Lappe Nordic Ski Club Newsletter

Fall 2012

President's Message
By: Paul Charrette

Hello Lappe Members. I hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable summer. As the leaves start to fall my thoughts naturally turn to the trails at Lappe and the upcoming ski season. As you will see in this issue of the Lappe newsletter, the Club has made incredible progress this year, which will make for a very exciting ski season at Lappe. I encourage you to read the newsletter and more importantly, to come out this season and enjoy skiing at Lappe and participating in the many events and programs that the Lappe Club has to offer.

I have recently taken over as the Club's President from Werner Schwar. Werner served as club President since 2007. He leaves an incredible legacy of service to the Club and on behalf of the Club, I wish to thank him for all that he has done over the years. Thankfully, Werner will still be helping at Lappe, mostly he will be using his high-level skiing skills and knowledge as the new coach for the Midget Ski Team, but he has also agreed to serve on the Club's Board of Directors as the Past-President; something I am very grateful for as I anticipate relying on his experience to help me during this season.

This season is shaping up to be very exciting for members of the Club owing in large part to the hiring of a new Head Coach, Kevin Shields and a new Program Developer, Katherine Hall. There will be more information elsewhere in the newsletter about them and their roles at Lappe. I am certain that their efforts will greatly improve the programs and services provided to Lappe Club members. I know both are excited to meet with Club members in their new positions and to assist members and enhance the Club's services and programs. The Board of Directors would like to thank the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund for providing funding for the Program Developer position.

Unlike Werner, I did not grow up skiing, but I came to skiing and Lappe through its vibrant Jackrabbit program. Therefore, it took me a few years of skiing at Lappe to realise that it is THE premier race venue in Ontario and is among the top race venues in Canada. This year, Lappe is honoured to once again serve as host for the World Junior and Under 23 Trials, which is one of the most important races on the National racing schedule. The event will also include Ontario Cup races and the combination will mean that top level National and Ontario racers will be racing at Lappe from January 3rd to 6th. Lappe also has a long history of incredible volunteers for staging races and I encourage you to volunteer for this exciting event.

The Club's Board of Directors has been working very hard to enhance the Club's services and programs. However, the Board is always looking for input and assistance from Club members. Therefore, I encourage members to attend the Annual General Membership meeting that will be held after the Lappe Open House on Saturday, October 20th.

I look forward to seeing you at the Lappe Open House.

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How to Make Lappe your Winter Home - Lappe 2012 -2013 Program Offerings
By: Stephanie Marler, Treasurer

Many of us make Lappe our "gym" and home in the winter. For my family, skiing is an activity that we enjoy together 2 to 3 days a week. Here are some of the ways that you can do that too. We are working hard to develop programs for everyone!

Are you a Jack Rabbit parent, interested in fitness and improving your technique? You can ski, as a family, 3 days a week and fulfill this objective.

Sign your child up for Jack Rabbits on Thursday evenings in addition to Saturday mornings. Then, on those nights, you can join the **Lappe Recreational Technique** (aka Masters) program. The coaches for this program offer superb lessons in both skating and classic technique, covering the basic skills.

On Saturday mornings, while your child is participating in the Jack Rabbit program, you could either ski as a **Parent Volunteer,** on your own or with a friend. The Parent Volunteer for each group will "sweep" the group, look after any cold children that need to return to the chalet, essentially be a helper to the Leader. Most Leaders give some coaching to the parents who join the group! Research shows that children have more success in sports if their parents take an active interest in the activity too. So volunteering can be very powerful.

On Sunday afternoons last winter a group of women met informally to ski together. We will be encouraging more Moms and women to join this group. We are hoping to facilitate childcare too. Of course, Dad's can use the childcare as well; and perhaps form a group of their own.

Are you a recreational skier interested in improving your technique and skiing with a group of like-minded peers?

In addition to the programs mentioned above, we also have several social skiing evenings over the year such as the Winter Solstice and Valentine's Day parties and Women's Day in February.

Are you a skier who is interested in improving your fitness and racing at local and regional events, under the supervision of our new Head Coach? You can join the Lappe Citizen Racing Team.

The **Lappe Citizen Racing Team** is a new program offering this year aimed at adult racers looking for support in their training. There will be two on snow practices held each week from December to April, under the guidance of Lappe Head Coach, Kevin Shields. Training plans, including dry-land workouts for the fall will be provided to each skier.

Are you a 14 and up and looking for full support in your ski racing? You can join the Lappe Nordic Racing Program.

The **Lappe Nordic Racing Program** is for skiers competing at the provincial and national level, as well as serious loppet and Masters skiers. Organized practices are held 2 to 3 times per week throughout the year. Racers are provided with year round training programs under the guidance of the Head Coach. The program includes 2 training camps with team trips to Ontario Cups and National Championships.

Are you 10 to 13 years old and love to ski? Or are you wishing to transition from hockey, soccer or another sport to cross-country skiing? The Midget Ski Team maybe for you.

The **Midget Ski Team** is for skiers aged 10-13 who are ready to make the jump to competitive skiing. Organized practices are held 2 to 3 times per week from September to April, and there are weekly spring and summer team outings. The program focuses on technique and skill development while promoting racing in a fun environment. You will attend local races and one organized out of town racing trip. Skiers will be introduced to roller-skiing and a variety of racing formats. Registration for this program is at the coach's discretion.

Are you over 10 years old, love to ski but do not wish to race this winter? Then join our Big Kids Ski Program.

This is a new program for kids 10 and up who have completed the Jack Rabbit program but do not wish to join a competitive ski program. This program, offered on Saturday mornings, will reinforce great ski technique through ski-based social and recreational outings, without the pressure of racing. At the ski races organized by the Lappe Nordic Ski Club you will be encouraged to volunteer rather than to race!

Do you have children who love to be active in the snow? Sign them up to our Bunny, Jackrabbit and Track Attack programs.

Bunny Rabbits are the very young skiers, under 6 years of age. There is a strong emphasis on games at this level. A parent or adult must accompany and participate in sessions along with the child.

The **Jackrabbit** program covers skill development for children between the ages of 6 and 10. Four major skills sets are introduced; Basic skills, Classical skills, Skating skills and Downhill skills. Emphasis is placed on using fun and games as a tool to introduce these skills. Overall enjoyment of the sport is our goal.

As Jackrabbits reach adolescents, the **Track Attack** program is offered. The Program provides veteran Jackrabbits with an opportunity to further develop their cross-country skiing abilities beyond the 4 Levels in the regular Jackrabbit program. The Track Attack program uses games and participation to further develop solid cross-country skiing skills. The Track Attack program can also help those with a competitive spirit that may want to experiment with intermediate competition. The program can help to bridge the gap between Jackrabbits and Midget and Junior Racing and Development.

Are you an aspiring athlete with a disability or an individual with a disability that would like to enjoy a great winter outdoor recreational sport?

Lappe Nordic is developing a Para-Nordic program. If you are interested in trying skiing please contact the club and we will work with you to have you try skiing this winter. (Robbi Weldon is a Lappe Nordic skier and is one of Canada's most successful Paralympic skiers. She just won a gold medal in London! Robbi is visually impaired.)

Do any of these programs sound right for you and your family? Please come to our Open House on October 20th from 10 am to 3pm or contact:

For Racing programs:
Kevin Shields at kevinshields@alumni.uwaterloo.ca

For Big Kids, Bunny, Jack Rabbit and Track Attack:
Fiona McKenna at mckennaf@xplornet.com

For Recreational programs:
Stephanie Marler at marlersteph@yahoo.ca

Lappe Midget Ski Team: Up and Running (and Roller skiing too!)

By: Werner Schwar, Lappe Midget Ski Team Coach

You might have noticed that it was not me writing the President Report anymore. That position is now in very capable hands of Paul Charrette, and has freed me up to do something I am much more comfortable with, that is to be able to coach my kids and others in the 10-13 year age group. With the help of assistant coach Freddy and Administrative Assistant Anne, we have met one time per week over the summer to do a variety of activities as described by Tessa. In September we will be holding sessions twice per week, and after that we will be offering sessions 3 times per week.

The intent of our group is to turn kids onto skiing in a social environment and be the bridge between Jackrabbits and the Junior Racing Program. We will focus on learning great technique both on roller skis or doing hillwork as well as on snow skiing. So far this year we have had 7 kids attending our sessions and I think Freddy and I have been having as much fun as the kids.

Lappe Midgets Athlete Report

By: Tessa Schwar

The Lappe Midgets had a great spring and summer together doing all different activities from kayaking, to agility, to an overnight camping trip. The fall is going to be so much fun! We're looking forward to orienteering, roller-skiing, hiking, autumn adventures, and having tons of fun with our teammates. Our amazing coaches are Werner Schwar and Freddy Hortis. Before long, we'll have snow, and we'll be having fun on the trails being ski buddies for the Lappe Jackrabbits, improving our skate and classic technique, and just playing on our skis. We'll have such a great time!!

Lappe Racing Team Update

By: Paul Inikla

In writing the Racing Team update I recalled numerous adventures of the Lappe racing team in the 2011/2012 season…..blizzard conditions at Highlands Nordic for both travelling to the race site and racing itself, skier crashes at inopportune times, broken equipment at critical junctures…but overall last season was a decent season for Lappe's small but dedicated racing team.

In the Ontario Cup series:

- Evan Palmer-Charrette was the second overall Junior Boy consistently hitting the podium in all race formats.
- Laura Inkila was the top Juvenile Girl with a '97 year of birth. She hit the podium a number of times in Classic events.
- Katherine Hall won her first OCup medal as a senior woman.
- Brady Harkonen improved his overall positioning in the juvenile boys category.

Our highlight was some serious celebrating at the Mont Ste Anne Ski Nationals as Evan earned silver in the individual start skate event. To the right, Evan celebrating his medal in traditional Lappe style!

While skiing ended very early last season, I was reminded that there was a late Lappe snowfall to give a ski well into the spring. April is the racers' "down" month, if there is such a thing. But our high school athletes are often jumping back into racing in May in either mountain biking or track and field. Evan ended up 3rd overall in senior boys mountain biking while Laura cleaned up with a perfect season in the Midget girls. Both Laura and Evan also ran the distance events in high school track and placed consistently between 2nd and 4th.

As ski training ramps up in May, we begin our heavier hours with the Lappe Training Camp. We returned to a traditional format this year with the first day of the camp at Lappe - baseline testing with our 5K test run, the Lappe strength circuit and our 'swampin' workout.

On day 2 of the training camp we headed up Spruce River Rd for a typical all-uphill roller skiing workout. In the afternoon the new Lappe Midget racers joined us at Centennial Park for some pole striding and strength conditioning.

Another Lappe tradition in the late spring is our 10 event strength test. Several records were set this year, although there are a few pesky records from generations past that still stand. Here Hannes Penttinen works at his specialty event.

As we hit the core of the summer, coach Steve Hart returned from his luxury European vacation, to get the group more focused on roller skiing technique. All athletes have shown improvement in their technique, and with continued practice, this is sure to reap benefits in the winter.

Lappe's racing program has been a victim of its own success this summer. With the small group, athletes are given much personal

attention. Evan benefitted from this greatly last season, and put it all together to earn a late spot on the NTDC Thunder Bay squad. Congratulations Evan!

As the summer comes to an end the group continues to be focused, and is ready for the homestretch before the snow flies.

New to NDC: Evan Palmer-Charrette
By: Evan Palmer-Charette

It is now September and fall has arrived. Everyone in the cross-country ski community is anticipating the arrival of snow and early season races just around the corner. For me, this past summer has been full of exciting new experiences and wonderful learning opportunities.

I was lucky enough to make the National Development Centre here in Thunder Bay after an exciting break through ski season last winter. Last year I fully committed myself to my assigned training plan and doing everything in my power to ski as fast as I possibly could. The hard work over the summer and fall paid off; I found continuous success medaling at the four Ontario Cups around the province from January to early March. But the biggest challenge was yet to come, Nationals, which was located in Mount Ste. Anne Quebec.

After experiencing success over the Ontario Cup season I went into Nationals with high expectations for myself. I wanted to have a top ten finish, and hopefully a medal. The first race was the team sprint. I competed in the team sprint with a fellow Lappe racer, Brady Harkonen. The race was in downtown Quebec City on the Plains of Abraham, nothing like any race either of us had done before. We did fairly well in the race, and it was a great way to kick off the week and get the body used to racing again.

After the team sprints there were four individual races spread out over the next six days. For me the races were, a 10km individual start classic race, 7.5km individual start free technique, 1.3km free technique sprint, and a 15km classic mass start race. I was able to achieve a top ten finish in the 10km classic, finishing ninth and a top ten finish in the sprint, finishing tenth, but just outside the top ten finishing eleventh in the 15 km mass start.

The third race of the week was the 7.5km free technique race. This was the race that I had thought about the most going into, and expected the best result out of myself. The entire week that Nationals took place was scorching not, this day was no different. When I got to the start line it was somewhere around 15 degrees, way too hot for ski racing! The warm weather made the snow very slow, and soft, which meant the race would take longer and require more energy.

I started the race off relaxed and then picked it up in the latter half. With about 2km left to go I got a split from my Dad and then knew I was in the hunt for the medals. I put my head down and hammered as hard as I could. When I came into the finishing stretch I push myself harder than I ever had before knowing every second could count. Soon after finishing the race I discovered that I had finished second and was very excited.

By the end of the week at Nationals there was hardly any snow left. Back home in Thunder Bay the snow had been gone for a few days as we had watched it disappear on the Lappe web cam. Without any snow when we got home skiing was over for the season and it was time for me to decide what I was going to do next year. I decided to apply to the National Development Centre (NDC) here in

Thunder Bay and if I did not make the team I would continue racing with Lappe.

At first when the NDC team roster came out I had not made the team, so I continued regularly attending Lappe practices. But in late June just before school ended Mark Doble, the NDC head coach notified me that there was another spot on the team if I wanted it. I talked it over with my parents and coaches and it was decided that being part of the National Development Centre, here in Thunder Bay was the next step for me to take in my skiing career.

My first trip with the team was out west for a training camp in Canmore Alberta, and Revelstoke BC. It began with a two day drive across the prairies. The exciting landscape of wheat, hay, and grass, left plenty of time for me to get to know the ten other athletes in the van with me. When we finally reached our destination of beautiful Canmore it was time for the training to begin.

After two days of amazing roller skiing in Canmore we headed up to the Haig glacier. This begins with a spectacular yet grueling three hour run up to the base camp. Along the way we were met by howling winds, rain, and hail. At the base camp we were greeted by the staff and luxury accommodations, which included a hot shower, satellite TV, internet,

lots of food, and disc golf. We were very lucky in getting great snow and nearly every day we had perfect weather conditions which made for ideal skiing. After four days we headed down from the glacier and on to Revelstoke.

In Revelstoke we focused on skate roller skiing up a park road that climbed a mountain from around 400 ft to nearly 2,000ft over 25km. It was full of spectacular views and lots of offset. After a week of Revelstoke we headed back to Canmore for another stint upon the Haig.

Once again the skiing and weather were wonderful and the accommodations nothing less than stellar. This time we shared the camp with the national biathlon team, which was another awesome experience. After three days we packed up and headed home for Thunder Bay.

Wanted:
House or Apartment to Rent.
December 2012 to April 2013
3 or 4 bedroom
Furnished or Unfurnished
Kevin Shields
kevinshields@alumni.uwaterloo.ca
519-650-8909

Welcome Back Jackrabbit Families!
By: Fiona Mckenna

Hi everyone. Big Bunny and Assistant Big Bunny can hardly wait to see all of you! A whole summer has gone by and we know that you and your family members have grown and have had some new and wonderful experiences away from your regular routine!

This season will build on our successes. For the younger children and kids new to skiing, we will be recognizing fifteen minute increments of time on skis or the trail *(instead of kilometers)*, especially during the first ten hours on snow! Another development will be changes in our start up protocol for Saturdays. We will be taking steps to better organize the first few minutes of the sessions to improve how we join together and launch the day. Our new head coach, Kevin Shields, has been guiding some of our planning. You will also see the friendly face of our Lappe Intern, Katherine Hall. She will be contributing brain

power behind and in front of the scenes this year.

Thanks to our Jackrabbit families, **Lappe Nordic Jackrabbits** is one of the most successful programs in Ontario. Our schedule promotes an active outdoor lifestyle where we can repeat healthy habits and build valuable life skills. We invite parents to participate alongside the activities of their children, whether this is as a **Leader or Parent Volunteer**, in skiing or walking the trails, supervising a craft activity or setting up a food table. We will seek ways to develop bridges between our groups and interests. We will thread together social and ski experiences that ignite passion and vision in skiing. Remember, skiing is a "pulk to podium" endeavor, and beyond. Give us your ideas and please invite your friends to drop in to try the Lappe ski community experience!

Enough philosophizing! On the ground this year, we started with our Boot Up Boot Camp on September 21-23 at Sleeping Giant Park. Our Jackrabbits who wish to be active for the rest of September and during October/November can join some of the sessions to be arranged with Lappe Midgets prior to our regular Jackrabbit Program start on November 17. In addition to the sessions, **Lappe Nordic Ski Club is hosting the World Junior Trials**, a major competitive weekend on January 3-6, 2013. We will be seeking the help of JR volunteers in many roles, both indoor and outside. Please consider setting aside some time for this; we expect over 350 visitors! Similar opportunities for skiers and non-skiers will be offered for every competitive event on the schedule.

We look forward to seeing you all at the Sawdust Run on October 6th, and the Lappe Open House and Equipment Swap on October 20th. Dust off your gear and get ready to deal!

Still At It: Michael Somppi
By: Michael Somppi

Hey Lappe skiers! I'm still at it, training and racing that is. This year my home base is in Canmore, AB as I am now a member of the Alberta World Cup Academy (AWCA) and a second year member of the National Senior Development Team (NSDT). It was hard to leave Thunder Bay and everything it has to offer in the spring, but being a part of a team with 8 of the 9 male members of the NSDT has really given me extra motivation and provided great competition throughout my summer training.

There have been many great training sessions and challenges throughout my summer so I'll do my best to highlight a few. An early season highlight for me was skiing in May at a training camp in Bend, Oregon. The snow was still plentiful at Mt Bachelor and we even had a big storm with plenty of fresh white stuff! It was my first time skiing in May so that was an exciting way to start off the new 2012-13 season.

Skiing at Mt Bachelor in May!

Another highlight from my summer was spending a weekend in Nelson, BC for a training camp with AWCA. This small BC town impressed me with a great main street strip, scenic views of Kootenay Lake and a good Mexican restaurant to top it off. We only stayed a few days, however we did complete two epic workouts. The first was a striding workout up a mountain involving 2 long zone 3 efforts with some short hard efforts in between. Try as we might, the mountain conquered, we never reached the end of the trail or any sort of summit. The next day I celebrated my 24th birthday with the longest road ride of my life. I completed the Silver Triangle, a 216km loop including two mountain passes, in 6 hours and 40 minutes with an average speed of 32.32km/h. When I rolled into the parking lot at our motel one of my teammates joked, "Somppi you're looking rough" and indeed I was. Completely spent, covered in sweat, grease, spilled coke and sticky power gel I smiled. A birthday I will remember for the rest of my life.

I spent the heart of the summer, July, training in Canmore. We did two stints up on the Haig Glacier to put in some high altitude volume on-snow training. The first trip up with the National Ski Team was something of a rock star style camp if that's possible in cross-country skiing. We took a chopper up to the glacier, as opposed to the normal 2+hour run in, and crust skied under blue skies and a bright sun. The perfect weather held out for the entire 3 days and we finished the camp being photographed by journalists before boarding the chopper and flying out.

The Canadian Men's team all smiles after a great Haig Glacier camp!

The most recent training adventure from my summer was a camp with AWCA in Whitefish, Montana. Our accommodation was situated on Whitefish Lake only 10 minutes away from the base of the climb up to the Big Mountain downhill ski area. The average day involved morning and afternoon training, each time jumping into Whitefish Lake afterwards to cool off from the 30 degree sunny weather. The paved climb up Big Mountain provided an awesome spot for rollerski interval sessions. Highlights include a rollerski up the breathtaking "Road to the Sun" followed by a mountain trail run down from Logan Pass (a continental divide) and a 10km road running race where PBs were had all around. *Running down from Logan Pass, above the "Road to the Sun" in Montana with the AWCA boys.*

Overall my training has gone as planned this summer and I am looking forward to putting in many more great training days, including a two-week camp later this fall in Salt Lake City with the National Ski Team, before the racing season begins. A major focus for me this season will be the December World Cup races in Canada, especially the two distance races in Canmore, Alberta. I will be aiming for top 30 results so finding good racing form very early this season will be crucial.

I am very excited to have the opportunity to race at home again this year with Lappe Nordic Ski Club hosting the World Junior/U-23 Trials event. This event will also be one of the domestic qualifiers for the 2013 World Championships which means all the top Canadian domestic skiers will be there to duke it out on the Lappe trails. The home advantage worked well for me two years ago and I'm hoping many Thunder Bay skiers will rise to the challenge with great performances during the week of racing. Make sure you check out the race courses early because from my understanding, Pauli has concocted quite the challenging 5km classic pursuit course with some newly cut trails to make the pursuit races at Trials real leg burners.

Have a great autumn and I'll see everyone over the Christmas holidays on the Lappe ski trails! If you're interested in reading more about my off-season check out my blog at michaelsomppi.blogspot.com.

New This Year – Head Coach and Program Developer!

The Lappe Nordic Ski Club is delighted to welcome new Head Coach Kevin Shields to oversee coaching and program development. Kevin will assist the current volunteer coaches in further developing their programs to ensure a high level of program quality for all ages and abilities of skiers, including Para Nordic. The Cross Country Canada (CCC) Long term Athlete Development Model (LTAD) will serve as the guide for ski programs at Lappe.

Kevin comes to the Club from Waterloo where, for 16 years, he successfully increased membership and participation at the Waterloo Region Nordic Ski Club, and helped coach his son Andy Shields, a current member of the NDC in Thunder Bay. He states, "I am looking forward to joining Lappe Nordic and experiencing the outdoors of Northwestern Ontario. As the club coach, my hope is that through their participation in club programs, members will develop their love of the outdoors, sport and physical activity, and be inspired to pursue their dreams."

Thanks to the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund (NOHFC), Lappe has also been able to hire a 'Program Developer' for the year. Lappe member Katherine Hall has been chosen to fill the position to work with the Board of Directors and Coaching team to help build the club and its events.

Lappe Swag!

Want to show your Lappe pride? The Club has plenty of high quality Lappe Apparel available for purchase. We have Brooks Hoodies and Sauce toques and Heabands in stock. At the Open House (Oct. 20) there will also be a chance to order your Lappe Race suit for the year and customized Sauce Headwear. In the spring we ordered Bjorn Daehlie Jackets, and may have the possibility of ordering more this fall (a while supplies last kind of thing). If you missed out last spring, don't worry, we will put in another order this spring!

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New Trail Alert!

Once again Reijo and Pauli have been busy improving the trail systems out at Lappe. One change is with the goal of getting a second 'A Climb' in for racing. Massaro's Heartbreak and the Big 'S' Turn have some new trail work done. The second big change is more kilometers being added to the recreational loop. Inside the 2 Point Ate there is approximately another kilometer of new and fun trail being added. Watch out for these changes the first time you're out on your skis.

This year Lappe will have its very own Terrain Park! We are working to turn the 'Kids Hill' near the stadium into a fun and kid friendly area to play on ski and develop skills. The Park will primarily be used for JackRabbit and other lessons to develop balance, coordination, downhill skills, turns and confidence on skis! You can look for things like jumps, bumps, obstacles and powder for all ages!

Awesome Performances That Inspire: London 2012 and More

By: Kevin Shields

London is the hometown of an athlete that I coach at the University of Waterloo. He was at home during the Olympics last month and was fortunate to watch some live events. He told me he was very inspired by Mo Farah's performances (10000m and 5000m gold medals) and other Great Britain athletes. I think he may have arrived in Waterloo in slightly better shape thanks to the Mo and his other inspirational British athletes.

During each day of Olympic viewing we were treated to amazing performances, in the pool, on the bike, on the water, in the gym, on the pitch and the track. For a cross country skier beginning to think about snow and winter races these residual impressions of the Olympics and Paralypmic athletes performing in London - Robbi Weldon, with pilot Lyne Bessette just won a the road race yesterday! - can help to motivate us in our daily training and fuel our dreams through the fall.

But what is there in these performances that we are so awed by? Clara Hughes' fifth place in the road race, Usain Bolt's 100 – 200 m double, Mo's 10 000 – 5 000m double, the Canadian Women's Soccer team's 3rd place, Emilie Heymans' 4th medal in four Olympic games, Adam van Koeverden's 2nd in paddling? What so impresses us about their performances are; how efficiently they execute their movements, how graceful they are, their strength, speed and power; their focus, determination, confidence (belief / faith in their capabilities); abilities to re-focus and to push through the pain of maximum effort; amazing conditioning, commitment and the enjoyment they derive from their sport.

How do these people attain and execute this level of performance? Emilie Heymans won her first Olympic medal at the 2000 Sydney games and a medal at each Olympic Games since. Clara Hughes won a medal in the cycling road race at the 1996 Atlanta games then focused on speed skating winning multiple medals at the Olympics over twelve years before returning to cycling for the 2012. Despite a fractured vertebrate incurred in a cycling crash at The Tour de Gatineau six weeks before the Olympics, she remained focused on competing in London, training through the pain in her back, and finished fifth! Alexandre Despatie also competed in four Olympic games and was just 13 at first major international diving competition.

I remember hearing a story that John Luc Brassard, a former Canadian FreeStyle skier from Quebec would ski off the roof of his house! Alexandre is also from Quebec and he grew up with a backyard pool. He loved the water and developed an early love for diving. At a young age he started diving with a club in Montreal and within ten years was the best men's diver in Canada – at 13 years old! At his first diving lesson I don't imagine Alexandre was ushered to the top of the 10m platform and asked to do a forward quad sommersault. And John Luc likely didn't pull a Kosack jump (JLB) off the roof of his house on Grand Ils, Qc. There were many trips to the pool and to the hill for these young Quebecers. For Alexandre it was his Grandmother who did a lot of the driving in those early years as Alexandre climbed the steps of the 10m platform at a Montreal diving club. Driving him to practice early in the morning and picking him up from school in the afternoon to take him back to the pool. Adam van Koeverden's mom got Adam to the Burloak Canoe Club for pre dawn practice – only after being woken by Adam who would have brewed her a cup of coffee!

Carol Huynh repeated as an Olympic medalist in London. Carol is a free style wrestler from Hazelton, B.C. a small remote town in Northern B.C. Carol advanced to the bronze medal match in London by defeating a wrester from Vietnam. Ironically Carol is also Vietnamese. Both her parents came to Canada in the early 1980s as refugees. The community of Hazelton, as many Canadian communities did, sponsored Vietnamese refugee family. Carol's family were the only refugees in Hazelton. It was in high school that Carol was introduced to wrestling and thanks to a highly dedicated high school coach, Carol and other young athletes from Hazelton were able to travel across B.C. to compete in wrestling tournaments. Much of the cost of these trips for the Hazelton High School athletes came from money raised within the community. So not only did Hazelton sponsor a young refugee family in starting anew in the early 80's they also provide the support for her to become the best in the world.

At the many practices and the countless times athletes lace up their shoes and head out their family's front door for another practice they are developing the physical skills of their sport: receiving a pass, striking a ball, rotating faster and gliding longer; moving with grace and relaxation; building strength, speed and power; developing confidence in their abilities and their mental strengths; practicing how to re-focus and concentrate on their task; handle the pressure and the pain of performance. It is in the enjoyment of movement that a passion develops and through support from family and community that Olympic performances are achieved.

At 30 years old Adam van Koeverden has completed a lot of practice sessions. I doubt

that he still lives with his mom, but I wonder if brewing a morning cup of coffee is still part of his pre-practice routine. Comments given in an interview given on CTV following his 2nd place finish at London indicate that he will still be rising for that morning training session. (He skis at Hardwood when the water is too cold to paddle!) He said, [he loves to train, to travel and to compete and the guy that beat me today is 36 ... why would I would stop]. Adam still has the passion to continue to improve in his sport and I look forward to seeing another Olympic performance from him in Rio – and I would be happy to see a return of the 500m event, because seeing Adam race twice is twice as good.

After the last Women's World Cup of soccer the Canadian Women's Soccer program made changes to their National program and a commitment to improve. Coaches and athletes made commitments to be better prepared for London. Hundreds of focused team practices and individual conditioning sessions later and Canada is playing the US to advance to the Olympic Gold Medal final. They are leading until late in the match when the US come back and snatch the win from the Canadians. But because of their team's preparation over he past two years they are able to re-focus and continue their exceptional play to win the bronze medal game. That was very inspirational to see – partly because I have a 14 year old daughter who is soccer mad!

Seeing Mo Farah race in London inspired Thomas, a first year University of Waterloo student from London, England, to increase his training over the past month. It is my belief that that increased practice time will lead to more enjoyment in the sport and greater success in future competitions, which will then lead to more purposeful practice and higher quality training, resulting in a further jump in performance. I wonder who inspires Usain Bolt? Maybe Len Valjas!

JR Children celebrating the end of a long bike ride around Lake Marie Louise at the 2012 JR Boot Camp. From left to right: Danika, Sarah, Daphne, Patrice, Chloe, Simone, Ivy, Cedric, Carley, Myla and Ben.

Weldon Strikes GOLD!

Congratulations to Lappe's very own Robbi Weldon after her very successful performance at the London 2012 Paralympics! Robbi cycled in the visually impaired classification with her pilot Lyne Bessette. In their first race the pair rode to a 4th place finish in the time trial. They then followed it up with a very impressive Gold Medal finish in the road race. Robbi has had great success as a Para-Nordic Athlete in the past years, and had switched her focus to cycling to prepare for the 2012 Paralympics. She continues to amaze and inspire us all, be sure to say hi and congratulate her when you see her on the trails!

World Junior/ U23 Trials

Once again Lappe Nordic, in conjunction with Big Thunder, will be hosting the World Junior/U23 Trials. The races take place January 3 to 6 at the Ski Centre. This race is a chance for the Junior and U23 athletes to qualify to represent Canada at the World Junior and U23 Championships being held in Liberec, Czech Republic. This is a great chance to see the best racing in Canada, in your own backyard, as the best athletes from across Canada, including local Thunder Bay and Lappe athletes, compete at the highest levels. The races include a Skiathalon, Classic Sprints and Skate race. Grab your cowbell and come out to cheer on the athletes and be a part of the action! Want to be involved? The organizers are always happy to welcome new volunteers to the group! Contact any of the Board members for more information on how you can be a part and help maintain the Lappe Standard!

Schedule Of Events:

Sawdust Run	Saturday, October 6, 2012
Open House and AGM	Saturday, October 20, 2012
Jackrabbit Program Start	Saturday, November 17, 2012
Winter Solstice Holiday Party	Friday, December 21, 2012
Boxing Day Classic	Wednesday, December 26, 2012
World Junior Trials / OCUP #1	Thu to Sun, January 3 to 6, 2013
Lappe Invitational	Sat and Sun, Jan 26 and 27, 2013
Women on Skis	Mid February
Sleeping Giant Loppet	Saturday, March 2, 2013
Jackrabbit Program End	Saturday March 9, 2013
24 Hour Relay	Sat and Sun, April 6 and 7, 2013
Run and Ski	Saturday, April 13, 2013
*Fresh Air Series	Every Wednesday at 7:00 once there is enough snow to ski

Check www.lappenordic.ca for the most up to date information on your favourite events, and to confirm the dates!