to the start, there were five inches of new snow. I should have cleaned off the klistner right then. But I was freezing. So I just smeared some wax over the klistner and hoped for the best.

Sometimes that works. This time it didn't. By the end of the first ten-mile section, my skis were iced up. I headed for the table where the Swix wax guys were dispensing expertise and wax. They lent me a can of flammable solvent, a roll of paper towels, and a propane torch. I soaked a wad of towels in solvent and wiped. It wouldn't soak through the ice. So I started melting it with the torch.

That worked fine, till the wad of towels caught fire with a whoosh. I leaped back, threw it on the snow, and stomped on it. The klistner stuck the wad of towels to my boot sole. So now my boot was on fire. I danced around, shaking my burning foot, until some bystander tried to help. It stuck to his boot,

too, and tore in half; so now there were two of us doing the flaming tarantella. Then some Canadian cried, "Stick 'em in the snowbank, eh?" That worked. Much warmer now, I swallowed three oatmeal cookies and two cups of hot soup, and tackled the next section.

The entire course, divided into ten sections rated from "easy" to "very challenging," runs through bush and farmland for 110 miles between Lachute and Buckingham, Quebec. It attracts thousands of skiers, from amazing athletes who ski the whole way with heavy packs and camp out overnight at the halfway point, to pedestrians ranging in age from four to over eighty. The one word for all of us here is "enthusiasm." We're here because we love the sport and love to be here.

The organizers of the marathon this year set double tracks for almost the whole length of the course. They also included some brand-new heart-stopping downhill. I did a lot of snowplowing, leaning on my ski pole tips, and often just took off my skis and hiked down the worst.

The burning foot proved to be the low point of both days. The high point came only a few hours later, when someone skiing behind me said, "Sir? Excuse me. Sorry, but you appear to have something stuck on the heel of your boot. It looks rather like paper toweling, eh?"

Will Lange recently headed back north for this year's Canadian Ski Marathon and we are looking forward to more stories — but hopefully no more pyrotechnics!

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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:

Midwinter (January) issue: November 15

Late Winter (March) issue: January 25

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

As this issue of NENN is being laid out, one of the best winters in recent history is unfolding in New England. There is just one more JOQ race left on the NENSA competition schedule, high school and J2 qualifiers are complete, and the AXCS National Masters' Championships are highlighted on pages 4 and 5.

Mother Nature has blessed even the lower reaches of eastern Massachusetts with natural snow. Hopefully, the white stuff will attract new skiers to our exciting sport. Some clubs report having tried new ideas to attract people to the racing side of cross country skiing, like the Bill Koch ice cream social that had as many adults as kids eager to race for the reward of building their own sundae.

Mary is in Norway with the NENSA Norway Cup team where the temperature has ranged from a balmy -6 C to today's low of -30 C (not a typo!). The skiing in the 1994 Olympic Stadium is beyond anything you can imagine. The tough hills covered in powder are exhilarating both uphill and downhill. There are a series of bridges that are crowned to add to the vertical challenge.

Results are coming in from the World Junior Championships where Vermonter and SMS skier Andy Newell placed sixth in the sprint race. That's sixth in the world! Ryan Foster placed 12th in the sprint race and 13th at the J1 Scandinavia Cup in Finland — great representations for NENSA and the USA.

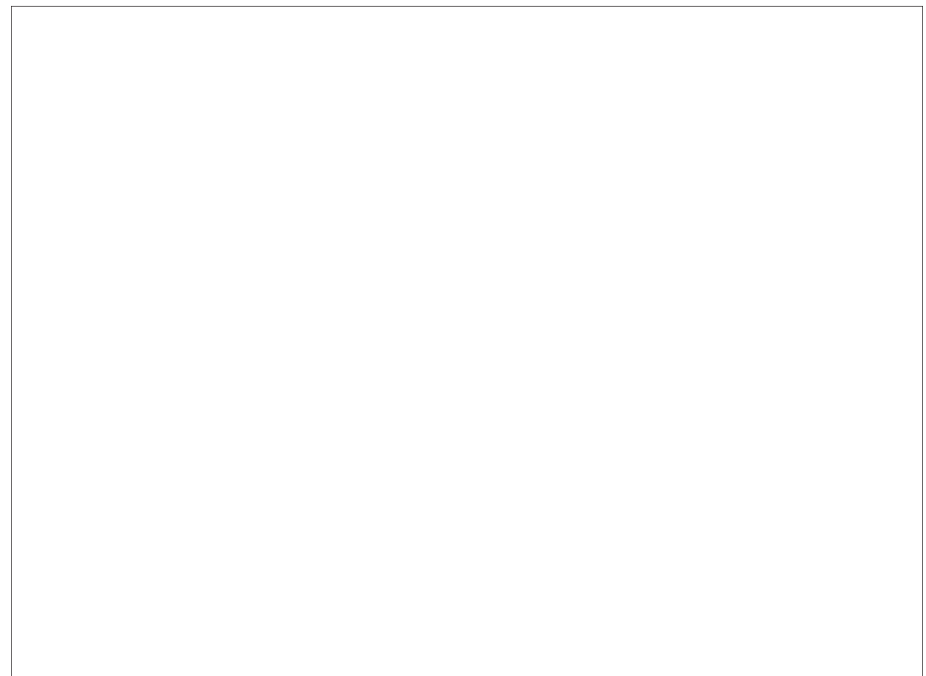
Plans are underway for the end of the season festivals and championships from Massachusetts to Maine. Athletes will be training right through their age group championships and hopefully beyond.

Enjoy the rest of this wondrous season,

Anne Donaghy

Mary Hamel

Co-editors



Start of the WC Nordic Combined Individual Pursuit at Soldier Hollow. (See article, page 11.) We think that's Assistant Chief of Race Ed Finnerty beginning the second verse of "The Star Spangled Banner." Photo: Anne Donaghy.

# BILL KOCH YOUTH SKI LEAGUE

## HOW ARE WE DOING?

by Zoe Erdman, New England BKL Committee Chair

"The mission of the New England Bill Koch League is to introduce young people to the lifetime sport of cross country skiing with all its recreational, social, fitness, and competitive opportunities."

Is NENSA achieving the Bill Koch mission and meeting the needs of skiers aged 13 and under, who comprise about 45% of total NENSA membership? There are hundreds of adults throughout New England volunteering significant amounts of personal time to help introduce children to the joys and challenges of nordic skiing. Without these volunteers, Bill Koch programs would not be possible. However, there are some challenges facing us, and it is clear that we have much work to do.

Bill Koch membership in NENSA was off 11% in 1999-2000 from the previous year. Even more troubling, however, is the number of kids who didn't renew their NENSA membership last year. Out of a total of 1022 kids who were NENSA members in 1998-1999, 506 didn't renew their membership in 1999-2000. That is nearly half of the total Bill Koch membership! The nonrenewals were spread fairly evenly throughout all Bill Koch age groups.

The good news is, nearly 400 kids were new NENSA members last year. We are still attracting new blood to the sport. In addition, record numbers of kids skied in the Bill Koch Festival in each of the last two years. Also encouraging is Fred Griffin's report that Bill Koch memberships are running well ahead of last year as of mid-January.

The NE Bill Koch Committee and NENSA leadership have been working together to try to understand the reasons for the turnover in Bill Koch membership so we can improve our programs to retain existing members while attracting new skiers. Among the reasons for the membership turnover which have been discussed are:

- Poor snow conditions for the last several seasons. Not even John Caldwell can do anything about our New England weather!
- Competition from other sports. Kids in my area play soccer and hockey year round and are specializing in one sport at young ages, when perhaps they could benefit from exploring a wide variety of athletic activities.
- Our American culture, which focuses on instant gratification and celebrity-dominated pro sports.

- Overemphasis on racing. While some kids love racing from an early age, others are put off by the competitive atmosphere, which often seems to be created by parents. We may be focusing on racing at the expense of developing solid technical skills at an early age and encouraging a healthy lifestyle revolving around year round active participation in a wide variety of outdoor activities.

- Not enough qualified adults to be able to effectively work with the wide variety of skill levels found in Bill Koch clubs.

What can we all do to make sure that new Bill Koch skiers come back next year and bring their friends, broadening the pool of talent from which will hopefully emerge the next Bill Koch?

- Encourage all kids, not just racers. The eight year old who wants to spend the afternoon going over jumps and playing games may ultimately develop into a champion, if she loves the sport.
- Parents, please leave the stop watches, and high fluoro waxes at home. Encourage your kids to develop personal goals, outside of where they finish in a race.
- Schedule off-season activities to encourage kids to remain active year round.
- Focus on technical proficiency at an early age, rather than speed. Make the investment in high-level coaching.
- Go for a tour for a change of pace. This year our district will participate in the 25 kilometer touring portion of the Craftsbury Marathon.
- Further develop the model of successful clubs which include all ages. Kids will learn from older club members, and it will give the adults in the club a chance to "give back" to the skiing community by mentoring aspiring young skiers.
- Involve more parents in coaching clinics and other activities which will expand their skiing and leadership expertise.

## Anticipated NENSA Employment Opportunities

Full-time Positions beginning May 1st:

**NENSA Information Services Director**

**NENSA Development Director**

Contact the Administrative Office for details.

# AXCS NATIONAL MASTERS CHAMPIONSHIPS

## SUGARLOAF WINS GOLD MEDAL

by Rob Bradlee, Cambridge Sports Union

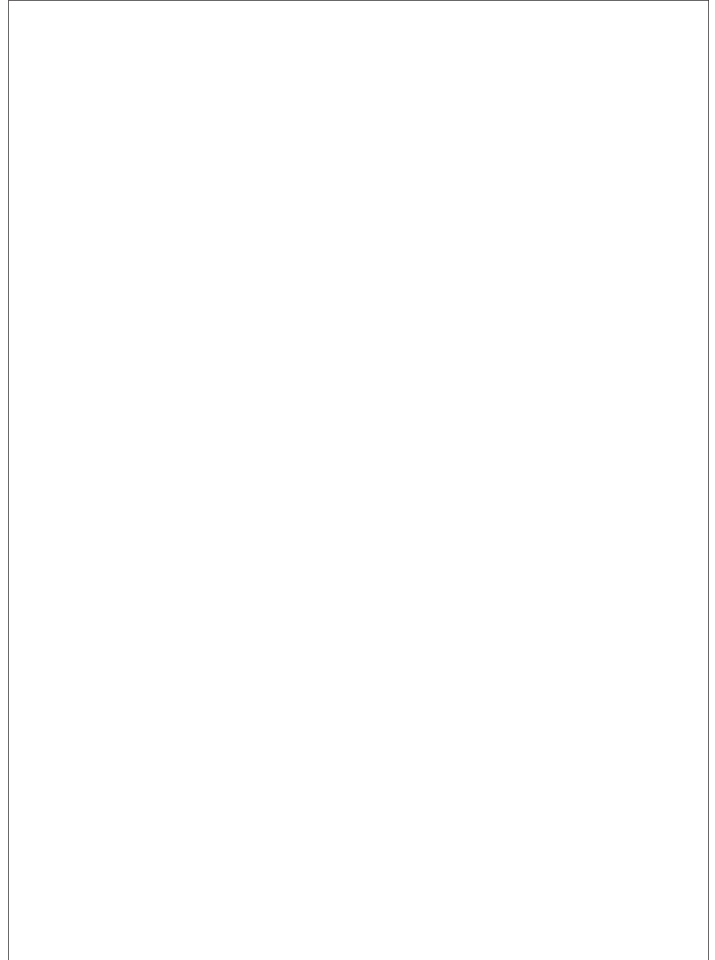
Despite all the elite Masters on hand, the top prize at the AXCS National Masters Championships has to go to the Sugarloaf Outdoor Center. They ran the best national caliber ski competition that I've ever been to. Starting with the big welcoming banner over the road to the final lobster banquet everything was on-time, meticulously run, and best of all, fun. And Nature didn't make it easy for them with a two foot snowstorm on Monday night and a howling rain and wind storm on Saturday. The theme of the event was "Yes you can!" and indeed we could and so could Sugarloaf.

There isn't space to list all the notable results of the five races held during the week (see [www.xcskiworld.com](http://www.xcskiworld.com) for full results), so this article will concentrate on some of the highlights and stories.

Monday's Sprint Relay was a World Cup style event with two person teams in Mixed, Women's, and Men's categories. Sugarloaf held the event at the base of the Alpine trails with booming rock music, huge floodlights, and announcer Dick Ring whipping the crowd into a frenzy as the skiers raced by in a blinding snowstorm. Most notable result was the husband and wife team of event organizers Sue Foster and Karl Johnson, who battled mightily in the Mixed category to take second. Another great team was Trina and Dave Hosmer who dominated the over 50 division.

We awoke Tuesday to find that the Great Blizzard of '01 had dumped two feet of fluffy powder. We dreaded skiing a single loop 10K classic in so much snow, but Karl surprised us with a firm and perfectly groomed track. After his hard race Monday night he'd been up all

Lower left: Jane Oliver, CSU, cheers at the finish line of her 10K CL.  
Below: Burke's John Sackett leans into the finish of the Men's 10K CL.  
Facing page: Overhead view of S/F area during Sunday's family expo; sponsor tent at right, Bigelow Mountains in background. Blue skies and snow! All photos: Pat Cyr.



night drinking black coffee in the Bombardier while packing down the race course. There was so much snow that tourers were doing "dock starts" off the deck at the Outdoor Center. Joe Holland spent the night in his car stuck on the overwhelmed back roads of Maine, but still made it to the race in time for a bronze medal.

One of the great things about Masters week is that the same skiers don't always win. In the M5 category, Ron Newbury, skiing on his 51st birthday, upset some star skiers with a blistering race and a gold in his category. His secret was an informal chorus of Maine Masters women singing happy birthday on the trail. Raul Siren and Bob Gray also captured gold in their respective classes. In the women's race it looked more like the '88 Olympic trials than a Masters race. Leslie Bancroft Krichko, Sue Long, and Dorcas DenHartog Wonsavage all skied like they were headed to Salt Lake next year. In a very tight race Leslie nabbed first, Sue was just behind her, and Dorcas very close in third overall and first in her age group. Tracey Theryl, Jane Banks, Trina Hosmer, and Nancy Kettle all won their age groups to come close to a New England sweep.

Thursday's skate race counted both as a pursuit race and as a separate skate race. Tim Kelley of Alaska was first out of the gate and onto the flawlessly prepared packed-powder single loop 15K trail. However, the skier's great nemesis, a bad head cold, soon dragged him down. Chris Ransom of Minnesota took the lead with former U.S. Team coach Gordon Lange chasing him to the finish. Ron Newbury is new to

skating and was overheard to say before the race "I'm going to be live bait out there." Bob Gray and Owen Haskell were also gold medalists in the skate.

In the women's race Dorcas Wonsavage hunted down Leslie Krichko and the smart money (i.e. all the men spectating) at the 8K mark predicted she would win in the end. But faster skis on the downhill and a powerful finishing sprint kept Leslie in the lead for the pursuit win while Dorcas had the faster skate time. Colby coach Tracey Theryl cruised in for fourth place with the ageless Trina Hosmer just 10 seconds behind her. The women's field also included an Olympic gold medalist as local resident Joan Benoit did the skate half of the pursuit.

Saturday's races were the wildest I've seen in 30 years of racing. Temperatures rose overnight and heavy rain fell. By 9 AM it was 45 degrees with sunshine. Fifteen minutes before the start of the Women's 20K the temperature plummeted and wet snow started to fall. Waxers scrambled to cover klister with stick wax as the wind lifted ski bags into the air and covered the trail with twigs, branches, bark, and pine needles. Leslie Krichko towed Joanne Hanowski around the entire course, both skiing out of the debris laden tracks with Leslie just taking the win. Dorcas Wonsavage also had a great race as did the indomitable Trina Hosmer. By the time the Men's race started at 1 PM the temperature had dropped to 25 degrees and the wind picked up to a roaring 50 MPH. In a tight battle in the M3 race, the lead men had to take off their skis to climb over a fallen pine tree. Karl Johnson

drove around the course on the snowmobile chainsawing trees off the course as fast as they fell. The snow turned to rock ice and the best skiers in the nation started to look like Bambi on ice. John Sackett gets the tough guy award. One tree fell next to him and the branches raked his shoulder. Then the wind took out all the flags at a key corner and he took a wrong turn. Losing a minute before he got back on course, he trailed Torbjorn Karlsen to the finish where he out-sprinted him by a boot-length for the win, but dove head-first into the timing building in the process.

The final banquet featured a magnificent raffle for clothing, ski bags, and five pairs of racing skis. Holding to long-standing tradition, Rob Bradlee won the last pair of racing skis to a resounding chorus of boos. John Downing, AXCS director, named the National Masters Team, top-heavy with New England Masters, and presented them with flashy VOMax tights. Next year we put away the beer and pull out the red wine when we meet in California. Meet me in the hot tub and I'll tell you about our great week in Maine.

# JUNIORS

## IN THE LAND OF THE SKI-THRU McDONALD'S: A REPORT FROM MORA, SWEDEN

by Chris Mallory. Chris is a 2000 graduate of Colchester (VT) High School.

Living, studying, and skiing in Sweden will probably be one of the richest learning opportunities I'll ever experience. Although learning to adapt to a whole new culture and language has definitely been exhausting at times, the energy and spirit of the Swedish culture toward skiing is motivating and exciting.

My home for the year, Mora, Sweden, is a village of 15,000 people located next to picturesque Siljan Lake in the central part of Sweden. This area of the country, as is most, is fairly flat, with no real mountain ranges and endless forests. It seems that every person in Sweden, especially the kids, has a bike — not solely for pleasure, but to travel around town with. Looking at my school parking lot I'll see about 15 student cars and 500 bikes. Maybe a few less bikes this winter, but there's still a big group of diehards. This is just one factor that attributes to Sweden's healthy lifestyle.

When people in Sweden ask me what I think about their food, that is exactly my response, "Well, it's certainly healthy!" They either grow large-eyed or don't believe me when I tell them what most kids in the US stuff themselves with in the school cafeteria: pizza, brownies, and potato chips. Here, every day at school we get to load our plates with potatoes, fish, and pastas. Not quite the junk food selection, but it works for me. The most common food in Sweden is without a doubt, potatoes. We eat potatoes every day, so luckily, my host-mom is a phenomenal cook and can serve them 20 different ways. It probably sounds like Sweden has a very healthy diet and lifestyle, and they do, but sadly the Golden Arches have also found their way here. McDonalds have popped up everywhere in Sweden, even in small villages like Mora. At least some boast Ski-Thru pick-up rather than Drive-Thru!

I'm amazed at how lucky I was to select the Mora Ski Gymnasium for my year of ski training and study abroad. The Mora Ski Gymnasium consists of 70 skiers, ages 16 to 19, and four terrific coaches. Half of these students focus their energy towards competing in ski orienteering and the other half towards nordic skiing. Much overlapping occurs, however, as some of the orienteers are top skiers in Sweden as well. I must admit that my attempts to orienteer, both on foot and skis, have not been extremely successful, but I still think it's a great sport. Students at the Gymnasium come from all parts of Sweden. As 15 year olds, they apply to the gymnasium they are most interested in (currently, there are five in Sweden). If accepted, they then spend 3-4 years training and studying, depending on their goals. I feel these gymnasiums are very successful because they join the top junior skiers in the country, to live and train with one another. Surrounded by peers that have similar goals and interests, the training becomes fun and brings everyone to a higher level.

After five months of training in Sweden, I've noticed both similarities and differences to the training ideas practiced in the United States. In both countries, skiers are training similar hours and seem to spend about the same amount of time building on the basic principals of aerobic capacity, strength and speed. I've noticed two slight differences throughout the fall and early winter. One is how rest and recovery is viewed. It is not just an idea here, but my classmates practice it seriously. Sensing a

sniffle or knot in the throat my friends in Sweden will not train. When unusually fatigued and tired, they'll head straight to bed for sleeping and watching American movies. Second, I've had more high intensity workouts than in the past. My coaches have stressed 2-3 high intensity workouts a week, which can be tough. If I'm lucky, however, I'll come across a group of kids playing in the street. Normally the first question I'm hit with is, "Are you training for the Vasaloppet?" (Sweden's famed nordic ski race) "Yes!" is the best reply to give, for if I'm in the middle of some intervals, they'll sometimes stick around and "heja" for me up the hills. It's a great motivator when rollerskiing! As part of the Mora Ski Gym, I've also enjoyed the variety of activities we do for training. Our workouts have ranged from orienteering (on foot, bike, and skis), rowing 22 person "church" boats, at least one group circuit strength a week, aerobics, spinning, wrestling, and the latest, a ski ballet competition during one of the camps. So while there is no hidden secret to how they train, I've learned that rest and recovery should be viewed as seriously as all other training, I'm working on getting that extra intensity workout in, and am enjoying the variety of activities in the workouts.

Students compete in races from early December to mid-April in Sweden. Rather than representing their school in competition, skiers represent their town clubs. So while I go to school and train with 70 other skiers in Mora, when it comes to the races, we compete against one another. For Swedish Juniors, an eight race Rossignol Cup is spread throughout the season, which joins all the top junior racers. There is also a Junior Nationals competition in February. Besides these big competitions, regional races are held throughout the whole season. It makes for a busy racing season with many long weekend trips, but the traveling is fun.

One of the races, or maybe I should say holidays, I'm looking forward to during the first week of March, is the Vasaloppet week. As the oldest, longest and biggest ski race in the world, the Vasaloppet is known as Sweden's second national day. It's Sweden's Super Bowl, the most popular event on TV, where just about a third of Sweden's population tunes in to watch. Every year 15,000 people start the 90 km classical race from Salen to Mora. Living a kilometer away from the finish line, it should be an incredible week of races to watch and partake in.

After my year of living, studying, and skiing in Sweden I know I will look back and view it as a very rich learning experience. Every day I have to struggle with the language, but then see the benefits while out on the ski trails having conversations with friends. Living in a country with such spirit and enthusiasm for the sport of nordic skiing has certainly been a treat.



## NENSA

### MID-SEASON REPORT FROM NENSA PROGRAM DIRECTOR, ZACH CALDWELL

Looking back from the beginning of February, it feels like a long season already. I got on snow, along with a large handful of other Easterners, in early November out in Silver Star and we haven't been without skiing since. When I pause to consider that we've had three months on snow so far it's no wonder that it feels like a long season — many years we're lucky to get anything close to three months of skiing. Oh, yeah — I've waxed klister once in those three months.

For our top Eastern racers there's been quite a lot of high level competition on the calendar already this year. Starting with the Continental Cup series, moving on to US Nationals and the Pre-Olympic World Cup, and most recently at World Junior Championships New England has been well represented. While it would be impossible to credit every good performance of the season to date, a few standouts are worth noting.

Justin Freeman won the opening Continental Cup race in Silver Star against the best competition in North America.

New England was well represented at the Quebec Continental Cups races in early December. Good performances were turned in by Scott McArt (Dartmouth), Anna Sprague (Maine Winter Sports Center), and a bunch of juniors led by the crew from SMS who scored FIS points down in the range of the 70s.

At US Nationals Tessa Benoit (Stratton ERC) finished second in the sprints and Kris Freeman (US Ski Team) nearly got his second National Championship as Justin Wadsworth overtook him in the final kilometer of the 10K Classic.

Three New England Juniors made the Junior World Championship team. Colin Rodgers (Middlebury) was top junior in the 30K skate, Ethan Foster (SMS) took the 10K classic, and Andy Newell (SMS) took the sprint. Ryan Foster (SMS) earned a spot on the USST J1 trip to Scandinavia.

A bunch of New Englanders earned start rights at the Pre-Olympic World Cup races in Utah. World Cup points scoring performances were turned in (against an admittedly weak field) by Andrew Johnson (US Ski Team) in the 30K, Kris Freeman in the 15K Classic (brother Justin was the second American, just out of World Cup Points) and Tessa Benoit in the sprint. Tessa, Kris and Dave Chamberlain (Gould Academy) earned spots on the World Championship Team for Lahti.

Most recently, Andy Newell (SMS) — the only Junior to qualify in the top 16 at both the Continental Cup and US National Championship sprints — qualified second and finished 6th in the sprint at the World Junior Championships in Poland. In sneaking onto the podium in his first year at World Juniors Andy made a good start on the prediction of US Team Coach Christer Skog who said, after watching the sprint at Nationals, that Andy could be World Junior Champion. We'll see in the next couple of years!

## TRAVEL

### GNA SUMMER SKI TRAINING CAMP IN VUOKATTI, FINLAND

The Gunstock Nordic Association is pleased to announce that all the necessary arrangements are complete for our Fourth Annual Summer Camp in Europe: 2001 summer ski training camp in Vuokatti, Finland. Head coach Alexei Sotskov is pleased to invite skiers whose goal is to be one of the best in NE or even the US to join us on this exciting trip. The first 20 skiers will be accepted to this camp.

Date: July 10-25, 2001 (may be slightly adjusted)

Location: Vuokatti training center, Finland

Cost: \$2500 per person, incl.: airfare from Boston, ground transportation in Finland, lodging at the training center, three meals a day, facility use fee and coaching.

Features of the camp: Training in the ski tunnel on snow, trip to the Karhu ski company, excursion and shopping in Helsinki - capital of Finland, training with Finnish Junior National team.

Deposit: \$900 (non refundable after the deadline)

Deadline for registration: April 25, 2001

Contact: Alexei Sotskov, GNA Head coach

Phone: 603-524-9484

E-Mail: vialpa@together.net

www.6r.com/gunstocknordic

GNA Head coach Alexei Sotskov is a former member of the USSR Nordic Combined team. Formerly, Alexei was the head coach at the Leningrad School of Superior Athletic Performance in Russia. Since 1992, Alexei has been the GNA head coach. The GNA program has become very successful under Alexei's guidance. Two of our members won Junior World Champion titles in 1999. Numerous GNA skiers have won US Junior National Championships as Nordic Combined or x-c skiers.

GNA has sponsored numerous training camps for x-c skiers and Nordic combined skiers in Jericho, VT, Sugarloaf, ME, Ramsau, Austria and Vuokatti, Finland. In 2000 over 100 skiers participated in one of these camps. Skiers at all levels, from high school up to the US Olympic team in Nagano, have been participants in GNA camps. These camps have also proved to be excellent training for those skiers pursuing collegiate Nordic teams.

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## NENSA CLUB NOTES

by Rob Bradlee, Cambridge Sports Union. Send your club's news to Rob for the next NENN issue! <rob\_bradlee@instructionset.com>

After the first two club races of the season it looks like we have an upset in the making. After three years of total dominance, the Putney Ski Club has been pushed back into a distant third. As predicted in this column, it has taken a Caldwell to beat a Caldwell. In past seasons John Caldwell drove his crew of retired Olympians to victory. Now son Sverre Caldwell has pushed the Stratton Club into a strong lead using his crew of future Olympians. Dartmouth Outing Club similarly used its surplus of Carnival-quality skiers to claim a strong second position.

The traditional opening race of the Club Series was the famous Bogburn 15K in Pomfret VT. Fondly known as the Quadburn for its long, steep uphill and narrow, twisting downhill, the trail is the "home" course of the Cambridge Sports Union. Fearing ridicule as "weakling flatlanders", race director Bob Haydock has created a roller-coaster course to challenge the toughest Putney racer. With 208 starters, half of whom did two laps, the corners took a beating and brought tales of waist-high ruts filled with leaves and grass. Freshly back from astounding results at Nationals, Andy Newell dominated the results. Jim Stock of CSU started with Andy and reports severe disorientation as Andy started so fast that "I thought I was paralyzed and not moving at all." The Stratton women and juniors skiing in the senior race provided their club with many good points. Now we see why the school agreed to host the Eastern Residency Program. Clearly it was just a plot to get the horses necessary to win the Club Championship. For the Dartmouth youngsters this was almost a home course as it is just a short drive up from the Valley. They arrived in force and with a vanload of talent. Similarly, the Upper Valley fielded a strong team by hiring CSU BKLers to babysit their little ones.

After being humbled at their own race CSU came back with six strong teams for Putney. They even unveiled their new secret weapon, known as The Trondheim Rocket. Stein Kaasa, a professor of medicine on sabbatical in Boston for the year, ran the second leg for the top CSU team. Stein skied right by four skiers to move the team into third. The Putney crowd couldn't stop grumbling "Who IS that guy?" and "How low will CSU sink to win?" Rob Bradlee countered by saying "Stein heard about CSU and wanted to spend a year skiing in the US to improve his golf course skiing skills. He begged us to join." Meanwhile, the Stratton teams again dominated both Men's, Junior's, and Women's races. The best race of the day came when Sverre did battle head to head with Putney star Bob Gray and their contest brought out everyone out to cheer.

By the time this article appears the final club races will be underway. Will Stratton falter in the stretch? Will Putney make a comeback? Will CSU's new suits finally make them ski as fast as they look? Will the DOC or UVNC assert themselves? Will Fred

Griffin manipulate the points system to put Northeast Nordic on top? Look for this column in your next issue to read the exciting conclusion to this epic battle.



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# SCENES OF THE SEASON

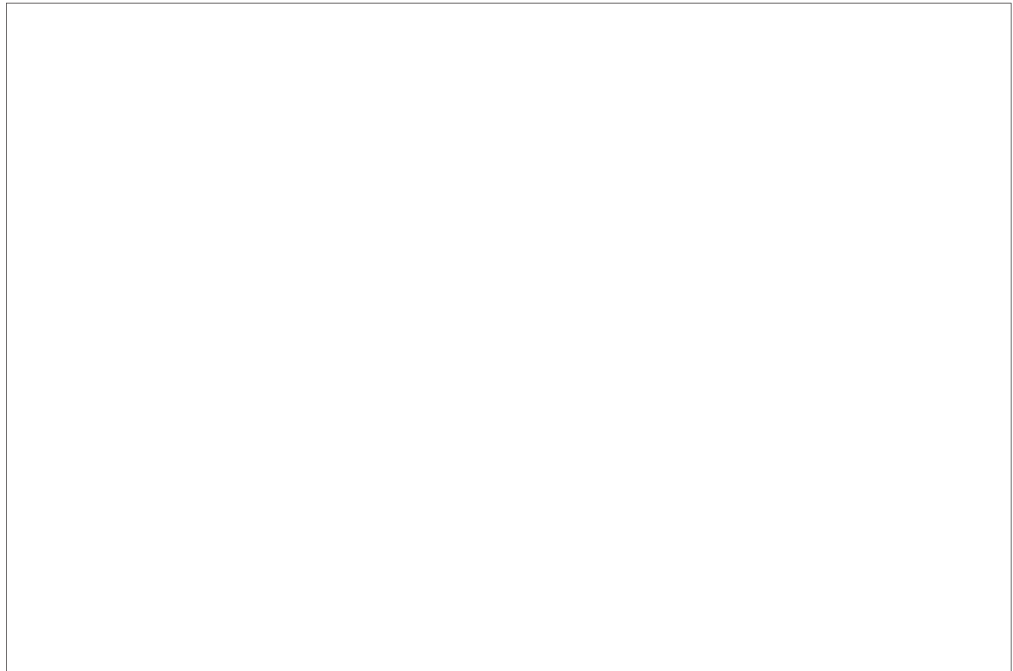
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Left: Peter Brickley (30-39) of  
Maine Nordic Club at Volvo EC  
Silver Fox Trot, 1/27/01.



Above and right:  
Two scenes from the  
Volvo EC Cheri Walsh  
Memorial at Holderness,  
1/28/01.  
Photos: Dorcas  
Wonsavage.



# COMPETITION

## WORLD CUP RACES AT SOLDIER HOLLOW

In January two Olympic dress-rehearsal or test events, the cross country and nordic combined World Cup races, were held at the Soldier Hollow venue. For the cross country World Cup races, the Utah weather also decided to test the athletes, coaches and race organizers by deviating from the preceding weeks of powder and cold blue skies: the day of the men's 15K classic and the women's relay featured thirty-two degrees and falling snow mixing with old snow and manmade snow. But the amount of snow at the venue wasn't an issue this year, and locals predict that it won't be next year for the Olympics either. Top athletes Bente (Martinsen) Skari and Johann Muehlegg both gave high praise to the trails and the race organization.

Unfortunately most of the Scandinavian World Cup racers stayed home, the Norwegians in particular fearful of the long travel and jet lag with their own Nationals coming up only a week later. Too bad they didn't have the chance to experience what our North American racers experience every year when they make the long trip to Europe! Bente Skari was the only Norwegian racer at Soldier Hollow, having traveled over weeks earlier to adjust to the altitude and enjoy the good skiing (she said the snow in Norway wasn't nearly as good). Including Skari, six of the top eight women on the World Cup points list made the trip to Soldier Hollow, which made for a deeper field than the men's.

Top U.S. women's racer Nina Kemppel continued her strong season with a fourteenth place in the women's one-day pursuit (5K classic, 5K skate) opener. In the men's 30K mass start opener, Justin Wadsworth took eighth place, beating a number of Red Group men he has been behind for years. This was the best men's World Cup result for the U.S. since March, 1984 (Jim Galanes' fifth

place in Murmansk). New Englander Andrew Johnson, skiing for the U.S. Ski Team, finished a strong 25th place, earning his first World Cup points, and the other top-30 finish for the U.S. men was Rob Whitney, in 29th. Native New Englanders Carl Swenson, Marc Gilbertson, Pat Weaver and Justin Freeman were 32nd, 37th, 38th and 44th. Kris Freeman, NH native and brother of Justin, scored his first World Cup points by finishing 29th in the men's 15K classic in wet new-falling snow three days later, with his brother Justin taking 32nd place.

The Soldier Hollow 1.5K sprint course is considered one of the most challenging on the World Cup circuit. It's hilly and at altitude; on the plus side it is entirely visible from the stadium with excellent spectator viewing also out on the top of the last uphill on the course just above the stadium. An enthusiastic crowd cheered on and motivated the racers. Most of the World Cup sprint specialists were in the women's field, and U.S. racer Nina Kemppel finished in 17th place, missing continuing on to the finals by less than a second. Eastern racer Tessa Benoit finished close behind her, in 20th place to earn a berth on the U.S. team to the World Championships in Lahti, Finland in February. In a thrilling race, U.S. racer Torin Koos moved up from the last seed to take 9th place, also earning himself a berth on the World Championship team. Carl Swenson ended up in 17th. The U.S. placed eight men in the top 30, with Eastern racers David Chamberlain and Kris Freeman taking 22nd and 23rd.

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

### FROM MIDNIGHT TO MIDNIGHT: THE D.O.C. 24-HOUR WALKS OF 1919-1920 (PART 3)

In which author William P. Fowler and Sherm Adams, then president of the Dartmouth Outing Club, decide to break the current record by walking 83 miles in 24 hours, followed by Doc Griggs, who "kindly offered to follow us in his car and to have our meals ready for us in advance". (The author's later notes, below, in brackets.)

We chose Memorial Day, which in 1920 fell on Monday, May 31, for our walk... We left Skyline at midnight, Sherm, myself, and a freshman whom I had got to help Doc Griggs, but who thought he would walk the whole way with us. It was good and cool all that night and we jogged along for the first mile or so, getting to Littleton (three miles) before 12:30. We went through Franconia at 1:45. Here the freshman was having hard work to keep up with us and gradually dropped behind. Going up the three-mile Profile House Hill he got out of earshot. We reached the Profile House (14 miles) at 3:03, as we had to slow down a bit on the hill... It was getting light by then and we had a good view of the Old Man. Going through the Notch we saw a porcupine and later a rabbit in the road, and heard lots of birds, mostly thrushes... We reached Agassiz Basin Cabin at 5:45, having gone 25 1/2 miles. Doc Griggs had not got there, as we were so far ahead of time, so we got up all the freshmen in the cabin and made them feed us some eggs and get cold water to soak our feet in. We spent three-quarters of an hour there and left at 6:30.

Doc Griggs came across us about two miles from the cabin. He had picked up the freshman at the Flume, 10 miles behind us. It was getting warmer, so we changed our socks and shoes and I took off my trousers and put on a running

suit...we went up Kinsman Notch [a rise of 1150 feet in altitude], past Lost River to Wildwood [in Benton], where we took the Tunnel Road [which goes from north to south between Mt. Moosilauke to Mt. Clough], to Great Bear Cabin, arriving at 11:05, having gone in all 44 1/2 miles...the Tunnel Road is a logging road uphill for five miles at an easy grade and then a sharp drop down. It was so hot that I began to feel tired, and I had a bad blister on my heel... The Tunnel Road was in poor condition, in places overgrown with bushes, and one or two of the bridges had been washed out, so that I remember scrambling down and out of a brookbed in two or three places. We drank often from mountain brooks as it was very hot...

At Great Bear Cabin we both got a good rub-down by a fellow who knew how to do it [Harry Hillman]. It helped my legs out a lot, as they needed it. We also had some sort of dinner, raw eggs, toast, and an orange. I got my blister opened and taped up [after dressing it with zinc and boracic acid ointment, which I carried with me for an unhealed wound left from my ill-fated Putney trip], so that it did not bother at all though I walked on it the rest of the trip. [As I remember it, a blister when dressed as above was very painful for the first mile, after which it gave no further trouble].

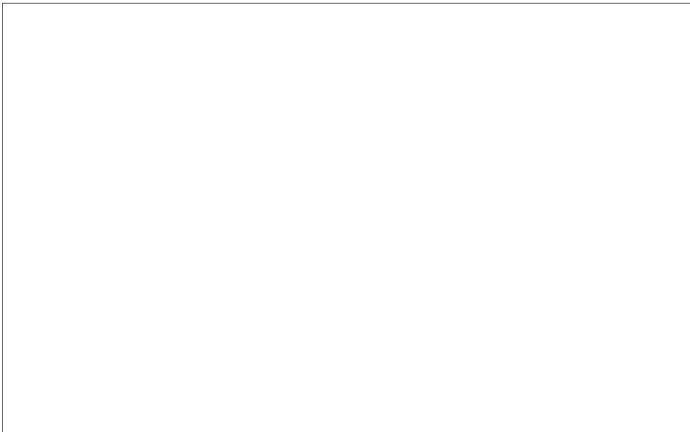
### SPRING NENSA COACHES CLINIC

The next in the series of "Gaining Ground" Coaches Clinics — coming in April!

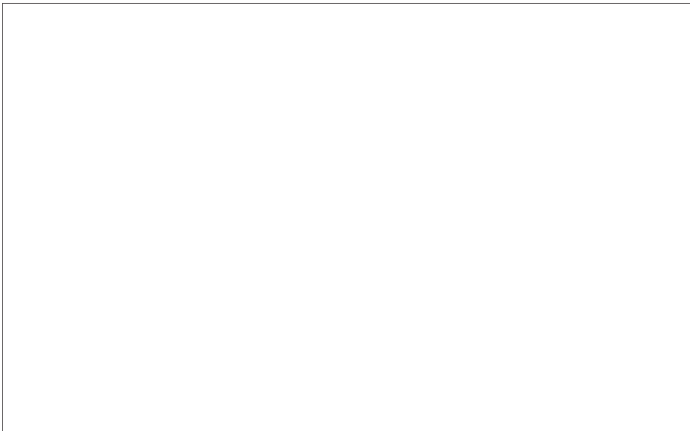
Since the summer of 1998, when the NENSA Coaches organization was born, NENSA has sponsored coaches clinics that have given coaches at all levels invaluable experience on snow, on roller skis, on dryland drills, in the classroom for training and sports physiology topics, in discussions with other coaches, with national team coaches, and even with visiting world class athletes. The NENSA Coaches education program is looked up to by every other region in the country. Come join us for fun and to gain much ground in your knowledge of every aspect of cross country skiing!

Check the NENSA web site for more information on this next "Gaining Ground" clinic:

<<http://www.nensa.net>>



Scenes from last August's "Gaining Gound" clinic. Photos: Anne Donaghy.



### NENSA'S SPRING BOARD MEETING

Sunday, April 29: NENSA Board of Directors Meeting  
Holderness School, Plymouth, NH, 11:30 - 4:00.  
Open to the public.

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