

Trout Lake Camp Recap.

Mountain goats, baby chicks, kittens, cows, horses and incoming planes??...not the usual sightings at a Nordic ski camp...but then, no one ever said Trout Lake was “usual”.

The Trout Lake camp run by PNSA and coach Ben Husaby, has been in existence for nine years. I have had the opportunity to coach at this camp for 8 of those 9 years. This year sported the largest group ever with just under 40 athletes and 6 coaches- and it was better than ever!

Trout Lake camp concluded this Sunday with an adventurous hike for the younger skiers and a summit to the top of Mt Adams for the second year J1's and older skiers. Over the course of five days athletes experienced skate roller ski sessions, one classic OD, one Classic Time Trial, a tough strength session including the Canadian testing protocol, a level 3 bounding session, an agility session on roller skis, a river adventure hike and the climb on Mt Adams.

They also experienced home cooking by the Taco Stand (Bend, OR), and Fitty, (Kristen Fitzsimmons). Kristen has been coming to Trout Lake for most if not all of the camps and has the meal plan down. Athletes were treated to barbeque chicken, pasta with pesto, lasagna, hamburgers and lots of salads, fruit and plenty of fluid replacement drink to combat the hot, sunny days. Yes- it was sunny Every day and for those of us in the east this year that is a huge deal.

The house we were staying at also had many of the aforementioned animals (sans the mtn goats) whose antics entertained us each day. The house sits beside a small airstrip and its always fun to watch the occasional incoming piper cub landing or taking off in the field.

It is as near a perfect environment for Nordic ski training as one can have. The paved logging roads are still in great shape and offer sustainable 2 hour uphill climbs for which to practice technique and build the aerobic system.

There are plenty of great trails to hike, run or bound on and a school where we can do strength work and play the very competitive games of soccer, Kapture the flag and ultimate.

As I mentioned earlier this was the biggest group at Trout Lake since its inception. The PNSA skiers come from all over Oregon and Washington, and the east was represented by Jackson and Hilary Rich from Eastern Mass. There was a nice mix of abilities here, though everyone had a good comfort level on roller skis and was eager for tips on how to reach the next level. The newer skiers had the chance to test themselves against the more experienced skiers like Eric and Sadie Bjornsen, Sam Naney, Dakota Blackhorse Von Jess, and Jamie Baronga.

Coaches included Ben Husaby, Bend Endurance Academy/BNT, Scott Johnson and Flash Clark, both from the Methow Valley; TJ Owens from Wenatchee, Brenna Knowles, Bend Endurance Academy/BNT and me representing JLS Sports. This camp provides much needed downtime in between challenging workouts and an opportunity for coaches to

share collective experiences about such things as training rationale, talent ID, technique analysis and other unique conversations. We tapped into Flash's extensive knowledge of geology- this is a place teeming with evolution in the form of volcano's and various rock formations, so it was fun to have this added educational dimension at camp. Scott was keeping extra busy by working on ways to correlate strength test results to the Time Trial results -which was proving to be very consistent. More on this interesting analysis will follow soon.

Much of the technical work at this camp is done on the road while the athletes are training. Coaches provide instant feedback as they ride or ski along side skiers with a video camera. Skiers can then make adjustments on the fly and feel the immediate difference in their skiing. The foundational movements are the focus, and each skier is encouraged to work at their own pace in order to engrain proper movement.

One of the cool things about this camp is the very high rate of repeat skiers from year to year. Both coaches and skiers can see the improvements that are being made in both fitness and technique as their physiology develops. Skiers can begin to see pretty early on that consistency in work ethic and coaching builds the foundation from which big improvements can be made. Steady work pays off.

This camp always culminates in the Mt Adams Summit for the older skiers. The younger skiers get their own adventure circumnavigating the mountain. Working their way up, over and around the different micro climates that exist on Adams, sliding on large snow patches, climbing past Hell Roaring Falls, and getting a good glimpse of about ten mountain billy, ewe and kid goats. When Coach Ben leads a group you can bet that you will go off trail, get muddy, get clean crossing the streams, get muddy again going through the swamps, down climb one or more pitches, and encounter many sticker bushes while bushwhacking back to the vehicles; All of which is really fun, sometimes scary, but always building all of us into stronger athletes and stronger character.

We are all looking forward to next year's camp!