



Madison Nordic Ski Club
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Natural Snow Enhances MadNorSki Ice Age Challenge

Ben Neff

The MadNorSki Ice Age Challenge and annual Blackhawk Ski Club Nordic fun day were held on Sunday, February 19th. Man-made snow guaranteed the event would take place on snow but a 9" snowfall on Thursday made it feel much more like winter at Blackhawk than it did just a few days earlier. Seasonal temperatures provided a picture-perfect day for the events which included a biathlon and a children's race in addition to a 5km freestyle race and a relay. Natural snow allowed organizers to create a full 2.5 km course (with a penalty loop for the biathlon) and excellent conditions so that racers were able to use their good skis. Everyone enjoyed brats and burgers throughout the day.

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped make this a successful day!



More than 30 racers lined up for the Ice Age Challenge's 5 km event (above). Age group winners were rewarded with ribbons in the East Challet. Photos Gordy Barthowome (above), Pat Remmington (right)



MADNORSKI News

News for members of the Madison Nordic Ski Club

March 2006 Vol. 25 No. 6

Another Strong Season for MadNorSki Members



Dirk Mason and Walt Meanwell

Thank you for another wonderful cross-country ski season. The club accomplished so much this year. This season the Madison Nordic Ski Club:

- Helped put on and staff the Capitol Square Sprints, one of only four such events in the world. Over 800 racers and recreational skiers participated.
- Put over 50 disadvantaged kids on skis for the first time. Be sure to read some of the thank you notes on page 3.
- Heightened the awareness of cross-country skiing and the club with over six club-related articles in local papers, seven spots on all three local TV news channels, and one regional and one national magazine article on the club.
- Worked effectively with the Mayor and the City to maintain grooming and facilities at Odana Hill golf course and Elver Park in a year of across-the-board budget cuts for the city of Madison.
- Experienced record participation in our youth programs with over 80 kids registered for our four levels of instruction.

- Placed several club members on numerous podiums throughout the winter and sent one youth to Junior Nationals.
- Held four on-snow races and one roller ski race locally, despite a two-month drought from mid-December to mid-February.
- Continued to build out the madnorski.org web site and further strengthen our online capabilities.
- Rolled out the "Support Your Shop" discount program and added the shopping page to the web site. If you aren't doing your ski shopping here you are missing definitely out.
- Further strengthened our partnership with Blackhawk Ski Club, jointly hosted the Nordic Fun day, and trained and raced together from Thanksgiving through late February on Blackhawk snow.

It was a very successful year, despite this being our fifth year in a row with poor snow. We do need help keeping your membership current. Please take a moment to look at the mailing label and see that you are current.

We plan on doing another clothing order in the fall. Let us (Dirk) know what you would like to see in the way of clothing items.

Thank you again for a great season!



Jo Ellen (left) and Julia Torresani enjoy MadNorSki's Blackhawk Nordic Fun Day, the partnership is one of the season's success stories. Photo: Ben Neff

Club meeting **Season Wrap-up**

Monday, March 13th

Where:

Lussier Natural Heritage Center

When: Social begins at 6:00 p.m.
Meeting is 6:45-7:45 p.m. Social begins at 7:45 p.m.

Program: Season wrap-up

Libations:

Refreshments will be served

Juniors Ski Well at High School Championships

By Greg Jones

The Wisconsin State High School championships were held at the Schwan Center just north of Spooner on February 10th and 11th. It is a two day race format, one day being a classic race and the other a skate race. Every year it switches which race comes first. This year the Skate race went first. The second day becomes two races with a classic race and a pursuit event. The winner of the first day goes off first while the second place skier waits his or her time back from the winner and then starts. The third place waits their time back and so forth until the racers are all out on the course. This makes for a very exciting finish since the first one across the finish line the second day score the best combined time and becomes the pursuit winner, but not necessarily the winner of the classic race.

There were 15 MadNorSki's competing this year comprised of 13 Juniors (high school) and 2 Silver Skiers (middle school). At the end of the first day (the skate race) we had two in the top ten. Ansel Schimpff was in 4th place and his brother Birken was close behind in 6th place. Awards are given down to 10th place so it was nice to see the Schimpff boys receiving medals the first night. Eric Delain also had a strong race to help get the Madison West team into 4th place.

The second day's race was a little harder on us. Birken just missed the top ten and Ansel finished in 8th place in the pursuit. The West team fell to 5th place in the team competition. Corrina Jones was our top girl. She went from 24th in the skate race to 15th in the classic race finishing the pursuit in 17th place. The girl's Memorial team finished the weekend in 12th place.

I can tell you that you do not have to win the races to have a good time or enjoy the camaraderie of your fellow skiers from around the state. Friendships were forged from around the state that will last long after the snow melts.

Some facts from the weekend:



MadNorSki Juniors flanked by coaches Yuriy Gusev (left) and Greg Jones (right) at the High School state championships, near Spooner.



MadNorSki Aria Walsh-Felz, of Madison Memorial skis the 7.5 km classical (left); Tom Ostby of Madison West shows how it's done in the freestyle. Photos: Greg Jones

- Well over 300 athletes competed.
- 18 girl's teams & 19 boy's teams participated.
- Hayward boys team won the team competition with a perfect score, they finished 1, 2, and 3
- Hayward Girls won the team competition finishing 2, 3, and 4
- Lakeland's Heather Bassett entered the stadium 10 yards behind the leader

- and overtook her just before the finish line for a dramatic finish in the pursuit.
- From the look of the Middle School race, the Hayward's dynasty will continue.
- All teams were housed on-site next to the trails to make for a fun weekend.
- Our sister team, Lodi, was there for the first time.

See page 10 for more photos



March

- 9 Board Meeting; 6:45 pm Meanwell's
- 12 Great Bear Chase; visit www.keweenawtrails.com/events for details
- 13 Club Meeting; 6:45 pm Social begins at 6 pm Lussier Center Lower Level

Board Meeting	Club Meeting	Meeting Theme	Meeting Agenda
Thursday, March 9	Monday, March 13	Racing wrap-up Pot Luck	Season wrap-up



Kiana Galloway's thank you note illustrates what a great time she had learning to ski at the Capitol Square Sprints. She was one of many disadvantaged youth bused up from Chicago's South side to experience cross-country skiing for the first time.

Thank you's

Here are some notes from Capitol Square Sprints disadvantaged kid skiers. Volunteers, including man MadNorSki, coached children on skiing for the first time during this event.

"Dear Skiing people, Thank you for having me for Skiing. It was fun I had a great time with you guys + girls. I love skiing It was so much fun"

—Jessicau

"Thank you for teaching us how to skii and we had fun. Thank rilly much."

"Thank you for teaching me how to skee. Every time I would fall down you would pick me up but you guys showed me how to get up and stop. Thank you very much I love skeeing!!!!"

—Julianne

"Thanks you for letting us come skying we had so much fun. It was our first time it was the best first time every! Now skying isnt that hard and now skying is very fun. Thank you"

—GNP



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Jonesy's Wax Room

KISS Waxing

Greg Jones

I circulate around a lot of construction sites in conjunction with my job. I often hear people talk about and applying the "Kiss Principle". What is the "Kiss principle" some of you may ask. "Keep It Simple Stupid". This may be a good principle for a lot of us to apply to the waxing of our skis. If you have less than 3 pairs of skis available, read on. If you ski less than 10 times a year you may want to read on. If you want to spend more time skiing and less time in the wax room, read on.

KISS for kick waxing: The easiest of all is to get a good pair of no wax skis. You will still need to glide wax them, but what could be easier for kick waxing than not waxing at all. Fish Scale skis come in a wide variety of styles from very affordable entry level skis, to wide back country skis, to skinny high performance racing skis. If you already have waxables and want

to keep it simple, there is a new "wax strip" product on the market. You just lay it onto the bottoms of your ski like masking tape. There are also two wax systems out there, but I feel that these will not satisfy you and are stepping stones to the full wax box.

KISS for glide waxing: The easiest to use glide waxes are the universal glide waxes. One wax works in all conditions. Most companies make a version of these. They generally come in either a paste (in a tin or a tube), or as a liquid. These are very quick and easy to apply. Most of them you just rub on let dry and buff. They do not require any ironing. If you are using them on your fish scales, wax the entire ski tip to tail including the fish scales. This can be done at the trail head or even during that chocolate break while skiing. These waxes provide a surprisingly adequate amount of glide, their only draw back is durability.

The Next step up from KISS: If you have a wax iron or want to start hot waxing, start out with only a few waxes. Someone put on our "list serve" the other day that all you need are two inexpensive glide waxes; Start Green and Rex Blue. This is not

really too far off. Start Green is an excellent wax for cold temperatures of 12 degrees Fahrenheit and colder. (Most of the really hard glide waxes for cold temperatures work well.) At about 12 degrees F and up switch to Rex Blue or to Fast Wax Sport Blue which is just about the same thing. These are wonderful waxes with a wide range that will take you up to the upper twenties. This is where I would add one more wax and that is a soft wax (usually yellow). The soft wax is great for just below freezing and up, but it also has other uses. It acts as a penetrating wax going deeper into your ski than the harder waxes. This will give you better wax adhesion and retention with all of your other waxes. It is also used as a cleaning wax. Apply it and scrape it off while still warm to clean skis. The soft wax is the best way to cover your skis for summer storage. Toko has a 3 wax system to get you started.

This is where I'd like to leave you. Be sure to cover your skis with that soft wax when you put them away for the summer. They will be much happier next fall if you do.



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Year Month Day

This membership will expire on November 1, 2006.

It's easy to tell when your MadNorSki membership expires, once you know how to decipher your membership label on the front of *MadNorSki News*. The renewal date code is between your name and your street address and shows the exact day your membership expires. Please take a moment to look at yours and renew if necessary at www.madnorski.org. Contact membership chairs Reg Bruskewitz, (bruske@surgery.wisc.edu) or Margie Sprecher (margies@tds.net).



MadNorSki's enjoy a grand day out at Blackhawk Ski Area during the club's Ice Age Challenge race.
Photo: Ben Neff

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MadNorSki ambassadors make trip to New England

Ben Neff

Dirk Mason and I had flown to New England in late January see how we stacked up against Eastern competitors and visit some old friends and make new ones. We had come to ski the Craftsbury Marathon, a 50km classical race with a 26-year history. Like Benjamin Franklin traveling to France, we felt like ambassadors visiting the Old Country.

We were proudly flying the colors of our MadNorSki suits, thinking no one will recognize us out of our element. However, Team Rossingnol's Jim Fredricks warmly greeted us as we were looking for a place to set our skis down. As we tested wax Dirk heard the cry, "Go, MadNorSki!" Dirk introduced himself to the racer, Mary Lou Lowrie from New Gloucester, Maine. "How do you know MadNorSki", he asked? "Oh, I have friends in Madison and I'm on your listserve". "I had no idea that the power of the suit reached all the way to Vermont", he exclaimed!

Our friend and former Madisonian Jon Lawrence, his wife Alex, and three of their ski buddies (all living in Portland, Maine) were our hosts. We stayed in a colonial house in Montpelier, Vermont, and like all the communities we went through in Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine (a weekend trip), it felt quaint, tidy and historic. We were surprised to learn that Vermont doesn't allow billboards and requires all residents to own at least one Volvo.

The night before the race we talked

through the wax fumes and compared the differences between Midwestern and Eastern skiing. First we debunked the myth that Midwestern skiing is all flat; they noted that a series of hills in the East is called a mountain range. They informed us that a private trail system with a warming hut is called a Nordic center (or ski center; quite common there). We told them that all of our southern Wisconsin ski trails are on public land and get groomed when we get snow, generally twice a winter. And we both agreed that Holsteins and snowmobiles are part of our common experiences. Most importantly, they noted we had cooler ski suits than they did.

They asked us about waxing, thinking that our cool jackets meant that we knew all about technical things. To pour fuel on the fire, Dirk kept getting calls on his cell phone from friends back home seeking waxing advice for the Noquemenon.

Eastern skiers tend to fall into two categories; competitive youth skiers, or adults that were former national ski team members. This was confirmed during the race; Half of the adult field was on the Dartmouth ski team, the other half was leathery white-haired skiers who whipped the Dartmouth guys. (Had we been over 50, we would have finished much farther down in our age classes). A tour started 30 minutes behind the racers and that contained non-competitive skiers, some in blue jeans and backpacks, who focused more on the food stations and the great views than their finish times.

The race started off on a lake and our wax worked great through the 2km of double poling but immediately failed on the first climbs. We had unwittingly tested our skis on the only stretch of good tracks near the warm-up area and the rest of the course was glazed with ice, soft slush or soft powder. Afterwards, we learned that the winners used waxless skis.

Luckily I was carrying a tube of klister in the pocket of my ski suit (again, the power of the suit!) and stopped around the 8km point to squeeze it on. Dirk caught me and we did his skis. Too bad about our hosts; they had taken some of our waxing advice... and weren't carrying klister, their suits had no pockets! There was nothing to do but go on.

We finished with a 2km climb up to the white-fence common in Craftsbury right where the last of the klister wore off. Afterwards we wore our MadNorSki jackets to the post-race feed and made new friends. Later, when we entered a local ski shop, we again heard the cry, "MadNorSki!, You are a long way from home," this time making new friends with the proprietor, the former Swix wax representative. He was at the Birkie the last six years for Swix and had many questions and local information for us.

Upon saying good-bye to our friends and New England, we realized that with the power of the suit had really worked and that we would bringing back the good-will of both old and new friends to the Midwest.

From Famine to Feast

Meteorological Tidbit of the Month

Scott Bachmeier

With the rude arrival of La Nina, MadNorSki's were forced to suffer through the second warmest January on record (an amazing 14 degrees above normal)—that month was also practically snowless (OK, 3.2 inches fell on the 20th, but you can't groom 3.2 inches).

Fortunately, February had something to say about all that: just after the Valentine's Day chocolates had all melted in our mouths, a two-pronged assault of heavy snow dropped 10 inches or more across much of Dane county.

What was interesting about this storm (to me, anyway) was the multiple rounds of thundersnow; similar to

thunderstorms in the Spring/Summer, these compact but potent bearers of lightning can drop impressive amounts of precipitation over localized areas (while adjacent spots only get light amounts). The resulting surge of waxing irons being plugged in was almost enough to bring down the southern Wisconsin power grid, I'm told...

The Next Generation

Walt Meanwell

It's all about participation and having fun. The Youth ski programs are doing well. Special thanks to coaches Mark Webber, Dale Fanny, Don Fariss, Yuriy Gusev, Greg Jones, and Mark Torresani. The amount of time that it takes to coach well is significant. There are also many volunteers who also contribute time and energy on behalf of the kids.

Over 80 skiers of all ages and abilities are signed up for cross country skiing this winter among the various club programs. Thanks to a generous grant from the Birkie Foundation 35 new MadNorSki uniforms for our youth skiers arrived in January. The kids are looking good and having fun.

There are four primary Youth Ski Programs the club offers. They are:

- KidSki – Kindergarten ages, 31 athletes. Coaches Webber and Webber
- Silvers/Biathlon- Middle School ages, 13 athletes. Coaches Gusev, Torresani
- Madison H.S. Area Juniors – High School ages, 15 athletes. Coaches Jones, Gusev, Fariss
- Lodi H.S. Juniors – High School ages, 21 athletes. Coaches Fanney, Fariss

If you know of an athlete who would like to participant please contact the appropriate coach [see page 2 for contact info]. The club has rental equipment.

It is important for the club and its members to continue the strong tradition of introducing young people to sports and encouraging healthy lifestyles. For all of you out there doing just this; thank you! The kids will



KidSkiers enjoy a snow day at Odana Hills golf course in Madison.

appreciate your efforts for years to come.



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Kathy Ducat

1/29/06 - 2/5/06 Granby Colorado

It began with three folks meeting Jim and I as we arrived in Denver. Once luggage was claimed, it was off to the special room at the airport to check in. It turns out the bus which was sent did not have a lift for the mobility challenged people. First call for help - many strong folks lifted them into the bus.

This was our first meeting with Ron, hearing and visually impaired. Jim can sign so could communicate with Ron. Ron feels the signs with his left hand and signs with his right hand. He is an incredible individual.

Sunday night at dinner, the visually and mobility impaired people introduced themselves and were assigned guides. Sue was my guide. Jim got to guide Mary, an 18 year veteran to SFL who was also a guide trainer. This was also the night we met Margaret. She is a

marathon runner who participated in the Para Olympics, and Leslie, a rep from the Guide Dog Training School I will be attending.

Between our return and dinner, each day offered special-interest sessions. Some topics were: Triathlon Training, Street Smart, Rowing, Physiology and altitude, Barber Shop Quartet, and Waxing. We also had time to soak in the hot tubs. Some even made angels in the snow.

Dinner was always with different people at our tables, so it was a great way to meet more of the crowd. The countries represented were: Japan, Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Portugal, Republic of Namibia, and the USA.

Wednesday we skied 20 km, we now we are rocking! After skiing on Thursday, we were offered the opportunity to work with a guide dog. Emily, a rep from Guide Dogs for the Blind, walked along with each team.

This was really neat for me and now I know going to school for a month will be worth it.

Friday was goofy dress day. Jim got himself a black spotted cow outfit. Quite a hit on the bus and on the trail. Sue, my guide, has long hair. She flipped it over a cone which was on top of her head and fastened the pony tail on top of the cone. I always knew where she was based on the conversation about her hair.

In the afternoon, the Rumparumble took place. This is smaller sleds one sits on, others can hook on to your legs and you can make a train sliding down the hill.

After dinner the Norwegians provided the entertainment. There was a history lesson on this event which originated in Norway (the Ridderrent), roses for all of the women, songs, rounds, Norwegian chocolate distributed, and even a train of folks dancing around

Continued on page 11

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My Experiences at the Badger State Games

By Lisa Shoshany Anderson

My experiences were very exciting, but almost none of them have anything to do with racing. I was supposed to be racing in the 4 km freestyle, but unfortunately, I didn't get to finish the race. I was warming up, and, being the unobservant person that I am, I totally did not notice that my lungs were literally on fire. I must have noticed it somewhat, because I took out my inhaler and took a couple puffs (I have asthma).

During the race (just the double poling part, mind you) I definitely noticed that I could not get any air into my lungs. I preoccupied myself by singing "I write sins not tragedies" by Panic!, and, seeing as how the words in that song are so fast you can't actually make them out, it was a good thing to preoccupy myself with. When I got to a place where all the spectators were, I went up to my dad and said, "I can't breathe." So I was immediately rushed to the medical center. The medical people were very nice, despite the fact that they did not have a nebulizer (the thing you use to treat asthma attacks) and cold air aggravates asthma more

than anything else.

So, we proceeded to go to the ER immediately, and, while on the trip, took several wrong turns.

Roughly five hours later, I got to see the doctor. Well, actually the nurse. Do you ever get that feeling when the nurse is asking you questions like you've just committed the crime of the century?

Then after about 20 more years, the doctor came in. It is at this point when I have to ask you a question: do they TRY to make hospital gowns so ugly that you want to throw up? They are, if you can believe it, even more hideous than the nurse's shirts. Then I got plugged into the nebulizer for 15 minutes.

This gives you the same feeling that I assume you would get after chugging, say, 30 gallons of coffee. One is literally shaking afterwards, and it does not stop until you feel like you could cure world hunger, poverty, and disease. After this little buzz, my Dad and I went down to the place where you pick up prescriptions, to get me some drugs that would get me even more hyper. When we waited, he and I agreed that

we were hungry, and we wanted to eat. So we made a purchase of that ancient thing that provides great nutritional value and fills you so well that you do not even need to eat dinner afterwards; the sacred candy bar.

After a while, we FINALLY got the medicine, and so we proceeded to the car. I swallowed the pill (called methelprednizone—ha! Say that five times fast!) and was left with the taste that I had just upchucked on my own tongue.

Then we went back to the games, and I proceeded to have two hot dogs, one brat and a cup of hot chocolate. (All of this around 11:00 am.) Then my friend Zoe Delain and I went to go for a ski. But we could not find her skis and poles, so she took one of my skis and a pole, and I took the other. And let me tell you, it ROCKED! Seriously, you have not lived until you tried this! Zoe and I went to the finish of one of the big races and screamed ourselves hoarse, cheering for people that we don't even know. It was great fun. And that is what I consider to be an eventful day.

Continued from page 8

the room. We gave T-shirts to our International friends - Badger State shirts, State Park shirts, etc. Diane and Alan of Scotland gave us some short bread and scotch - mmmm yum.

Saturday was race day. Being I am not usually competitive, I was thinking of this as another ski with Sue. Sue had other ideas...

The day was beautiful. Sunny, great tracks. We cruised past many along the route. Turns out, we took third. Not to bad for a couple of older ladies (we competed against all females under age 49).

Saturday night was the banquet. Many "thank you" speeches were presented and well deserved. In addition to corporate sponsors, this event is also sponsored by the Sons of Norway.

I am left with an amazement of how many guides give of their time to share this wonderful week. They pay their own way and share tips on how to enjoy this wonderful sport. It is known as a silent sport, but not at SFL. There is a lot of chatter as 2 stride down the trail. Some conversations I heard were - A gentle up, a curve to the right, step left, "Sue and Kathy passing". Have a good ski. Nice job. Great tandem down that hill. When you saw me, was I standing or lying in the snow - you know I spend about half of the time doing both. Good Day mate.

It is a privilege to be a part of this family. If anyone was alone, we just approached, began talking, and the next thing you know, there was a train of folks leading one another around and enjoying a chat.

Jim had a thought - blind people are

just folks who choose to shut their eyes, they choose to attend SFL, they choose to ski. They do not want to be looked on with pity or sympathy. Everyone is confident in how they approach life. For Jim it is a paradigm shift that recognizes power, motive, and will.

Jim's "thank you" to a corporate sponsor was read aloud to the group on Friday night. I liked the part where he said "I guide, you guide". It is a representation of the entire feeling of sharing which took place during this week. This event gave me a renewed feeling of acceptance for who I am and how we all have unique ways we journey through life.

If you are interested in guiding for the Wisconsin Regional SFL, please see Jim or I for information on how to become involved in this moving experience.

High School State Championships



Corrina Jones, Madison Memorial drives to 17th place overall in the pursuit (above). Birken and Ansel collect the hardware for top-ten finishes in the first day's races. See article page 2.
Photos: Greg Jones



Some heavy
SNOW this season
would be NICE!



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Volunteer Corner

MadNorSki Instructors:

If you would like to be a part of the Club's instructor pool please contact Jimmy Vandenbrook, Director of Instruction for details (jpvanden@mhtc.net).

KidSki

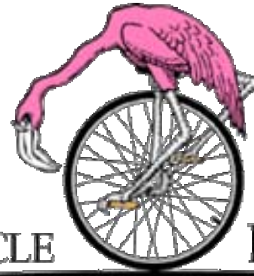
KidSki coordinator Mark Webber welcomes help with instructing. Last year KidSki had 30 participants. Contact him at webber@chorus.net for information.

For rent: SNOW PALACE I & II

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