Lappe Nordic Newsletter

April 2000

The 2000 ski season was short but sweet. Snow came late and left early much to the diehards' distress. One incredible feat is in the making as this newsletter is being typed. There is a crazy Finlander who is putting in 40-50 kilometres every day and has been doing this for most of the ski season. That adds up to over 4000 kilometres in the shortest ski season in recent memory. That crazy Finlander can be seen travelling out to Lappe in the early morning to ski on a 200 metre stretch. Congratulations Marc Metsaranta for achieving your goal and becoming this year's hotly contested but not widely known Kilometre King.

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT
Marc Bode

I am going to reverse the usual order of reporting and talk about next ski season first and then come back to the 1999-2000 season.

The 2000-2001 ski season will be a critical one for our Club. Financially we are in solid shape. We will enter the 2000-2001 ski season with more money in the bank than we have had at any time in the recent past. On every other front we need to rebuild and rejuvenate. Specifically,

- we need more Junior and Senior athletes
- we need more coaching resources to support our athletes
- we need to expand our network of support people/volunteers
- we need to provide some adult programs for our Club members
- we need to support and help expand our Jack Rabbit program

Like most small sports clubs, every three or four years we have to rejuvenate our Club by bringing in new people. Our Club is in good shape right now but many of our athletes and volunteers will be moving on in the next year or two and we need to "pass the torch" to the next generation.

We are holding a planning session on April 30th. If you have any interest in seeing our Club flourish, please come to this session.

Now back to this past season. What a year. Notwithstanding the fact that the good skiing lasted less than three months, the year was full of highlights. They included:

- another very successful Jack Rabbit season. Congratulations to Mary Ellen Ripley, the big bunny and all of the other volunteers that made this program great;

- we hosted one of four Ontario Cup events gthe weekend of December 18th and 19th and the Lake Superior Ski Division Championships at which the club award was won by Lappe.

- our Junior and Senior athletes performed well at major events across the country; including events in Quebec City, Hardwood Hills; North Bay; Sault Ste. Marie; and Canmore. Congratulations to Tasha Betcherman, Jill Maepea; Timo Puiras; Riku Metsaranta; Billea Dyson; Leslie Bode; Alyssa Pera; Rena Bode; Arne Stinchcombe; Brodie Marshall; Kristjana Marshall; Michah Dowbak; Shane Maley; Monica Ranta; and Todd Inkila;

• we hosted the best ever Canadian Junior Championships (that's not just me bragging, we received that feedback from dozens of athletes and coaches). The Organizing Committee and the Club as a whole did a wonderful job of organizing the event and it ran without a hitch, despite incredibly warm temperatures and rapidly disappearing snow. The huge amount of planning that went into this event ensured that it went off without a hitch. Every athlete, coach, volunteer, and spectator that I talked to had a blast. I am quite certain that when we next bid for a National event, Cross Country Canada will be pleased to consider us as a host site.

The (almost) Canadian Senior Championships

As everyone now knows, the weather made it impossible for us to run the Canadian Seniors. This was heartbreaking not only for the local and NTDC athletes who were looking forward to competing at their home site, but also for the 100's of volunteers who had been geared up to run the event. We looked at every alternative that would keep the event here. None were viable. The minute we knew we could not run the event here, we concentrated all of our energies on making sure that the new host site (Canmore) received as much benefit as possible from all the organization and planning we had put in. They used our website, our medals, our prizes, and most importantly, two of our critical volunteers, Reijo Puiras and John Guthrie.

Anyone who wants to relive the Juniors or the Seniors should visit our website at www.lappenordic2000.com or better yet, buy a video of the Canadian Juniors (a deal at $10.00) from Rob Stinchcombe, 767-2409.

Before I close, I want to thank all of the people who volunteered time and energy to making this past year a success. The athletes, the coaches, the parent volunteers, the Organizing Committee for the Juniors and Seniors, and all the volunteers that helped make those events a success. Notwithstanding the lack of snow it was a tremendous ski season. See you all at our planning session, our annual meeting or next year.

JACKRABBITS

In the words of Jackrabbit Johanssen, "Enjoy life to the fullest, respect the environment, exercise and keep your body healthy and SKI EVERY DAY THERE IS SNOW!"

Now any other year, this would not have been a problem...but watching our snow disappear so early...literally melt under our boots during the Junior Nationals...made for an interesting season. However, while the snow was on the trails, so were our Jackrabbits. Another busy season with Children's Races sponsored by Lappe, Lake Superior Ski Division, and Kamview. As a special surprise, this year our Jackrabbits who raced during the LSSD championships succeeded in bringing home to Lappe the Jackrabbit Participation Trophy. This trophy is awarded to the Jackrabbit Club who has the highest percentage of Children participating over the two-day event. This is a first in my three years as Big Bunny. Great work, each and every one!

We also managed to clock in over 3,600 kilometres during Jackrabbit sessions, and give a new meaning to "play on the snow" while we were thrilled with the new trails and hills at Lappe, "Humpty Dumpty" and "The Big S Turn" in particular. We have pictures of leader Marko Seppanen catching air on "Humpty Dumpty". Another surprise for me was skiing up to a couple Green-level skiers who had just enjoyed a ride down Massaro's. We love our hills almost as much as the pancakes upstairs. Thanks to Reijo's mom and dad for another tasty season in the pancake department!

We had some new Jackrabbit families join the Lappe community, and some enthusiastic additions to our leader core. The presentation of skill accomplishment on a colour chart which recognizes accomplishment of new skills when the leader sees the Jackrabbit demonstrate it consistently is a big hit with leaders and Jackrabbits. Thanks Andre for the great idea and work in creating the chart. We are looking forward to using the idea again next year.

Speaking of next year, the Big Bunny ears have been passed on to Judi Vinni who is very excited to coordinate the program next season. The plan is to have an assistant each year who then becomes the Big Bunny, and keeps the volunteer spirit active. Judi did a spectacular job of organizing Cafe Jackrabbit during the Junior Nationals and earned the Jackrabbit Program $1,300. The money (along with Bingo contributions) has allowed the purchase of 8 new sets of skating skiis and poles.

Special thanks to Jackrabbit parents who make that supreme effort to have their children involved in this great sport...cross country skiing! See you in the fall.

Mary Ellen Ripley, Big Bunny

Canadian Master's Championships

Lappe Nordic was well represented at the 2000 Canadian Masters' Championships March 7 – 11.

Brian Berry and Paul Inkila made the drive to North Bay with the Big Thunder masters' convoy. The long drive went by quickly as CRC Communications provided 2-way radios for all vehicles. Thanks to Reid Carter for this great idea. Snow cover on the sides of the Northern Route was thin throughout except for a hundred or so kilometers around Timmins. This raised the hopes of the entire contingent for some good skiing.

The first event was a 10K Classical race in North Bay on Tuesday. North Bay Nordic had been under the same weather influence as Thunder Bay. Snow cover on the trails was thin, with a mix of ice, slush, and wet snow. Nevertheless, the volunteers managed to shovel enough of the trails to hold the event (Brian, the shovel master himself, pitched in for several hours). Temperatures at race time rose to +10C resulting in much klister related panic at the start.

After this race, it was obvious that the thin snow cover, warm temperatures, and predicted rain would make it impossible to hold further events in North Bay. The remaining events were moved 100K north to the Temiskaming Nordic Ski Club.

A 10K Free technique race was held Thursday in Temiskaming. Conditions were mid-winter with the race held in a wind-driven snow storm. The race course selected was a glider's course, resulting in some upsets and near upsets. If you get the chance ask Brian Berry how he almost got a "beaner" after this race.

The third and final race was held Saturday over a more difficult Temiskaming course. Skiers were given the option of competing in a Classical or Free Technique 30K event. Lappe's Ron Mahler made it to Temiskaming for his first Canadian Masters race, and joined Brian in the Free Technique event. Paul skied the 30K Classical.

The three participating skiers continued Lappe's tradition of doing well at this event: Paul – 3 gold, Brian – 2 silver, Ron – 1 bronze. It was a pleasure to compete with an enthusiastic contingent from Quebec. The comradery among these very proud skiers is something special. They will no doubt continue to provide fierce competition at the 2001 Canadian Masters Championships in Charlo, New Brunswick.

Ontario Championships

The Ontario Championships were held March 11-12 in conjunction with the Canadian Masters in Temiskaming,. Ten Lappe athletes competed in the event, with most travelling on the Big Thunder – Kamview - Lappe bus.

Results from Saturday's Free Technique Races:

Juha Metsranta	Senior Men	5th
Billea Dyson	Junior Women	5th
Leslie Bode	Junior Women	6th
Brodie Marshall	Juvenile Boys	8th
Michah Dowbak	Juvenile Boys	13th
Shane Maley	Midget Boys	5th
Todd Inkila	Atom Boys	1st

The master racers competed in Sunday's Classical Races after the conclusion of the Canadian Masters on Saturday. Results:

Juha Metsaranta	Senior Men	13th
Paul Inkila	Master Men 35-39	1st
Ron Mahler	Master Men 40-44	2nd
Brian Berry	Master Men 50-54	1st
Billea Dyson	Junior Women	3rd
Brodie Marshall	Juvenile Boys	2nd
Michah Dowbak	Juvenile Boys	15th
Shane Maley	Midget Boys	6th
Todd Inkila	Atom Boys	1st

Thunder Bay's Jackrabbit age skiers did particularly well with Big Thunder's Chris Butler, Kamview's Brayden Jaspers and Lauren Lankester, and Lappe's Todd Inkila winning 2 gold medals each.

LAPPE NORDIC SKI CLUB ANNUAL MEETING

MONDAY, MAY 8TH AT 7:00 P.M.

TO BE HELD AT THE LAPPE NORDIC SKI CENTRE

ALL MEMBERS ARE INVITED

HELP!!!!

Fundraising is an important function in any organization. The Lappe Nordic Ski Club operates one regular evening bingo per month at the two locations of Thunder Bay Community Bingo (Red River Rd and CLE Auditorium). These bingoes are the main source of fundraising for the Club and we raise between **$12,000 and $16,000** per year. That is a lot of bake sales. With this money, we are able to fund our junior athletes' travel to various competetions throughout Canada. This year we were able to contribute to the Jackrabbit equipment. With the support of this money, we are also able to fund other areas of the ski program at Lappe. Currently we are experiencing a shortage of bingo volunteers with about 20 people working almost every bingo and some working every one. This is a plea for more help. If each club member or Jackrabbit parent could volunteer just once a year, it would be greatly appreciated. Each bingo requires about 4 hours per month from 5:45pm to 10:00pm on the evening of the bingo(sometimes people even get to go home early). Lappe's bingo dates are **April 9, May 23, and June 25,** all at the Red River Road location. If you are able to help at these events or in the future, please call Shelley Whitney at 933-4233 or Liz Inkila at 767-1860. Really, they are not as bad as you think!!!!

Upcoming events

April 17th at 7:00 pm -regular board meeting (please note the date change)

April 30th at 10:00am - orienteering/planning session (please see information sheet enclosed)

May 8th at 7:00 pm - Annual Meeting

May 23rd at 6:45 - BINGO

June 25th at 6:45- BINGO

Enjoy the summer!

LAPPE NORDIC SKI CLUB SPRING ORIENTEERING
Saturday, April 30th 10:00 - 12:30 with barbeque to follow

The Lappe Junior Racing team is hosting this orienteering event.

A special invitation is extended to all older Jack Rabbits and potential junior skiers to come to this event.

This is a fun event and it will run rain or shine so dress accordingly (bring a towel and a change of clothes for a sauna after).

Each person should be able to complete the course in 1 to 1 ½ hours Entry is free and there will be a barbeque immediately after.

LAPPE NORDIC SKI CLUB
PLANNING SESSION 2000/2001 & BEYOND

Saturday, April 30th 10:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.

PRESENT AND PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS WELCOME!!!

We are extending an invitation to past, present and prospective members. Come to this meeting, put forward your ideas about how our Club can be preserved, strengthened and renewed.

The planning session will concentrate on three things:

a. **Improving and strengthening our junior programs. Everything will be up for discussion including:**

- **building our coaching/assistant coaching base**
- **should we be looking at paid coaching**
- **fund raising - are there alternatives to Bingo**
- **attracting and keeping more junior athletes in the program.**

b. **Building a better link between Jackrabbits and our junior program**

c. **Providing a masters skiing program**

The meeting is designed to get as many ideas from as many people as possible. Around 12:30 we will light the barbeque and offer sausages and drinks to the participants. Parents, bring your kids along (some of our junior athletes will be running an orienteering session from 10-12). See the attached announcement.

LAPPE'S CANADIAN JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS MEDALISTS

RIKU METSARANTA - GOLD - 10K Free
TIMO PUIRAS - BRONZE - 10K Free, SILVER - Sprints

Timo and Riku are pictured here with the overall Junior Men's Champion Guillaume Joly.