



new england NORDIC NEWS

WINTER 2004 VOL. 9, NO. 2

Pineland Farms - Cross-Country Skiing as a Lifestyle

Classic New England red brick buildings set in fields bordered by a pine forest cut through with trails for runners and skiers. Green grass in summer, flower and vegetable gardens and a working farm with border collies and llamas keeping watch over grazing cows and horses. Lovely white snow blanketing it all in winter and hanging from the pine boughs above the trails. Bustling activity from the offices to the school building to the barns and riding rings and hayfields to the huge dining room/cafeteria where anyone who works there can eat - and everyone smiles at you and welcomes you as soon as they see you. Even their website opens: "Welcome!" This is Pineland Farms in New Gloucester, Maine.

Pineland is a 2,500 acre working farm and a business campus (for nonprofit and for-profit businesses and organizations, including a conference center) as well as a recreational center only 25 miles north of Portland and a fifteen minute drive from Freeport. Pineland's goal is to provide a productive and educational venue that enriches the community by demonstrating responsible farming techniques, offering educational opportunities and encouraging a healthy lifestyle through recreation. Does this sound familiar to us cross-country skiers? Yes! It matches the goal of an organization farther north in Maine - the Maine Winter Sports Center - whose aim is to build healthier, more engaged communities by establishing cross-country skiing as a lifestyle. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that Pineland and MWSC have linked up to provide community skiing programs.

Pineland Farms offers nearly 30 km of trails, all of them designed by Olympic skier John Morton. Skiers from beginners to experts are at home here since John has designed different loops for different abilities. The Nordic Center operated by Gorham Bike and Ski offers skiers, snowshoers and other outdoor enthusiasts a place to gather, rent or purchase skis and trail passes. There's even a handy waxroom supplied with all the essentials. The trailhead begins at the Visitors Center and offers a beautiful vista of Mount Washington — from "the other side" to those of us Vermont and New Hampshire skiers used to seeing it from the west.

Outdoor Programs Coordinator Phil Savignano lists Pineland's skiing programs for a wide community: the Healthy Hometown Ski Program now includes 11 school and recreation programs, there is a Senior Striders program, a Bill Koch Youth Ski League program, a Moms & Munchkins program (including Dads!) for at-home parents and young children not yet in the school system or home-schooling.

There's a Masters Primer series for masters skiers looking toward the racing season or just working on building their skiing base for the upcoming Banknorth Marathon Series. Phil Savignano adds, "This winter we will be hosting the Maine Handicap Skiing Nordic Program that will include training for staff and volunteers. This program will begin to lay the groundwork for an adaptive program at Pineland Farms."

The Maine Winter Sports Center worked with Pineland to develop the Healthy Hometowns Ski Development Program, providing local children with complete ski packages and local ski clubs with a complete curriculum to help ensure that the time spent out of doors is productive and fun. The MWSC provides instructor training through this program as well as testing opportunities to chart the progress of individual skiers. All of this helps improve the quality of health and lifestyle for future generations.

It's a full events calendar at Pineland Farms this winter: a coaches clinic sponsored by the Maine Winter Sports Center, a Craftsbury Marathon Primer, a big weekend combining their first annual Ski Festival and the third annual NE Women's Ski Day, the Coastal Nordic Games, mini clinics during spring break for junior skiers, a Sweethearts Relay on the day after Valentine's Day... and more. Their skiing events calendar and even daily snow conditions are posted on their website: www.pinelandfarms.org.

Go to the website for more than ski schedules and snow reports - go to check out the entire Pineland campus and for the fun of looking at the photos of horses and llamas. Then make a date to go there this winter, for some great, fun skiing!
Anne Donaghy

Pineland Farms cont'd on pg. 12.

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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 25

Late Winter (March) issue: January 25

Spring (May) issue: March 25

Summer (July) issue: May 25

Early Fall (September) issue: July 25

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.

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Be sure to check here frequently for the latest info. on upcoming events!

FROM THE EDITORS

Anticipation season. It's another pleasure known to cross-country skiers here in New England. As this issue is taking shape, NENSA members are in the heart of anticipation season. It actually started a lot earlier for those who work to provide us with great skiing and racing all winter long. Ski areas, race organizers and NENSA committees have been long getting ready in anticipation of providing us with great skiing and racing all winter long. John Upton, NENSA Board President, keeps us up to date with a report from the fall Board of Directors meeting on page 8.

A bit of snow in mid-November gave us a hint of the ski season to come. We knew that there was skiable snow in the mountains of Vermont and New Hampshire. Some of us were able to take advantage of Mother Nature's tease while others were content to know that winter is on its way. Reports from out West tell us that many of our athletes have transformed the Thanksgiving Holiday into a jumpstart on the season. On page 5 Rob Bradlee gives us an animated report from West Yellowstone.

In the rush of the holidays and the excitement of the racing season, our attention to nutrition can sometimes get put on the back burner. Dr. Don Christie gives us some timely tips on fueling for efficiency on page 10. He will be giving a related presentation during the lunch hour at the NE Women's Ski Day on Feb. 1st at Pineland Farms. Speaking of Pineland Farms, on the cover page Anne Donaghy gives us a glimpse of what we can expect when we visit there in New Gloucester, Maine.

The upcoming season holds a great deal of promise. The first big event on the US calendar, Senior Nationals will again be staged at Black Mountain in Rumford, Maine from Jan. 3rd through the 11th. It's our chance to come out and cheer and be inspired by the best skiers in the US. Check out the official race site for the latest details on race dates and times: www.chisholmskiclub.org/chevytruck.html.

We wish you great Holidays, lots of snow and a Happy New Year!

Mary Hamel
Anne Donaghy, Editors

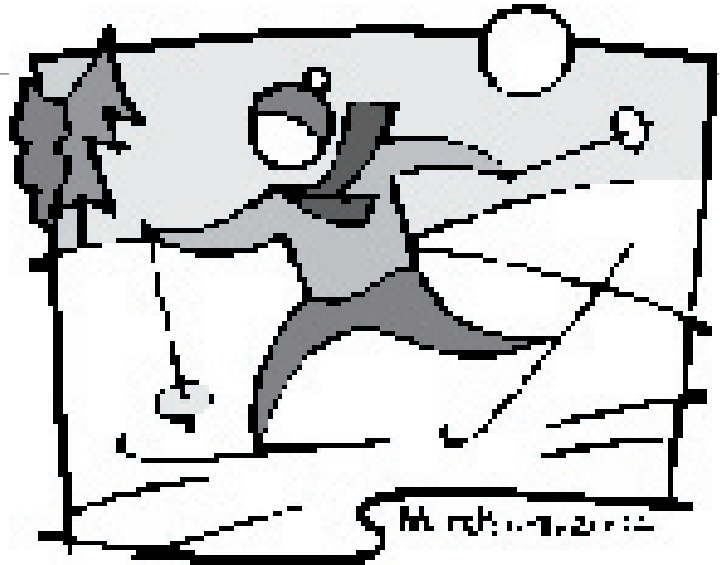


NE Women's Ski Day '03 - Come join us this year on Feb.1!



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CLUBS NEWS

Fall '03 Clubs Report

by Rob Bradlee

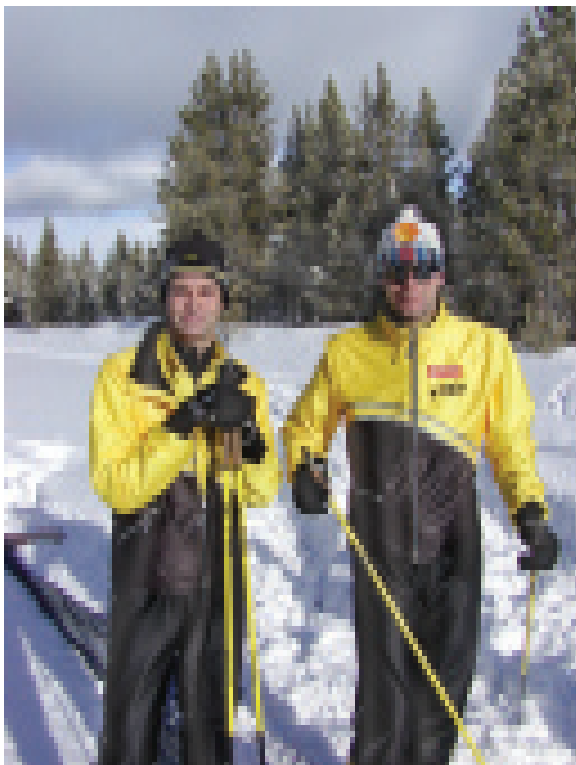
NENSA clubs have spent the fall training hard, getting organized, and planning many winter activities. My own CSU club has been doing weekly hill-bounding workouts at Prospect Park in Waltham MA. Thanks to good headlamps we continued all fall and should be ready for the Club Series competition. We also upgraded our weekly Tuesday night race series at the Weston Ski Track to include a season long point competition with sponsorship from the new ski shop in town, Fast Splits. The snow guns are fired up and we are putting in the Ks. Come on down for First Night in Boston and the New Year's Pursuit.

Upper Valley Nordic also upped the training ante with a huge Stadfest stadium-bounding event in Dartmouth stadium. Eleven hardy souls accumulated the vertical gain of two Mt. Everest ascents in a single afternoon. Using a complex formula weighted to include family obligations and creativity of costume design, club member Stephen Genereaux was declared "winner" of the training event. One participant sent the following email to organizer and chief sadist Chris Nice: "Thanks for organizing a wonderful event. I had to double pole from the parking lot to my office. I haven't been able to walk for two days. Thanks again."

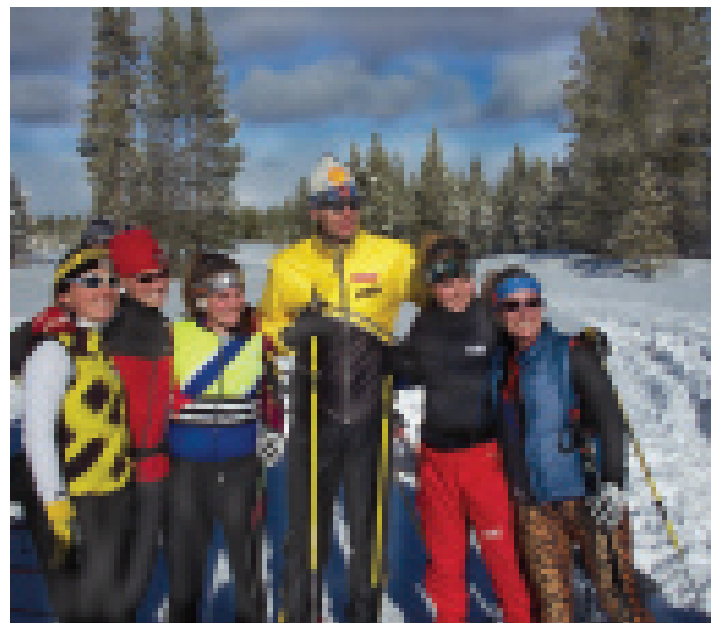
NE Nordic continued its fall and early winter camp program

aimed at high school skiers who seek individual excellence on a regional and national level. Two highly intensive non-profit camps were held 11/28-11/31 in NW Vermont and 12/11 - 12/14 at Mt Ste Anne's targeted specifically at J2 and EHSC athletes who seek success on NENSA's Eastern Cup Junior Olympic circuit—but who lack a home program or club that provides weekend support. This year's camps were filled by five skiers from ME, three from VT and one each from NH and MA. NE Nordic coaches Jeff Hixon and Fred Griffin will continue to provide support to camp kids at eastern Cup races throughout the winter.

Doug Armstrong, top organizer and coach, report that Mt. Washington Nordic has updated their newsletter software (now up to 7 issues per season), purchased 10 pair of Aeros, provided rollerski training to kids and adults throughout the summer and fall, increased efforts towards an improved BKL, increased the Wellinghurst Series to nine events, sponsored three training camp days (for two local high schools and one for club members), created a new website, enlarged their Club Library with the purchase of all of the 2003 WC videos, ordered a new club hat, and best of all have their own club song "And the Club Skis On" to the tune of "And the Band Plays On." Way to go, Doug!



Rob Bradlee pauses for breath and Thomas Alsgaard pauses to enjoy the West Yellowstone scenery. (Ian Harvey photo)



Thomas Alsgaard enjoys a break with the Whitman College women's xc ski team. (Jim Levins photo)

MASTERS

West Yellowstone Thanksgiving by

Rob Bradlee

Every November America's ski family gathers in West Yellowstone Montana for a Thanksgiving holiday of skiing and socializing. My wife and I had the feeling we were coming home. On the plane Bates skier Kyle Rogers sat in the seat behind me. Arriving in Bozeman we met a large group of skiers from Holderness School. The next day on the trails we saw the Stratton Mountain School contingent, former New England skiers like Andy Newell and Andrew Johnson leading the U.S. Ski Team through interval training, and racers from college teams Middlebury, UVM, and Bates. There were other skiers from all over the country as well as The Factory Team, The Rossignol Team, and the Toko Tech Team. **And this year we had a very special guest for the holidays: Thomas Alsgaard, the fastest skier in the world and a multiple Olympic and World Championship gold medallist. At the invitation of Toko and Madshus, Thomas flew in from Oslo to spend a few days skiing and hanging out with America's skiers.**

I first met Thomas when he strolled into breakfast at the Stagecoach Inn escorted by Ian Harvey, Toko Brand Manager, and Peter Hale of Madshus. Thomas looked tired, but perked up after a hearty meal of scrambled eggs, toast, and coffee. **After eating Ian said, "Who would like to take Thomas for a ski?" Jim Levins, NENSA Board of Directors member, and I jumped at the chance.** A half hour later Jim, Thomas, and I were dressed in our bright yellow Toko warm-ups striding quickly toward the trails. Alsgaard is a tall man, but what really sets him apart are his broad shoulders. We had to march quick-step to keep up with his long, rapid strides. Ski conditions were ideal with fresh, cold, packed powder on the trails and bright sun painting the snow-laden pines with yellow light. With Middlebury skier Kate Whitcomb, we started up the Rendezvous trail. Before beginning our ski in earnest we had to pass through the brightly colored gauntlet of ski product tents lining both sides of the trail. Thomas created quite a stir as we passed. He stopped and chatted politely while skiers asked questions and gushed. He was anxious to get skiing so after a few hellos we skied off into the trees.

When we reached the Dead Dog trail, Thomas was really enjoying the day and wanted to cruise. **I suggested he take the lead, but he said, "No, you set the pace."** Try to imagine the pressure of having the world's best skier clicking your ski tails as you struggle to maintain some semblance of good form on the uphill and to not fall headfirst into the soft snow on the downhill. I snuck a glance at my heart rate monitor at the top of a hill and saw that I was enjoying a good level 5, maximal effort. Thomas was not breaking a sweat, skiing relaxed, and enjoying the scenery. To give myself a break I asked him questions. He told me that he never uses a heart rate monitor, but just skis hard when he feels good and it is fun to go fast, and skis slow when he is tired. It was his first day of classic skiing since March and the best conditions he had seen

this year. It was clear that above all he loved to be out in nature enjoying a good ski. As you may have gathered, his English is excellent.

After 90 minutes we had skied almost all the open trails, so we returned, me gasping, Thomas smiling, to the tent area. We headed out again with a Middlebury skier named Clare so Thomas could give some her some technique advice. This gave me a chance to ski behind him and observe his smooth and powerful technique. He never slipped kicking up the steep hills and double-poled with long, crisp thrusts. At the end of our short tour he gave Clare some good suggestions for improving. I asked if he had any tips for the old man. He smiled, "No, it is too late for you." But then he followed his joke with some good pointers for me too.

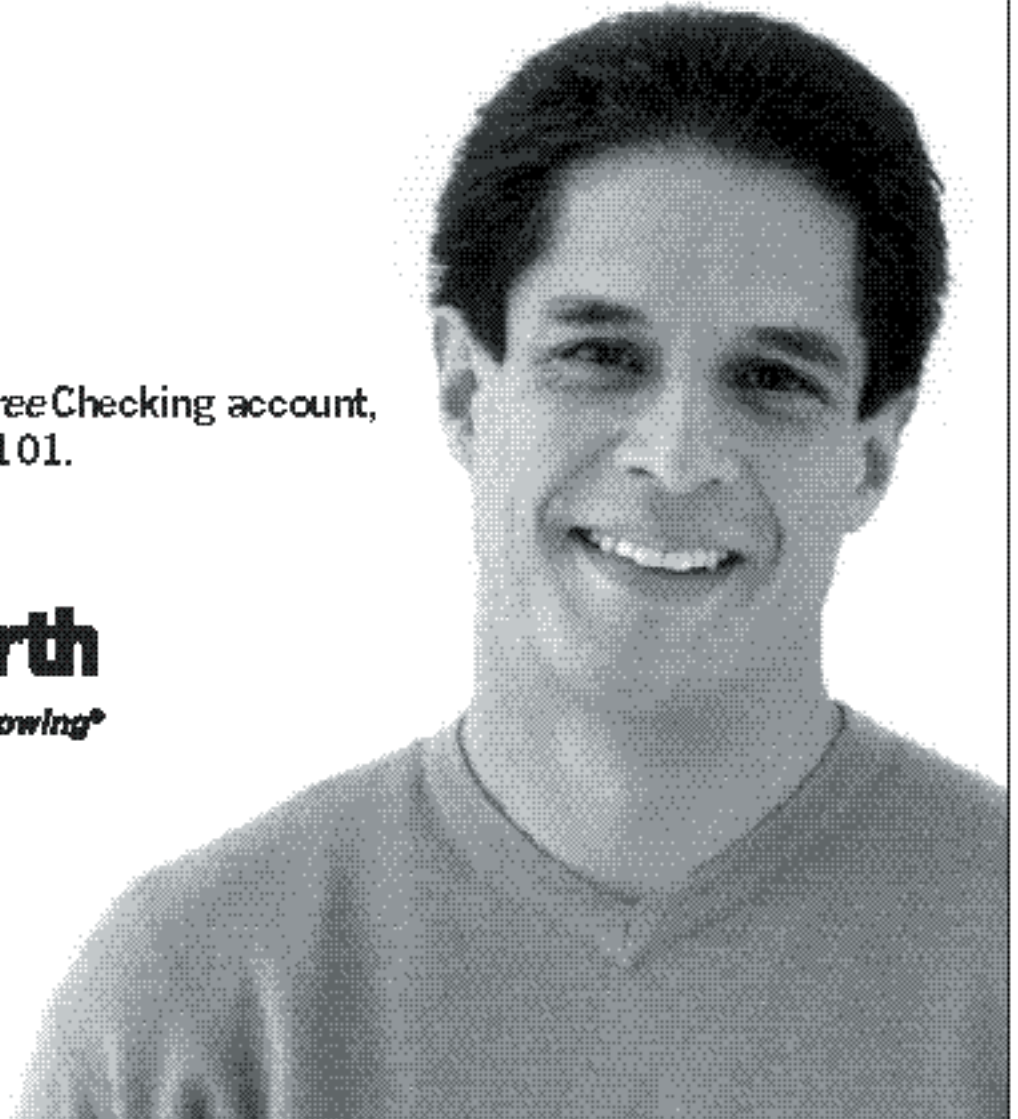
Thomas skied with many high school and junior teams from all over the country, and spent evenings signing autographs and answering questions. Jim Levins arranged for him to ski with Holderness and Stratton Mountain skiers on Friday morning after Thanksgiving. Thomas is a shy man in a crowd, but with a group of juniors on the trails he was open, humorous, and fully at ease. St. Lawrence skier Amy Laverack gathered lots of good information. His biggest training week was 35 hours, and he trained about 800 hours per year. However, as a junior he trained 420 to 460 hours per year and enjoyed playing many sports including soccer and cycling. And dismaying news for coaches, he told the juniors to not listen too closely to their coaches, but to listen to their own instincts about what works for them. He told the story of the time before the Olympics in Lillehammer in 1994. He would do no-pole skate workouts for over an hour. The older members of the Norwegian team derided these workouts. **After Thomas crushed the field for a decisive win in the 30K skate the rest of the team decided that no-pole skate workouts were not a bad idea.**

Murray Banks, World Masters Champion from Vermont, told me of seeing Thomas skiing back from the trails to our hotel. West Yellowstone lightly plows and packs the snow on its streets and uses no sand or salt. Thomas took a flying leap off the snow bank into the street, weaved in and around two on-coming cars, and dashed down the road around the corner. As one young skier said, "He gave me five tips about skiing, but the only one I remember is to "have fun."

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NENSA

What is NENSA?

by Fred Griffin, Executive Director

I take my job seriously—too seriously if you ask my wife, a sensible woman who values restraint. I put a cherished teaching career on hold seven years ago because I believed my efforts, talents, and yes, rogue energies could make difference in a start-up organization. Working with Zach Caldwell and a dedicated, hard-working visionary core of volunteers we created something where nothing had been, wrested a child-centered organization based on health, respect for the environment, and personal excellence from the void.

Every year we grew, added limbs which sprouted programs which bore fruit: coaches education, athlete education, officials education, a full schedule of events in winter which grew to a full calendar of events year-around, nearly 100 clubs, multiple websites, trips abroad, a marathon series, women's day, a newsletter, a BKL Manual, a coaches manual, a race organizer's manual. Perhaps of even more importance, we established an open and fair New England community called NENSA where the skiers could and did gather.

But this year it became evident to many of us that this was not enough. Our headlong, catch-as-catch-can, bootstrapping efforts to provide something for everyone who wanted to be involved in the sport of cross-country skiing had been successful. But where did we go from here? We were still potent with purpose, but we lacked direction—a clear and focused vision of the future of the sport in New England. Consumed for years with the myriad details of getting programs up and working, we had lost the broader view. What's next didn't mean moving to the next pile of papers on the desk. Sure we had accomplished some impressive things, but where were we headed? Longitudinal thinking, planning for a better future was called for. But before we could begin the planning process fundamental questions had to be answered.

What is NENSA? What had we become? What were we in 2003?

This took some thinking. There were problems. NENSA, you see, doesn't actually do many things. We don't hold Eastern Cups or Marathons or the Bill Koch League. We support those that do, provide resources and expertise, set standards, provide promotion — but we very rarely directly run the races or teach the kids. We are not "the thing;" we are that which encourages, supports, enhances "the thing." After foundering mightily, we came up with these two paragraphs. I like to call them "NENSA defined." I think they are very important.

"The primary goal of the New England Nordic Ski Association is to create an environment that promotes the athletic development of New England skiers, supports skiing organizations, and encourages the growth of the sport of cross-country skiing." NENSA's long-term programs assist the

individuals and the organizations that deliver services to the skiing community. In cases where structures do not exist to deliver necessary services, NENSA may elect to initiate events or services to stimulate desired development. NENSA staff or NENSA-based committees may take on the short-term responsibilities of delivering such services, but it is not the responsibility of NENSA to be a primary service provider for ongoing services, nor should significant portions of the NENSA budget be allocated to provide services that can be delivered by other organizations such as clubs, schools, and cross-country ski centers.

NENSA's direct contributions to growing and supporting a healthy skiing culture can be separated into the areas of communication and coordination, education and certification. As the conduit between individuals, organizations, schools, clubs, ski centers, race sites, and industry, NENSA creates and maintains the communications vital to the health of the sport. NENSA's links allow for the coordination of scheduling, siting, and promoting of events and activities by individuals and organizations. It is through NENSA that various entities within the New England ski community are best able work with each other. NENSA's educational programs are designed to serve the skiing community with clinics and workshops in areas such as ski technique and race organization, and seminars on issues such as youth development and club development. NENSA's Coaches and Officials Education and Certification programs develop standards and teachers of standards to improve the quality and consistency of athlete development across the region."

This is it then. Do you see?

We are not a government; we are a service organization. We are not the building; we are the foundation and framing. We are infrastructure, we are glue, we are catalyst, we are facilitator. From this understanding, from this vision of NENSA our Strategic Plan was created. You will find it on the website at www.nensa.net. It's worth your while to read it. And, of course, to provide feedback. It is meant to be a living document, always in transition, always arriving, but never quite getting there. I hope to hear from you.

The Strategic Plan is Just the Beginning!

by John Upton, NENSA President

The adoption of the NENSA Strategic Plan at the Fall meeting of the Board of Directors was the culmination of a year of important planning, but it is just the beginning of the next phase of NENSA's development. Over the next four years, the Board, our Staff and each of the committees responsible for setting the direction of our organization will be intent on accomplishing the long range goals and objectives identified in the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan will be our road map to

assure NENSA realizes its mission to sustain a vital and active skiing community in New England.

In setting the direction for our future, the Strategic Plan keeps NENSA's historic focus on core athlete development programming, while embracing an increasing role as the glue that binds cross-country skiing in New England. Importantly, the Strategic Plan also recognizes that we have limits in what we can accomplish effectively, and accordingly the Board will continue its policy of not attempting to become a primary service provider in place of the critical role that clubs, teams, schools, sites and other local organizations currently play.

The implementation of the Strategic Plan will center on four long range objectives: expanding event participation and membership; acting as the conduit and facilitator for all aspects of skier development; refining our internal operations to better fulfill our role; and, supporting all of the above through a diversified and sustainable financial base. No single goal can be successful if the other goals are ignored. The success of the Strategic Plan thus contemplates that we move forward with all goals with equal emphasis. Just a very few of the action items the Board has identified toward achieving these objectives are interactive improvements to our website, creation of a year-end festival for older juniors, seniors and masters, expanding our non-racing programs, reexamining our current committee

structure, pursuit of grants to fund new programs and implementing benchmarks to track our progress. There is much to be done.

Four years from now, I am confident we will all look back with satisfaction that NENSA did not sit back and let events control it, but set in motion a thoughtful plan to propel our organization and our sport forward. Thank you to all who have contributed to the planning process. NENSA's future is bright because of your good work.

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COACHING

Welcome Nina, Igor and Evgenia!

by Dorcas Wonsavage, NENSA Media Coordinator

Gunstock Nordic Association's search for a nordic coach has ended – and all of New England couldn't be more excited! Nina Gavriluk is now officially the GNA Head Nordic Coach. GNA's Katrina Howe interviewed Nina and Igor to find out what brought these two elite athletes and their daughter all the way from the home outside of St. Petersburg, to Gilford, NH.

Nina, now thirty-eight, skied for the Russian Federation for 17 years, from 1987 to 2003, participating in four Olympic Games (1988, 1994, 1998, and 2002). She has three Olympic gold medals in the relay ('88,'94,'98) and one Olympic bronze medal in the 15 km freestyle ('94). In addition, she won 5 world cup races and six world cup relays. She is one of the revered figures in the sport internationally.

Her husband, Igor Badamshin, skied in the Russian federation for 7 years, skiing on the World Cup circuit from 1989 to 1996. He participated in the 1994 Olympic Games ('94). He has a bronze medal from the 1993 World Championships relay. Their thirteen year old daughter, Evgenia Badamshin, is already an aspiring nordic skier. She is looking forward to studying in the United States and is enrolled in American school at Gilford Middle High School.

Both Nina and Igor wanted to try coaching. "Coaching is better in the U.S. - you have snowmaking, lights, groomers." Igor and Evgenia had visited the United States with the Russian/NENSA exchange team two years ago. Nina came this past summer to lead the cycle of "Nina's Clinics" hosted by NENSA. Both had seen New England and met the GNA team and decided it was a place where they would like to live. "They are excited to be here but nervous because they can't speak English very well" said Howe. "They're looking forward to learning to speak English better."

Nina is very glad to be finished with World Cup skiing, according to Katrina Howe. "She is sick of all the time away from home and all the summer camps that she had to go to for so many hot months.....she said she doesn't like summer training! She is looking forward to teaching her own daughter and other young skiers how to race at a higher level and really wants a chance to pass her knowledge on to younger athletes. She feels that she can help us a great deal through technique instruction."

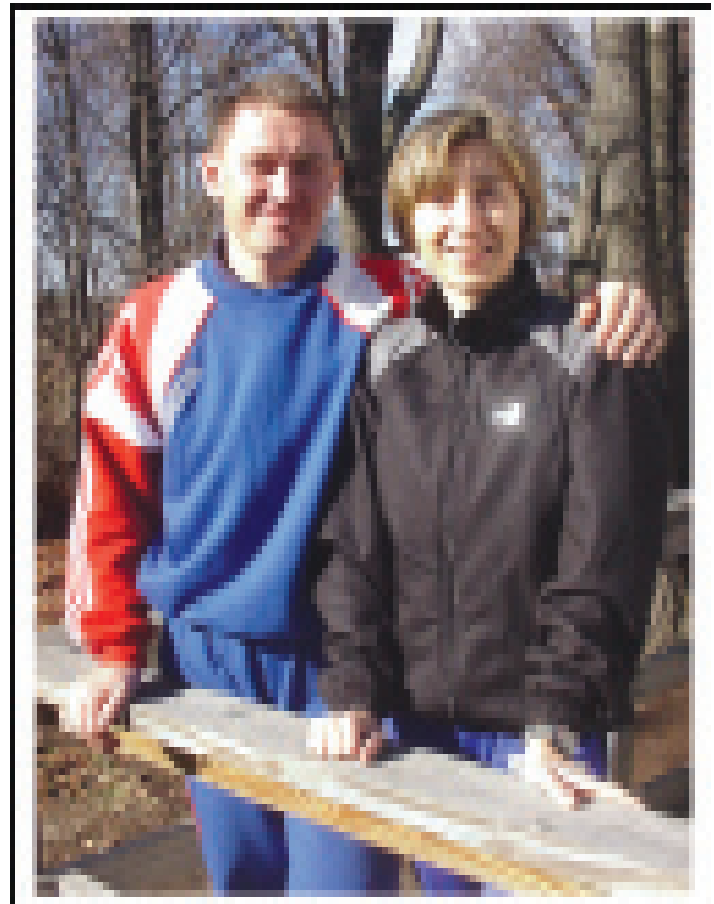
Nina has been skiing since she was 11 years old. She was attending a sports school when a nordic ski coach approached her and asked her to ski. Being noticed at that age was frightening but flattering. She started skiing soon afterwards. Igor started as a basketball player but he joined the ski team at age fourteen when he stopped growing. When asked to compare skiing in Russia with skiing in the United States, "It is more expensive to raise a child who skis in Russia - many people there cannot afford it anymore so there are fewer and fewer skiers there" says Igor. Adds Nina, "Americans don't run enough. The older athletes should play fewer games (soccer, frisbee, etc.) and run instead." Otherwise both nations do a lot

of the same activities for training.

They are both very excited about the coming winter and are looking forward to traveling around New England with the GNA team to the NENSA races and festivals. Nina has expressed that she would like to try working with younger children. Igor, who is not formally a GNA coach but has volunteered to help, wishes to work mostly with higher level skiers. Nina anticipates running a few clinics during the winter.

Both Nina and Igor have already been coaching and participating in the GNA practices, as has Evgenia, and they are fitting in well. They are excited to be here and want to share their knowledge. When you see them out on the ski trails this winter, say "Zdrastvitua!" Hello!

For more information on Nina, Igor and the Gunstock Nordic Association, visit www.gunstocknordic.com.



Igor and Nina (Dorcas Wonsavage photo)

SPORTS MEDICINE

Eating (and Drinking) Right for Training and Competition

By Donald Christie Jr., MD, Chair, NENSA Sports Medicine Committee

To make the most of our growth and development as athletes — to say nothing of what's best for our good general health — we need to plan ahead when it comes to food and drink, as surely as we check our equipment and hope for the right wax. Why train our "engine" so carefully throughout dryland season and into the early weeks on snow if we don't give that engine the fuel it deserves, in the right amounts and at the right time?

Enough, Already!

Rarely do serious skiers have a problem taking in too much food. Many don't eat enough! Some growing boys and girls (the latter group, especially) take in too little food and drink to support their growth and physical activity. Tracey Cote, head Nordic coach at Colby College and a member of our NENSA Sports Medicine Committee, focused on nutrition and eating problems in her master's degree studies and shares this concern about the under-nutrition evident in a number of our athletes. She notes that, too often, out of worry about gaining a few pounds, a skier may restrict food intake instead of assuring consumption of adequate calories, protein, and essential minerals like calcium and iron.

While it is true that some older recreational athletes wear a few unnecessary pounds here and there (a whole other topic!), and that fully-grown elite skiers mustn't carry too many fat pounds (nor unnecessary muscle weight, for that matter), high school age athletes may need to work at it to consume the right quantity and quality of food and fluids: adequate energy (calories) to support growth, development, restoration, and repair; adequate foodstuffs (protein, carbohydrate, and fat) and non-caloric micronutrients (vitamins, minerals) for construction, repair, and function; and adequate fluid to support the "hydraulic" needs of our cardiovascular system, regulate temperature, and maintain the "internal ocean" of water and salts within and outside our cells.

How Much, And When?

Printing tables with details of specific foodstuffs and micronutrients is beyond the scope of this short article, but readers can get a good start by consulting the Sports Medicine page on the NENSA website for related reading, including articles on nutrition and hydration from past issues of NENN. However, a few guidelines and hints are in order.

Number of calories needed each day: For growing teenagers, a reasonable rule of thumb is a daily allowance of 20 calories per pound of body weight. Thus, the 150-pound junior boy would need to take in about

3000 calories each day, a 115-pound sophomore girl about 2300 calories. For us, ahem, older types, body weight times 15 usually meets our calorie needs, as long as we make sure they come in the form of wholesome, unprocessed food containing adequate amounts of protein, vitamins, and minerals. (Elite skiers, keeping heavy training and racing schedules, may need to consume calories equivalent to their body weight times 30-40, depending on the day and schedule.)

Fully-grown athletes should realize that if they are about the right weight for planned training and competition — neither too thin nor carrying "excess baggage" of fat or useless bulging muscle — and seem to be performing about as anticipated, they are probably taking in just about the right number of calories.

Food content: If we no longer have to worry about calories — Let's assume our weight is just about right — we then turn our attention to the need for adequate protein (for growth, building, and repair: 1 gram of high quality protein per pound of lean body weight per day is a generously-adequate amount of protein), carbohydrate (the principle energy source for endurance athletes), vitamins, and minerals. A diet made up of 2500 calories or more of real food, consumed in a "balanced" diet (meaning, a balance of different food sources: lean meat, fish, low-fat dairy products, eggs, fresh fruit and vegetables, whole-cereal-grain products) provides adequate vitamins and minerals without a need for multivitamin and mineral supplements.

"Junk" food provides lots of calories, but comes up short in the protein, micronutrient and food fiber departments. (Those superheroes consuming 5000-6000 calories each day may be able to "afford" those junk food calories as a source of carbohydrate and fat fuels. However, they risk acquiring bad eating habits that won't wear well once the party's over.) We need some fat in our diets, too, especially the "good" fats such as plant oils and fish oils, but those things almost come along for the ride without our thinking about it when we eat the proverbial balanced diet. Strict vegetarians reap the rewards of ample carbohydrate, fiber, and most micronutrients, but they have to pay special attention to food choices to consume adequate protein, calcium, iron, and vitamin B12.

Translating Needs Into Real Food

Once we have figured out how much energy (calories) and protein we need, we have to consider this in terms of real food. For those not used to doing this, a great place to start is by studying the "Nutrition Facts" labels on food and drink packages. These fairly accurately specify the serving size (portion size), its caloric value, and grams of protein, carbohydrate, and fat as well as any significant micronutrient contribution. We can also consult food tables available in nutrition and cooking texts in our

school and community libraries, or on-line. After a little bit of practice, one quickly acquires the knack of estimating the food value of one's usual diet. Some may want to consult a nutritionist or sports physician to determine body composition and design a personal program.

Timing

Having figured out what to eat and drink, we need to determine when to do so. It isn't enough to think "three squares," for we have to factor in our training and racing schedule and make sure we have fueled and refueled right for that. Eating and drinking about every 2 1/2 hours while awake — "three squares" plus two or three snacks each day, beginning with breakfast and ending with a bedtime snack, would be about right. (Indeed, great athletes seem to be "grazing" most of the time they aren't sleeping.) While the stomach doesn't tolerate (and send on its digestive journey) solid food taken less than about 1 1/2 hours before intense activity, one can continue using a "sports drink" (e.g., Gatorade, XL-1, Extran, or a homemade mix of half-water, half-orange juice, with a pinch of table salt added per 8 oz) right up to any activity, and even during training or racing if it lasts longer than 30-40 minutes. (Think of those important "feeding" stations in 30k and 50k races and at ultramarathon events.) Sports drinks, or water, and small amounts of high-carbohydrate food (snacks) should be consumed within minutes of completing exercise, to foster timely replenishment of the muscle and liver glycogen (storage form of carbohydrate fuel) just spent. A real meal can

follow in a couple hours. However, waiting two hours or more before having anything other than water "misses the boat" if one wishes to refuel with greatest efficiency.

And Now, the Hard Part: Planning Ahead

This is the most important step, too! All the book knowledge in the world about the right meal or snack, or right drink to put in the "water" bottle, means little if athletes don't plan ahead to have the right food, snacks, and fluids available, at the right time. For those who have extra pocket money to buy occasional meal and snack replacements such as Myoplex, Meso-Tech, Met-Rx, Balance Bars, Endurox-R4, and PowerBars — fine, but beware any claims for magical restorative powers. Whatever one chooses, prepare all in advance and take with you to training sessions or races. Don't bet on the local convenience store to stock your needed items.

Make the most of your growth and hard-won athletic development since last winter. Plan ahead to supply that engine with the right fuel at the right time.

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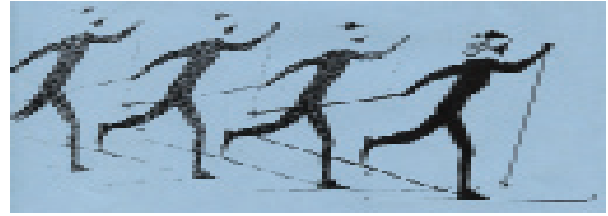
Pineland Farms, cont'd from pg. 1

2004 NE Women's Ski Day - Feb. 1, 2004

Pineland Farms, New Gloucester, Maine



The Valley Farm Extension loop runs right past Valley Farm, home of a herd of Holsteins, Dorset and Icelandic sheep and free-range organic chickens. (photo credit: Pineland Farms)



A day of skiing for women, by women! Come to our clinics for skiers ranging from never-ever-been-on-skis to serious racers. Enjoy the trails at Pineland Farms. Participate in the fun afternoon relay event in two-women teams. Check out the NENSA Expo, with ski industry representatives there to let you try out all sorts of ski equipment. Learn to wax. Try on (and buy!) clothing from vendors known throughout the country for their fine products. Enjoy hot food in the cafeteria and listen to sports medicine authorities talk about women's nutrition. Win some great raffle prizes. Child care is free. Equipment rental at low cost. Come join us for the day!

Register & more info. at www.nensa.net.

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