

MADNORSKI News

News for the members of the Madison Nordic Ski Club Vol. 22 No. 5

- A WORD FROM JIMMY -

Who's to Blame this Time?

BY JIMMY VANDEN BROOK, PRESIDENT



Look's like Madison is on its way to a record snowfall season! Too bad it's the wrong end of the accumulation spectrum. Seems almost comical that Madison had but 4.25 inches of total snow accumulation through mid-January, most of which promptly disappeared. And the rest of Wisconsin is not much better. Nothing but cold, dry air is featured for the rest of this month, with our historically driest month on deck. MadNorSkis have taken to scraping the vestiges of snow into meager piles on the pond at Elver Park so that sliding on real skis could be attempted. An heroic effort, if a tad desperate. Travel to the Upper Peninsula provides the nearest real relief.

Calls for the club to get into snowmaking or to rent nearby downhill areas for X-C skiing mount. But these are merely solutions to the problem when what we really want is to finger the person(s) responsible for this dearth of snow. Before I run down the list of likely suspects let me put you at ease about my own innocence. While my natural Catholic guilt allowed me to accept responsibility for several recent sub-par snow years, I guarantee you that I am incapable of maintaining a streak like this regardless of the endeavor. If I were, I'd have much better racing results for sure. My fellow MadNorSkis, your president is not a crook. This may seem a pathetic attempt to retain power, but

truly, regime change won't help. Here now are my top seven "End of winter as we know it" suspects (with mitigating circumstances for all but one):

1. Governor Doyle — He's warned us repeatedly that painful cutbacks are on the way. Well, he has the pain part right, but since he didn't take office until after the drought began we can cut him a little slack on snow responsibility. Nonetheless, it's fun to blame our government for things, so

I have a few more state officials/agencies on the list.

2. Former legislative leaders Chvala and Jensen — Embroiled in the caucus scandal, these two are worried about not being able to stick taxpayers with their legal bills. Could they have sold off our snow to replenish the coffers? Not likely actually, since they have a poor record of cooperating on anything.

3. The WI Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection — By

law, this state agency is actually responsible for regulating "Weather Modification" (no kidding). Somebody sleeping at the snow switch? Though it might be gratifying to do a little bureaucratic butt-kicking, DATCP is off the hook because I work there. So there.

4. The WI Department of Natural Resources — Snow is a natural resource, right? So where is the management? All we want is a little environmental justice. You know, snow for everybody. Besides, is every DNR staffer working exclusively on CWD? Even if they are, I have many pals at DNR who are really good folks and they

(SEE **BLAME**, CONTINUED ON PAGE 13)

OUR NEXT MEETING

Monday, Feb. 10th, 2002
ROCKY ROCOCO'S WEST

Agenda

- 6:00: Social half-hour with free beverages
- 6:30: Video's on the Big Screen & Pizza Buffet
- 7:30: Business Meeting
- 8:00: More videos
- 8:30: Adjourn

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Jimmy Vanden Brook
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(608) 437-4192
jpvanden@mhtc.net

Willi VanHaren
Vice President

(608) 437-3782
psh@itis.com

Hans Herweijer
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hans@genetransfer.com

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Publicity
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nhoene@chorus.net

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Membership
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bachmeier@mac.com

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Race Chair
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nedz@chorus.net

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Advertising/Promotions
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hlum@convenienceelectronics.com

Kay Lum

Newsletter
(608) 249-0186 ext. 110
kay@athleticbusiness.com

Pete Anderson

KidSki Chair
222-1928
pjander2@facstaff.wisc.edu

John Taylor

Social Director
236-4565
jtaylor826@excite.com

Playing The Percentages:

A SAFE WAX BET WITH A BROAD RANGE

BY ERIC MITTELSTEADT, TOKO TECH TEAM

A word that comes to mind when I think of winters here in southern Wisconsin is "unpredictable".

As the marathon season, including the American Birkebeiner, approaches, this unpredictability can leave ski waxers stressed out. But not to worry. There are a few simple things that you can do to "hit the wax" for the big events while keeping your ying and yang in check. But first, let's take a step back.

There seems to be a myth out there among x-c skiers that those fast skiers who have great knowledge and experience in ski waxing must use some really special, top-secret tricks to make their skis go so fast.

The truth is most skiers who are really "in the know" have three things going for them. First, they completely understand the wax brand(s) that they use and, second, they use proper technique in the wax application and removal process and lastly, they KEEP IT SIMPLE. This last point is the one I like to stress the most but all three factors really need to be given equal weight.

If any of you have attended one of my wax clinics, you have probably heard me say, "stick with one brand of wax and learn it really well". In my early days of ski waxing, I made the mistake of having a little bit of every wax brand known to man in my wax box. I thought that by having a little of everything, I would have a good wax for every condition out there. As a result, I had a little bit of everything and a whole lot of confusion.

Since that time, I have spent the better half of the last ten years waxing skis. Along the way, I have picked up many tips, tricks, techniques and good old fashioned experience. In 1998, I became a member of the Toko Tech Team. Then in March of 2000, I had the opportunity to work with World Cup Nordic wax technicians while visiting the Toko Wax factory in Altstatten, Switzerland where I learned even more about the world of waxing skis... keep it simple.

How do we then apply this to the unpredictability of snow conditions combined with the fact that most of us don't ski race for a living and time is limited?

Following are some simple rules that should ease your guesswork on choosing the right wax for your next event and make the best use of your time:

1.) The first step: brush, from tip to tail, with a copper brush. The copper brush bristles have just the right combination of stiffness and fine gauge to get into the base structure without being too aggressive. This is an important step that should not be skipped. If your ski bases are really scratched or look a bit "white" as a result of oxidization, you may want to get the skis stone ground.

2.) If your ski bases were really dirty, you may want to do a "hot scrape" at this time, otherwise, the second step would be to apply Toko LF Molybdenum as your "base coat".

Why use the LF Moly? This product is used by a majority of the elite ski world virtually every time a pair of skis is waxed for a race. The "moly", as it's usually referred to, increases the durability of whatever you put on top of it (pretty important for a marathon-length race). It also enhances the properties of graphite (black) bases such as repelling dirt and preventing static build-up. The molybdenum is similar to graphite base waxes, however, it's structurally stronger which increases the bonding between it and your next wax layers.

3.) Step three starts to get more specific regarding matching the wax to the conditions.

The basic concept is to match "the wax" to "the snow type". If we use Toko wax as an example, there are only three colors of wax to think about: Yellow for "warm" temperatures, red for the middle temps (mid-teens to mid-20s) and blue for "cold" temps (usually low teens and below). With only three wax colors, each one covers a relatively broad

(SEE **WAX**, CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

- WE WANNA GO, WHERE'S THE SNOW? -

Trips Trips Trips.

BY MIK COCKREM, TRIPS CHAIR



Oh dear, the December **Demo Days** didn't depart, due to a dearth of snow. Maybe next year?

By the time this arrives in your mailbox, the **Third Annual Nordic Ski Rendezvous at Telemark** will have happened... hopefully! (as of Jan. 20, it looks like with the man-made snow Telemark made, and the 3 inches of fresh natural snow (so far)... that it may just be a go!



And it looks like it will even be cold enough and snowy enough for the **Book Across the Bay**, in Ashland, to be on skis and not in kayaks. This informal MNSC trip is February 14-16, 2003. The Book Across the Bay is a 10-km race that crosses the frozen Chequamegon Bay of Lake Superior; beginning in Ashland, WI and ending in Washburn, WI. The race/tour is Saturday night at 6 p.m. The entire course is lit by hundreds of candles in ice luminaries. The event is open to participants of all ages and ability levels; the course will be groomed for classical-style and skate-style skiers. Snowshoers are welcome too. Proceeds from the race benefit the local Medical Society and Public Library. You can call the Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce at (800) 284-9484 or www.batb.org. The race starts at 6 pm. Race-day registration and check-in will be held from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 15, 2002 in Ashland at the Hotel Chequamegon, 101 Lake Shore Drive West. Preregistration (before February) fee last year was \$15 for adults. We park in Washburn, near the finish line catch a shuttle to Ashland before the race (2-5pm). See <http://www.cheqnet.net/~tomc/asta> for other local trails. *

Fun Day at the Lussier Family Heritage Center

SUNDAY, MARCH 2, 2003 AT 2 P.M.

The Madison Nordic Ski Club will host a "Farewell to Winter" party featuring skiing/hiking and snow activities for all ages at the Lussier Family Heritage Center on March 2, 2003. We will have the entire facility open for club members free of charge. Please bring the whole family. Snacks and beverages will be available in the lower level from 2 to 5:30 pm. At 6 P.M. we'll move upstairs for a potluck dinner. After dinner we'll have a bon-fire and a candle-light ski or hike depending on conditions.

So, mark your calendars now for a low-key, fun event, that everybody can enjoy. Since we seem to get all our snow in March in recent years, we think this could be the best skiing of the season! And if the snow deserts us, we'll still have fun. *



- WHAT ARE THE SILVER SKIERS DOING? - Silver Ski Update

By GREG JONES

Like the rest of us the Silver skiers are still patiently waiting for snow. Some of our skiers were new to the program last year. Some of them are new to the program this year. They have all been hearing promises of snow for sometime now. We all have to give them a lot of credit for hanging in and being patient. Every week we keep getting a good turn out of enthusiastic middle school kids. They keep doing all the dry land training we can throw at them with the promise that the snow will come. Actually I have stopped promising them because I hate to get called a liar.

To try and put some fun into the



otherwise dismal season we have been doing some ice skating. We meet at Elver and skate on the ice there. They all seem to enjoy it so much, I don't have the heart to tell them they are cross training. It would be

nice to skate with poles but we have deemed it to be dangerous at the small confines of Elver's rink.

So far all of the races we have had on our schedule as a team have been canceled. A few of the team members have made it to a couple of races on their own with the help of their parents. My hat is off to them. Maybe at the next practice all 20 of us will do a snow dance for a full hour. Drastic times call for drastic measures. *

Madison Snow Trivia

By SCOTT BACHMEIER

Well, here we are at the 20th of January, and Madison has received a whopping 4.4 inches of snow for the season. The skier in me expressed disappointment in this number, and the meteorologist in me possessed a morbid curiosity that led me to wonder: what's the worst snow season Madison has ever had? Fear not, fellow skiers -- one winter was less snowy than this. The 1901/1902 winter season saw a paltry 4.0 inch total. The second worst winter was 1967/1968, when a total of 12.7 inches was logged. The maximum snow depth that particular season was 2 inches — and that was on the ground for eight long days! The remainder of Madison's low-snow winters all had at least one 4-6 inch storm, so maybe there's still some hope for us in 2003.

It's one thing to get snow in Madison, but us skiers like it when it actually stays on the ground for days on end. Looking back through the climate records yielded the following impressive statistics: the maximum snow depth ever recorded was thirty-two (32) inches (January 28, 1979). During that banner winter, there were 20 or more inches on the ground for 41 consecutive days (January 14 through February 23).

The award for "longest ski season" also goes to the 1978/1979 season, when there was 1 inch or more on the ground every day from November 23 until March 20 (yet, it snowed again in late March and early April!).

The 1985/1986 winter was close behind, with 1 inch or more on the ground from November 22 until March 17. *

2002-03 MadNorSki Meeting Schedule

Board Meeting	Club Meeting	Meeting Theme	Meeting Agenda	Club Meeting Location	Newsletter/Ad Deadline
Wednesday Jan. 29 TBA	Monday Feb. 10, 6:30 pm	Birkie war stories/ Birkie alternatives	Ski Videos Pizza!	WEST side Rocky's	Monday January 20
Wednesday Feb. 26 TBA	Monday Mar. 10, 6:30 pm	Racing wrap up	Awards & Potluck	Shorewood Community Center	February 19

MadNorSki Juniors: Keeping a Ski Team Together Without Snow

By MIKAELA ROBERTSON

It is January 11, the middle of “winter,” and we’ve just finished another rollerski session. Haven’t the snow gods heard us? Haven’t they seen us hiking with poles, cringing with the endless rollerski season, and kissing the occasional flurries as they remind us of what could be? We really feel for the new skiers who have never really skied on snow. What a commitment to a sport whose joys they haven’t ever tasted! This must be like some sort of stressful final exam, kind of like the ones I’m supposed to be studying for right now.

In actuality, we don’t really mind preparing for the arrival of snow. When it does come, everyone gets so excited! On Monday, when we had a skiable melting inch, we raced a relay on the Elver pond. We danced in the hail-like flurries on Thursday. And all the while our excitement is building for the day we finally get a real snow!

Outsiders always ask how we can possibly practice skiing without snow. Our coach Don knows, and so

do we. We hike, run, use poles, climb Elver hill, race time trials, slide on the ice, use bungees, practice technique, do Russian ski drills till we ache, rollerski, work on strength, skiwalk, and of course, keep up the snow

dances. Don often throws in something new. At Thursday’s roller-ski practice, we “Cut the Salami,” which involved weaving through the other skiers. We also played “Follow the Swede,” copying the moves of a good skier. On long slow workouts, we have time to discuss ski team news, including important items such as who likes who and who doesn’t.

Training together keeps us motivated. When you forget why you’re running with poles in cold, gray weather, you can look around and

draw determination from the excitement (or exhaustion) on others’ faces. It really helps to have a group to commiserate with, people who understand your insatiable appetite for snow.

Part of the glue that holds us

together is the weekly hunt for snow. I’ve been on three of our team’s four trips so far. The first was a training weekend when we stayed at Camp Manitowish with another high school team.

**“WE MUST ACCEPT FINITE
DISAPPOINTMENT, BUT
WE MUST NEVER LOSE
INFINITE HOPE”**

— MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

For the second trip we raced at ABR’s season opener. On our most recent, desperate attempt to ski on white, we left Madison at 5:30 AM and drove four hours north to race on a lake, then drove right back.

What truly keeps us going is hope—for snow, for skiing, and for more good times together. *

Biathlon Startup

By MARK TORRESANI

Over the past few months there have been ongoing discussions with the Nordic Sports Development Board, Black Hawk Ski Club, The Minnesota Biathlon Organization, and MadNorSki about the possibility of getting a biathlon program going in the Madison area.

Biathlon is a Winter Olympic Sport that combines cross country skiing and precision shooting. The difficulty in biathlon is to go all out on skis and then steady yourself to accurately fire a rifle.

We are hoping to get things going in a small way with an air rifle course at Black Hawk Ski Club located west of Madison. This course would be used primarily as an introduction to the sport. If there is enough interest the course could be expanded as the program grows.

Currently there is a very active

program throughout Minnesota and small pockets of interest in Wisconsin. This season offered about 15 different events throughout Minnesota including junior nationals. This spring there are plans to attend a coaches clinic put on by Minnesota



Biathlon and the potential to have Bill Meyer a nationally recognized biathlon coach give a seminar here in the Madison area if there is enough interest.

Above all safety is the primary concern for any program. Anyone interested in learning more about biathlon can visit the web site www.biathlon.net/intro.html. Those interested in helping to get a biathlon program started in Madison or would be interested in attending a seminar on biathlon can contact me (Mark Torresani) at (608) 662-5374 or torresan@chorus.net or see me at a ski club meeting *

(WAX, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

range and are formulated to perform well without getting complicated.

If the during the week going into your race weekend, you get the forecast for race day, you can at least get one of your “wax of the day” layers put on your ski. With such a broad range, should the forecast change a bit, you can simply go with another layer of the more appropriate wax over the top of your last layer. Again, the range is broad so you should still be in the ballpark. If the forecast falls somewhere “between” the wax temperature ranges, which happens often, the waxes can be mixed. This is a very easy “trick” that is simple yet extremely effective.

Let’s say for example that you’re going up to ski the Noquemanon Marathon in Marquette and the forecast is for an overnight low of 10 degrees F, an expected high of 20 deg. F and the snow type is considered “transformed” (simply meaning that it’s not new but it also has not gone through a thaw/freeze cycle to become “fully transformed”- we’ll cover snow “types” more in a different article). If the race starts at 9am and the forecast is fairly accurate, the snow temperature at race time

(STILL READING?, GO TO PAGE 13)

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3rd Annual 24 Hours of Telemark Saved by Man-Made Snow

INTRODUCTION BY KAY LUM

No Snow? The lack of natural snow didn't stop the 3rd Annual 24 Hours of Telemark Ski Race. Due to the new snow-making abilities at Telemark lodge, and the cold temperatures, a 3.1K loop of man-made snow was created, and the race was on! (Way to go Kevin Eccles of Team Sports Events, and Phil Van Valkenberg of Telemark Lodge, and anyone else who helped to make it happen!) An additional 3" of natural snow at the last minute helped to make the surrounding area white, to give the illusion of a real honest-to-goodness Wisconsin winter! The loop was very winding and had quite a bit of climbing (in my humble opinion). The temps were sub zero... I never really looked at a thermometer, why would you? Just put on your Balaclava and vaseline and get out there! The race started at 10 A.M. on Saturday Jan. 11th and ended at 10 A.M. on Sunday Jan. 12. There were "teams" that had anywhere from one member (the solo freak category), to 6 member teams (known as a big team). The idea is to have one of your team members on the course at all times. (That wasn't always the case for all the teams!)

I thought it would be interesting to get blurbs, some short, some long, from different people who participated in the event. I got stories from spectators, experienced skiers, first time racers, and even a skier who had never even been on skis before. read on!*



The final second of the race... tick tick tick tick... is there time for one more lap?

A Spectators View

BY DON FARISS

After attending a high school race in Hayward, juniors Tom Richner and Louise Jones accompanied me to Telemark to yell "Heijja, heijja!" for the Mad-NorSki troops. Arriving about 9:00 p.m., we ran into some familiar faces in the lodge. Most were lathered with shiny face protection against the frigid night and wore the grim expressions you might see on battle-worn soldiers. However, each expressed optimism for their team's hardiness and future fortunes. We walked the edge of the entire twisty, technical 3 km course, cheering the familiar and non. As we looked down on the zigzags through the woodlands from the highpoint we were enchanted by the sight... the light from dozens of headlamps appeared instead to be twinkling fairy lights flitting among trees. "Woods fairies!"

We returned again at the 10:00 a.m. race finish time to see grimness turn to tired, but deeply satisfied smiles. That any of these bodies could still stand unaided was amazing. We were further amazed when we skied several loops of their now emptied course. The twists tapped our best ski skills on every lap. Hard to imagine negotiating them at speed in a frozen, fatigued, sleep-deprived state. We were told later that there was a 284 foot elevation gain on each lap!

Although I may question the participants' sanity, there is no doubt to their determination, willpower, fortitude and devotion to their teammates. My ski torque is off to you ladies and gentlemen. *



The Red Bull arch start/finish line was what skiers dreamed of reaching while their teammates awaited their arrival in the clear, heated tent at the right.



At left: JoEllen Torresani was the Champ for the women's 3 hour solo category with 46.5K on a hilly winding course! Way to go!



Below: "Hix & Chix on Stix" took first place in the 4 person open team category! From left: Harry Spehar, Kay Raschka, Carolyn Senty, and Mark Harms

Birkie Wannabee Survives Telemark Trial

By BILL DELANEY, TEAM NUMBSKI RECRUIT #6

I volunteered and was accepted for the sixth slot in the Madnorski 24 hour relay team (desperate men take desperate measures). That was at about 11A.M. on Friday (the race was Sat. A.M.) I sweated over how many skis to bring and thought I really over packed. Then recruit #4 (Willi Van Haren) showed up in my driveway and filled my truck to the ceiling with his abundance. He's been skiing twice as long as me so he amassed lots of equipment over the years. I believe he brought it all. Five and-a-half hours later, we stumbled into the condo of Jimmy and Judy Vanden Brook at Telemark. Jimmy was relieved to have his roster back up to 6 people of course. In a short few days before the race half of his team had called with problems that prevented their participation (*see poem this page!*). Fortunately, recruit #4 is a ringer. He skis circles around 5 & 6. And the three originals, well, they all hold their own pretty darn well. I'd guess these primary 4 guys have over 70 Birkies between them. Kim and I have 1.

After a nice dinner and some chit-chat about the race we break up and tend to our pre-race rituals. Some stretch, some sleep, I immediately set about waxing skis which I have not seen since the 2001 Birkie. We all get a good nights sleep in preparation for the next 24 hours.

Saturday morning is breezy with temps warming up to about 12 degrees. We shuttle down to the pre-race meeting at the Telemark lodge and listen to the race officials. And the EMTs. They warn us about possible 30 below wind chills that night. Reminding us about frostbite, etc. Funny thing was that at the awards the next day, the race director said the two EMTs were never so bored.

The race starts at 10 A.M. and I'm 4th man. Figure I'll do my 6 or 7 turns on the course over the 24 hours. I guess around noon I take my first trip around the course. Snow is surprisingly good, my ski legs are a little perplexed in this first round though. By the third lap I'm stumbling up the steeper hills, no form, no technique, no glide. Wow, it's been a long time since I've been on skis.

I try not to notice how many people are passing me. Just running my own race, trying to keep my lap times similar. The skis are fast, and I'm feeling good control on the downhills, turns, etc. I can't complain about my engine, it's keeping pace, not overwhelmed. But the course is hard and slick due to the artificial snow. Takes a lot of effort and concentration to stabilize. In the first trip I end with a 20% slower lap, but I'm glad to have made it all three laps. Shin splints and painful feet are my only complaints.

Back at the condo things are low key. Football games are on, bottomless bowls of chicken soup are available, naps are snuck in. We all share our experience with the course and discuss tips on how to handle the coming night.

The middle of the night was a steady zero degrees. Clear sky, beautiful bright stars, and less people. The volunteers kept the bonfires going, and they cheered for us all night long. What a unique experience.

When it was over at 10 A.M. on Sunday. We were all tired, but not injured.

The awards are fun if only to see what the ski machines look like in person. I mean, they are out there in their fancy duds and passing by you like you are skating on klister. But once inside they are comfy in jeans and sweatshirts (matching team jackets in some cases), looking more or less like normal human beings.

I saw some pretty novice, very slow skiers out in the middle of the night. If they could do it, so can you.

I'd like to thank my teammates: Jimmy, Reg, Andy, Willi, and Kim for making my first 24 hour race an easy introduction. And of course, #7 (Judy V.) deserves a big round of applause for supporting the team over the long two days. Its not for everyone, but if the opportunity presents itself, I'd say "Go for it." *

ONE OF THE NUMBSKIS WAS SO INSPIRED,
HE WROTE A POEM...

Ode To The Numbskis

By KIM THORNTON

THE NUMBSKIS HAD A TEAM OF SIX. 'T WAS
JIMMY'S PRIDE AND JOY. BUT GASNER
CLAIMED A BROKEN LEG — A DESPERATE,
SHAMELESS PLOY.

THEN JIMMY ASKED (WHEN RON WHITE'S
SURGEON ORDERED POST-OP REST),
"SINCE WHEN IS SKING JUST ONE DAY
CONSIDERED STRENUOUS?"

WHEN NUMBSKI ROOKER CALLED TO BAIL
ON FLIMSY PRETENSE TOO, JIMMY CHECKED
THE WEATHERCAST; AN ARTIC BLAST
WAS DUE.

HIS ONLY HOPE TO FIELD A TEAM WAS
THAT THE LAST TWO MEN
WERE NUMBSKIS IN THE TRUEST SENSE —
TOO DUMB TO THINK AHEAD.

JIM THEN PUT OUT AN A.P.B. FOR MORE
DIMWIT RECRUITS. AS DEADLINES LOOMED
HE FILLED ALL SLOTS WITH THREE NEW
CLUELESS RUBES.

IN FRIDAY'S COLD AS GEESE RUSHED SOUTH
IMPELLED BY TINY BRAINS. THE NUMBSKIS
WENT THE OTHER WAY —ACROSS
THE FRIGID PLAINS.

THE LEAD OFF MAN WAS WILLI V. WITH
MUSCLES BULGING BIG. HE SNAPPED A POLE
ON HIS FIRST LAP AS IF IT WERE A TWIG.

AND SO IT WENT INTO THE NIGHT 6 MILES
PER MAN PER TURN. THE AIR WAS COLD,
THE SOUP WAS HOT, NO MEDALS
WOULD BE EARNED.

EVENTUALLY THE WEAKEST LINK FLAT OUT
COLLAPSED INTO A HEAP OF SHAKING PALSY,
AND MOURNFULLY WITHDREW.

BUT THROUGH IT ALL THE OTHERS
SOLDIERED ON UNTIL THE END. WITH JIMMY
ON THE LAST TWO LAPS, (THE RECORD
SHOWS IT'S *REG).

IF THERE'S A MORAL TO THIS TALE, IT'S
SURE NOT CLEAR TO ME.

JUST ONE MORE ENTRY ADDED TO
THE LORE OF MADNORSKI

*REG SWITCHED TIMING CHIPS ON JIMMY, BUT
DON'T TELL HIM. HE'S SURE HE DID 22 LAPS AND
STILL CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHY IT ONLY SHOWS 20
— BUT I GUESS JIMMY KNOWS NOW!



Master recruiter Captain Jimmy V. gets ready to take his turn on the trail! (I wonder who's chip he has on?)

"Bloody Lungs" Just Miss 3rd-Straight Podium Finish

By MIKE IVEY

The aptly-named "Bloody Lungs" returned to the 24 Hours of Telemark this year, hoping to defend back-to-back 3rd place podium finishes in the Big Team category.

Unfortunately, the team organized by captain Tom Woody came up a bit short, finishing in 4th place with 140 laps. Other team members were Tom Kaufman, Mark Torresani, Chris Halverson, Dirk Mason and Mike Ivey.

One big problem for the Bloody Lungs this year was the presence of the Skinnyski.com team, which made a big deal out of going for the 24-hour relay record. While this group of semi-pros from Minnesota failed to break the 517-kilometer record, they easily won the Big Team race by completing 158 laps.

This was enough to push the Lungs one spot down the results list and off the podium.

But as always, a good time was had by all. The Madnorskis were well represented as usual at Telemark – and hard to miss in those red, silver and blue suits. *



Three of the six members of team "Bloody Lungs" (L to R: Chris Halverson, Tom Kaufman, and Dirk Mason), wait for their turn near the end of the race... they each did one 3.1K lap at a time to try to sinch 3rd place, but missed by a mere 2 laps—that's only 6.2K!



Harry "Swag" Lum FINALLY scores some "Swag" for himself at the awards ceremony after the race. He liked the shades so much, he didn't even care that his team "Snowvengers" placed 10th in the big team category!



"Dumber than Dirt" squeaked by with a second place finish in the 4 person Classical category! In a repeat performance of last year, they did the same amount of laps as the 3rd place finishers, but did it a mere 4 seconds faster! (left to right: Bill Lontz, Phil Van Valkenberg, Gerry Wright, and Dave Robb.)

It starts to happen as the cold starlit night gets the first shimmer of daylight. Then it comes on full force as the horizon takes on a yellow red glow and the sun pushes over the tree edge. Elation! My body responds with a new found power. I am going to make it! I have only four more hours to ski. There are twenty hours behind me and the sun will help me time this adrenaline rush for the finish line.

Eleven long hours of night skiing are history. The uphill that grew in the dark requiring single poling are now diminished. I smile to myself confidently as I notice the clarity the ski trail takes on in the real light of day. No more fading battery headlamps to change out. No more lonely thoughts. There is now a sense of pride from skiing into the darkness and through the long night. Right now I am warm and comfortable on well-waxed skis and I am watching the sunrise. Better, I am actually skiing to greet the rising morning sun! There are ice crystals in the crisp air floating into my face and I feel powerful as I glide through them.

I know this too will change. That is one of the many lessons from 24 hour skiing. Yes, this too will change. But for now, I will enjoy the moment. This is what it is all about. The ego of racing has been subverted in the long night hours.

The 24 Hours of Telemark 2003 all started with the worry of cancellation due to no snow in most of the Midwest. Long days of Nordic speed skating in preparation

gave way to a concern that it would take place on a 3.1 kilometer, artificial snow course. In addition there was the possibility of -25 degree F wind chill. The last two years had interesting 10K loops. A 3K course sounded like something for gerbils not skiers and artificial snow sounded like a Hollywood set not northern Wisconsin. Possible -25 degree F wind chill? Now that would separate Nordic skiers from Green Bay Packer fans!

Did I really want to do this? Yes! And so did another 190 racers who showed up.

At race start the temperature was at 0 degrees F. It never got warmer than 12 degrees F. Overnight it dipped back to zero! A 3.1 kilometer loop with a mix of short steep hills and long flats exposed me to 5-12 knot winds alternately in my face and at my back. I was racing on man-made snow. The two inches of new snow that had fallen just prior to the race at least gave me the feeling of full winter in the Northwoods. Spectators cheered around the clock from many different locations on the course. In the bright sunlight rock and roll blared from the staging area under a huge Red Bull inflatable... (Did I hear Johnny Cash more than once?)... As night took over, bonfires burned trail-side, tents with Christmas lights shimmered. Ice crystals floated from snow guns and I heard kids laughing as they tubed down a hillside lit by a smiling half-moon. On each lap I noticed the timers thumbs up, inspiring me to keep going. I took this all in along with noticing race organizers, support vehicles, and volunteers everywhere shoveling,

You Want Me To Do WHAT?

By BEN SHOCKEY

Having never put on a pair of Cross Country Skis in my life, the 24 Hours of Telemark was perhaps the most brutal and enjoyable experience I've ever had.

I was talked into joining a Classical Only team, five days before the race and I was given my first lesson at 10 a.m., precisely when the race started. I began my first lap at about noon and the two mile loop took me about 30 minutes. I think I spent at least half of that time on the ground. It was absolutely a lesson in humility. Following my initial debacle, I cut my laps down to about 20 minutes and eventually skied approximately 20 miles. Not many people can say they skied 20 miles the first day they learned how to ski. (Oh yeah, I've never been on downhill skis!)

I think the best part of the race was the people. I've never been in a race where the other competitors were so encouraging. Nobody ever stopped to help me off the ground, but their words were very helpful. It seemed that for many people the race was not about winning, it was about surviving 24 hours of ice, 20 below wind-chill and fading headlamps. I think anyone who chooses to compete in an event like this must have something not quite right in their head, and that's what makes them so much fun. *



"Lükken 4 Sno" came in with a first place in the 4 woman open category! Left to right: Jacky Budweg, Kay Lum, Laura Budweg, and Ann Curtiss. (Is it ok for me to put myself in the newsletter?)



Willi Van Haren, Numbski team member, was ready to fly down the trail at a moments notice!

"Solo Freak" Chris Ransom meets "I've never skied before in my life" racer Ben Shockey. Skill doesn't matter, attitude does!



encouraging, and passing out fluids. Add to that the speed and grace of team skiers flying by you, the tenacity of the diagonal skiers, and I realized I was smack dab in the middle of a skiing phenomenon.

I was fortunate to have George Welk and his wife, Yuliya as my support crew. George was trailside the entire race. I had only to ski up to him and he would pop supplements, hard candy, and energy bar chunks into my mouth. Yuliya meanwhile, had a smorgasbord of hot soup, hot mashed potatoes, turkey jerky, fresh fruit, bread and cheese, pickles, olives, crackers, nuts and dried fruit ready and waiting in the room at the lodge following every four hour ski block.

My race strategy has been the same for all three years of 24 hour racing: ski four hours; take a one half hour break in a room. No sleep. Snooze, you lose! This break included a hot shower, a complete change into dry clothes, and lots of food for me. George was in charge of getting me out of the room on time and making sure I was not disoriented enough to forget my watch, race bib or timing chip. We laughed a lot when I always seemed to turn the wrong way down the halls in the lodge!

Race strategy also included not telling me where I stood in comparison to others until the last eight hours.

My skis ran fast on the dirty, man-made snow and noticeably faster than others on the one relatively long downhill. George waxed skis twice for me.

Overall it was a demanding course with few places to

stretch or rest. The snow was abrasive, cold and relatively slow. It seemed like I was often going uphill. On the wide-open flats I was dealing with the wind. Many tight corners demanded focus and agility on my feet. I did a complete change of clothes five times. Five complete sets of ski clothes is a lot of clothes! I often had three layers on my arms with a vest on top. I had 2-3 layers on my legs covered with wind pants or warm ups. I wore a facemask the entire race with cold protection cream and used mittens and over boots at night. I like cold weather and still got uncomfortably cold on several occasions.

I met a friend adventure racer, Anthony, who entered the solo division and had barely ever ski skated. Another guy from Iowa who joined a team at the last moment really inspired me when he told me he had never skied before (see *Ben Shockey's article*).

A hamburger, French fries, and German dark beer never tasted so good after the race.

The gamete of emotions one goes through in an abbreviated amount of time. You come to understand the lessons of a life sport like Nordic skiing, which enables you to appreciate what is really important elsewhere. I hope to ski with you next time. *

Chris Ransom, 51 is National Solo 24 Hour XC Ski Champion 2001-2003 and a member of the U.S. Masters XC Team. His latest passion is his new wife, Juli Lynch, and the sport of ice boating.

Snow Oval Mysteriously Materializes!

By PETE ANDERSON

In sort of a winter take on crop circles, a 500 meter snow oval came into being during the night last week at the Elver park pond. The alien agency behind this manifestation was the Russian Ski School and 15 juniors. Something like 50 or 60 skier-hours of shoveling went into this, but we now have the longest machine-trackset classical ski trail on natural snow in the state of Wisconsin, if you count pulling Sepp's track sled by hand as machine grooming. What it lacks in terrain, it makes up in, well, something, maybe ambiance.

There's another 600 meter loop waiting to be created on the other pond. Price of admission is adding some snow to the new loop. Thanks to Dirk Mason, Don Fariss, and Yuri Gusev for coordinating this, and, of

course, all the forced labor.

Thanks to all who worked so hard to make the loop magically appear!

Volunteers included: Kristin Gallagher, Shanna Bodily, Ansel and Jeff Schimpff, Emily Ricker, Nathan, Lee

It's amazing what a little snow, (very little snow) and a lot of ingenuity can accomplish. Desperation breeds some good ideas!

and Nicole Schiesser, Amanda, Nicole and Michelle Zach, Louise Jones, Marta Drew, Sara Eskrich, Brittany Alioto, Noah and Galen Kenoyer, Bryan Garfoot, Mikaela Robertson, Gordy Bartholomew, Willi Van Haren, Pete Anderson, Dirk Mason, Don Fariss and YURIY! *



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- JUNIORS ARE ON THE MOVE! -

2002 - 2003 MadNorSki Junior Team Directory

BY DON FARISS

All of the Juniors answered 17 questions about themselves so we can get to know them better. Here are the questions.

1. How many years have you skied?
2. How many years have you raced?
3. What is the best part of your skiing?
4. What needs improvement?
5. Why is skiing fun for you?
6. Who are your heroes?
7. Athlete(s) you admire
8. Other sports or hobbies you have
9. Favorite music
10. Favorite movie
11. Favorite book
12. Favorite food
13. Favorite subject
14. What one word would your friends use to describe you?
15. What one word would your use to describe yourself?
16. What should we yell/cheer for you in a race?
17. Anything else we should know about you?



JENNA ACKER is a sophomore at Verona High School

1. 0; 2. 0; 4. Technique, endurance and speed; 5. It's a challenge and I can enjoy the winter; 6. My family for always being there.; 7. All of them for their dedication.; 8. Dance; 9. Depends on my mood; 10. "A Walk to Remember"; 11. Harry Potter; 12. Moose Tracks ice cream; 13. History; 14. Caring; 15. Kind; 16. "Go Jenna!"; 17. I'm really looking forward to learning this sport



SHANNA BODILLY "Bodilly" is a junior at Madison Memorial

1. 0; 2. 0; 3. Umm, nothing; 4. Umm, everything; 5. I like snow and going fast; 7. Marion Jones, Sarah Schwab; 8. Running; 9. Older stuff; 10. "Lord of the Rings"; 11. Harry Potter; 12. Everything; 13. Art, gym, psychology; 14. Outgoing; 15. Driven.



SARA ESKRICH is a sophomore at Verona High School

1. 8; 2. 0; 3. My ability to have fun while skiing; 4. Technique; 5. It gets me out into nature; 6. My mom and grandma; 7. All true athletes; 8. Biking, volleyball, music, camping, hiking; 9. Almost all, it depends on my mood; 10. "One Fine Day"; 11. Gone With the Wind; 12. Pasta; 13. Political science; 14. Kind; 15. Caring; 16. Anything.



BRYAN GARFOOT "Goofy" is a sophomore at Mt. Horeb High School

1. 10; 2. 0; 3. I am a great classical skier; 4. I have never tried skating (as of early December); 5. I love being outdoors in the winter; 6. Ghandi; 7. Khalid Khan-nouchi, Paula Radcliff; 8. Cross-country, track; 9. Garth Brooks; 10. "The Matrix"; 11. K-Pax; 12. Strawberries; 13. Mathematics; 14. Oddball; 15. Intelligent; 16. "Go Goof!"



NOAH KENOYER is an 8th grader at Verona; 1. 10; 2. 7; 3. Tempo; 4.

Strength; 8. Swimming; 9. Classic rock; 10. "Saving Private Ryan"; 12. Subs; 13. Band; 15. funny.



JEFF SCHACHERL is a sophomore at Mt. Horeb High School

1. 5-ish; 2. 1-ish; 3. Skating; 4. Diagonal stride ahhh...; 5. Being outside in the winter; 7. Steve Prefontaine; 8. Cross-country, basketball; 9. Good Charlotte!; 10. "The Matrix", "The Fast and the Furious"; 12. Spaghetti!; 13. French; 14. Crazy!; 15. So very busy... 16. Go Jeff!



Gratitude

BY DON FARISS

As one of the ski coaches for Madison youth, I'd like to express my humble thanks to the 5% or so of the club membership that has responded to our fundraising drive to cover current increased costs (associated with growth) and establish a fund for future needs. We have had several very significant donations that will help a great deal. It's humbling to know that some of you believe deeply in our efforts.

The following contributed in December:

Jim Coors & Ann Pollock
Gordon & Judith Faulkner
Rebholz family (Tom Rebholz Memorial)
John & Leslie Taylor
John Stolzenberg
Gaspar Giorgi & Kathleen Helm
Carolyn Senty
Liese Pfeifer & Rich Bechler
Deborah Ahlstedt
Anne Weiss & Peter Erk
Robert & Louise Jeanne
Walt & Stacey Meanwell
Samuel Moore
Gail Moede
Robert Steidemann
Willi & Gail Van Haren
Tom & Judith Gasner
Constance Meek

THANKS!

If there are others who would still like to donate, we'd be grateful for any amount. If even a quarter of you gave \$10, we'd have \$1000. And if donating to "Wisconsin Nordic Sports Foundation" for the tax write-off seems like a bother, just make the check out to the club itself. Either way, note "for MNSC youth programs" on the check memo line and send to Hans Herweijer, Treasurer, Madison Nordic Ski Club, P.O. Box 55281, Madison, WI 53705. I've always been proud to be a member of this fine club. We always seem to be able to rise to the cause of worthy efforts. *

(**BLAME**, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

ski. So, DNR skates on this one.

5. Minnesota Viking Fans — These Minnesotans are so bitter that they still complain about games they lost to the Packers years ago, which I find personally delightful in a twisted way. They would do almost anything to make life miserable for Wisconsin Packer fans. But they draw the line at snow sabotage. They know that their best skiing is done on Packerland tundra.

6. Saddam Hussein — I can almost hear the Iraqi president calling for the "Mother of all Winters". You know this guy has the motivation to stick it in our eye but he's so busy scuttling from one bunker to the next he just can't focus. Besides, U.N. inspectors couldn't find any Weapons of Snow-Mass Destruction anywhere in the country.

7. Kim Jung Il — As the incarnation

of Dr. Evil, the North Korean leader is wacky enough to do anything and is my top pick. Kim is always trying to embarrass us and holding our snow hostage is quite a coup. But he can be bought cheap. For example, we know

the U.S.A. could trade a little fuel oil to eliminate the threat of "nuclear" winter from North Korea. Why not trade a case of ski scrapers, some Fast Wax, and a gross of bumper stickers to get our "skiing" winter back from them. The bumper stickers could even be modified to say "MadKimSki". Painless.

Well, at least now you have someone to hold accountable. Seriously, let's just hope this isn't a weather pattern that

is here to stay. If it is, and if global warming is the culprit, we have a lot of work to do to reverse that trend. And it probably won't involve a trade with Dr. Evil. We might have to trade some personal choices. *

WHY NOT TRADE A CASE OF SKI SCRAPERS, SOME FAST WAX, AND A GROSS OF BUMPER STICKERS TO GET OUR "SKIING" WINTER BACK

(**Wax**, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

should be somewhere in the upper end of the "blue" wax range, say 12 deg. F. For a longer race such as the Noquemanon, there's a good chance that the snow temperature will rise throughout the race and climb upwards into the "red" wax range. The solution: mix your waxes, red and blue, at about a 1:1 ratio. By going this route, should the conditions turn out to be different than predicted, either warmer or colder, you should still be in the ballpark by using the wax mix. This simple "trick" of mixing the waxes will usually be a safe bet if your looking to cover a broad range of possibilities.

If you're still having doubts about which wax to use for your next big event, you can call (toll free) 1-888-TWAX-TIP for Toko's Wax Tip Line. You will find a wax recommendation for most of the races here in the Midwest.

In later articles, I will cover some specifics on wax application and removal techniques, matching the wax to different snow types and many other related topics. I hope this advice will make your next skiing adventure a little more... predictable. *

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Can We Check Your Pockets For You?

By DON FARISS

No, not for your wallet. We mean ski camber pockets on both your skating & classical skis. If you find them, you'll know whether your skis fit you and function well. What would it be worth to you to find out? \$20? \$10?

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You've seen it set up at club meetings. We will set it up at the February meeting and test your skis for only \$5.00 per pair! All proceeds will go to our youth ski programs.

We will:

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- Locate and mark the hard wax & klister pockets on your classical skis for your current body weight.

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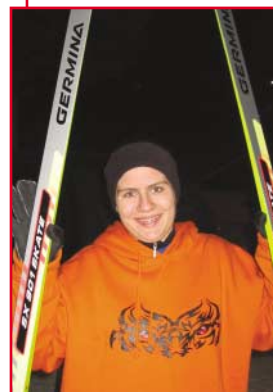
So don't forget to bring your skis to the February meeting at Rocky's with the sticky wax cleaned off. And don't forget your wallet too. *

—THE MADNORSKI JUNIORS

Special Thanks!

Special Thanks goes to **Joe Gollinger**, rep for Germina skis for the donation of **20 pairs** of combi and skate junior skis to the youth skiing programs. We hope to offer opportunities to more kids to join the Silver Skis and Juniors programs next year using this gift. Now... anybody want to donate 20 pairs of bindings? *

— DON FARISS



MadNorSki Junior skier Emily Ricker is the delighted winner of the big prize in the January MNSC meeting raffle, Germina top-of-the-line skate skis donated by Planet XC.



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Other Stuff...



Scott "I'm a meteorologist" Bachmeier and his assistant, wife Ruth, lure folks to sign up to be new members with the promise of "more snow in future years."



Actual photographic proof that Dave Gellatly, Swix and Fischer Rep. WAS at the January meeting, just like his boss told him to be! (And he didn't seem to mind it at all!)



Don Fariss, Gina Interrante and Ann Pollock show each other what they selected from the vast array of dishes from the pot luck table at the January meeting. We may not be able to ski, but we can still eat!



Who is this masked man? Phil Van Valkenberg was so happy that Telemark now has enough snow making capabilities that they could still hold the T24 race... even if it was just so he could wear this outfit in the sub-zero temps. Hats off to Phil! (not for long though, it's cold out there!)

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Correction: Ok, so I mistakingly called the "Snow Palace" (the ski getaway with nice toilets in Ironwood, Michigan owned by Mike Ivey and Willi Van Haren), the "Ice Palace" in the last issue. I am truly sorry, and I hope everyone forgives me.

— YOUR NEWSLETTER MAKER

It (Almost) ALWAYS Snows... (Have Faith)



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