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MADNORSKI News

News for members of the Madison Nordic Ski Club

December 2006 Vol. 26 No. 3

Keeping the Faith



Dirk Mason and Walt Meanwell

As Nordic skiers we must be flexible and ready to ski at a moment's notice. With the weather being so fickle, we better have our skis packed and ready to react to the conditions. Folks were skiing at ABR in Ironwood, Michigan, in the middle of October and skiing at Tyrol in the middle of November. We all knew that the October skiing was a fluke, but no skiing in the end of November? What is going on? ABR did not open for Thanksgiving weekend for the only the 2nd time in 10 years. The first Tyrol race on "guaranteed" snow did not happen. Upon reviewing the long range forecast, at the time of writing this message, it appears the other Tyrol events should be a good to go. (Was the crystal ball accurate?)

Given how fickle the weather this year and every year, good thing the bus trip is planning on going to ABR if Minocqua gets shut out. Many thanks to Paul for organizing this adventure (see article at right); at least we know that there will be snow for this trip. (Oh, now it is jinxed). However, we must keep the faith in the UP snow guns, all we need is one good clipper ripping across the lake.

With the unpredictable nature of when and where we can enjoy our recreational pursuits there is one thing



Always ready to ski at a moment's notice; MadNorSkis enjoy a day on some real snow at Tyrol Basin, November 18. Photo: Ben Neff

we can count on. And, that is our monthly meetings to share the joy and sorrow associated with having to rely on the weather as a dominating factor in our pursuits. Maybe this is why when we get those days on the trails

with the snow hanging on the trees and the world around us in blanketed in a layer of clean white snow and there is not a sound to be heard, we know that the moment must be cherished. See you at our annual Potluck on the 11th!

Demo Days Trip

Paul Matteoni

The Mad Nor Ski Demo Days trip to Minocqua Winter Park on December 16 is a go! At this point, we have confirmed seating for a small bus, but we only need a few more for a 50 passenger bus. You'll have a great time and we'll get you back in one day!

If you're thinking of going, send a \$50 check payable to: Madison Nordic Ski Club, c/o Paul Matteoni, 1710 Yahara Place, Madison WI 53704. The \$50 will cover your ski pass as well as the bus trip. To ensure that there's still space available, check the club web site: <http://www.madnorski.org/trips-current.shtml>. Paul Matteoni. day: 608-664-5580; eve: 608-242-1549

Skiing Upside Down

Jeff Schacherl

My father and I planned a two-week trip to Australia to see some sights, but more importantly, to ski the 2006 Kangaroo Hoppet in Falls Creek, South Australia, at the end of August. This race is one of the smaller members of the World Loppet international marathon series. The normally 42-kilometer event usually attracts only several hundred skiers because of the obviously remote location.

On August 19, we left Madison for Australia, looking to get on some of that elusive snow. After 35 hours of traveling (including layovers), we arrived in Adelaide, South Australia. It actually took us two days to get there, one to travel, and one lost to time change. Here we did some light hiking and spotted some wildlife including grey kangaroos (standing up to seven feet high), koala bears (about the size of a soccer ball), an echidna (spiny critter), and many wallabies (miniature kangaroos standing about knee high). After two days in this area, we flew back to Melbourne, where we caught the bus to the race area.

The bus ride took five hours and was very scenic as we approached the Victoria Mountains. The bus stopped for us at race headquarters where we picked up our bibs and spoke with the director about snow conditions. She was optimistic about holding the race but said that it would probably have to be moved to the top of the mountain and shortened due to lack of snow. The last hour of the ride was twisting up the largest of the mountains to Falls Creek, the town hosting the race located 6,000 feet above sea level.

The situation looked fairly grim. Throughout the summer, Falls Creek had been fairly mild with temperatures similar to those of a southern Wisconsin winter—40's and rain. It was just like that as our bus pulled up to the depot and let us off—misty and foggy. The entire scene was brown with some small mudslides that indicated warming temperatures as South Australia moved towards spring. We stayed at a small lodge called Snowgums (named after

the regional type of Eucalyptus tree) with tiny, dorm-like rooms, but a large social room for international guests. Everyone we met was very open and friendly. However, only a handful planned to ski the Hoppet, as most were there to alpine ski. I hiked up to check trail conditions but found mostly mud—it wasn't pretty. We went to bed with the sound of rain. The race was in two days.

The next day, however, we awoke to falling snow that accumulated to six inches by mid-morning. Unfortunately, the storm also brought high winds so we were unable to ski much that day. To adjust to the altitude, we hiked around the town a bit. However, we ended up giving up and wound up in the social room talking to some people we had met from Brisbane and a woman from Holland who also hoped to be able to ski the Hoppet. That night, to commemorate the race, the kitchen served up their national icon: kangaroo. Personally, I did not find it very appetizing, but finished it anyway—come on, I'm not that picky.

Thankfully, the race-day conditions were excellent and the storm had passed. We arrived at the top of the mountain via chairlift and from there walked to the start. The sun was out revealing spectacular views of the Victoria Mountains. The temperature was close to 30 degrees, which we were happy about, considering the past week. The snow was just enough to create a challenging two-lap, 28 kilometer course in which the conditions were fast at the 9:00 am start, but considerably slower for the second lap as temperatures rose into the 40's. The race was a mass start, but was seeded accordingly. I started at the back of the first group.

From the start of the race, the course climbed sharply for about a kilometer, and was very hilly from there on. The trail was narrow, thus passing was difficult. The down hills were icy and fast with technical turns. Half-way through the lap, there was a three kilometer downhill which you paid for with a kilometer climb—straight up.

The majority of the skiers walked up this hill which was reminiscent to “hill 5” at Blackhawk, only longer! From other skiers, we learned this course was very difficult, although shorter, compared with the course in years past. We agreed.

After the race, I got to meet some junior skiers from New Zealand and met the men's overall winner, Ben Sim. He finished in 1:13:17, whereas I was happy to finish in 1:45:50, 53rd out of 225. My father was excited to come in 2:50:01, 175th (he took the scenic route). We were happy to be done as temperature climbed that day to near 50 degrees. The conditions were miraculous and the race could not have been held any other day that week.

Two days later, we left the snow in exchange for sun as we arrived in Caines, in north Australia, where we toured the rainforest and sailed out to the Great Barrier Reef. It was a very busy two weeks, but skiing the Hoppet was definitely the highlight!

Free Ski Lessons

Jimmy Vandenbrook

Madison Nordic Ski Club offers free lessons starting at 6 pm at Tyrol Basin on the race nights December 5, and December 12. \$10 fee for Tyrol trail pass. After that, depending on snow conditions, there will be FREE classes at Elver Park, on Tuesday nights also at 6 pm. No experience necessary, just enthusiasm. The annual pass for skiing at Elver (and other Dane County trails) is \$20—Go to Madison Parks for your pass. See <http://www.ci.madison.wi.us/parks/winterAct4.html> for county trail maps, on-line pass purchase, and more.

Please email me at jim.vandenbrook@datcp.state.wi.us and indicate what night(s) you are coming, your name, and whether you will be on Classic or Skate skis since we need to know how many instructors to provide.

Fontana and R.E.I. rent Classic gear and Sepp Sport on Monroe Street rents both Classic and Skate equipment. It's great fun; and you can't beat the price!



December

- 5 Tuesday Nordic Night at Tyrol Basin; open-ski at 6 pm, race at 7 pm
- 7 Board Meeting; 6:45 p.m.
- 11 Club Meeting; 7:15 p.m. Social begins at 6:30 p.m. Lussier Center
- 12 Tuesday Nordic Night at Tyrol Basin; open ski at 6 pm, race at 7 pm

January

- 2 Don Miller Elver Series Race 7 p.m.; Registration 6:30 a.m. Elver Park
- 7 Board Meeting; 6:45 p.m.
- 8 Club Meeting; 7:15 p.m. Social begins at 6:30 p.m. Lussier Center

- 9 Don Miller Elver Series Race 7 p.m.; Registration 6:30 a.m. Elver Park
- 13,14 Capitol Square Sprints, Madison. Visit capitalsquaresprints.org for info
- 16 Don Miller Elver Series Race 7 p.m.; Registration 6:30 a.m. Elver Park
- 23 Don Miller Elver Series Race 7 p.m.; Registration 6:30 a.m. Elver Park
- 30 Don Miller Elver Series Race 7 p.m.; Registration 6:30 a.m. Elver Park

February

- 8 Board Meeting 6:45 p.m.
- 12 Club Meeting; 7:15 p.m. Social begins at 6:30 p.m. Lussier Center
- 18 Ice Age Challenge

Board Meeting	Club Meeting	Meeting Theme	Meeting Agenda
Thursday, Dec. 7	Monday, Dec. 11	Pot Luck	TBD
Thursday, Jan. 4	Monday, Jan. 8	Waxing for racing and recreation	Wax Demo
Thursday, Feb. 8	Monday, Feb. 12	Birkie stories	Juniors fund raiser
Thursday, March 8	Monday, March 12	Racing wrap-up Pot Luck	Election of officers

November Clinic a Success

Yuriy Gusev

The November skate rollerski clinic brought 10 participants. Local skiers of different levels and abilities enjoyed a beautiful morning and three hours of instruction. For 4 out of 10 participants it was first time on rollerskis and by the end of the clinic you would hardly believe anyone had not rollerkied before. The clinic was a fund-raiser for youth and junior programs in the Madison area and \$420 was raised that weekend. The clinic was concluded with a raffle and lunch at Pasquals.

Thank you to clinic instructors Greg Jones, Lorie and Brent Wesolek for

contributing their time and experience!

The next clinic is set for Saturday, December 16, at Blackhawk Ski Club from 9 am to 1 pm. Snow guaranteed!

Both skate classic techniques will be presented on the same day with different instructors. Participants will be working in three groups: beginners, intermediate and advanced. This clinic will also be a fund-raiser for youth and junior programs. Cost is \$60. Limit is 15 participants.

Please e-mail me at yuriy@rsss-usa.com to sign up.



2006-07 Board

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Walter Meanwell: waltmeanwell@tds.net

FunSki

Walter Meanwell: waltmeanwell@tds.net

Back In Action

Madnorski/Blackhawk High School Ski Team

Greg Jones

The Madnorski/Blackhawk high school team has been practicing four nights a week since November 1st. That doesn't mean it's too late to join; we've only just begun! The team has been doing a lot more roller ski workouts than in years past. The word is that the team likes the white stuff better. Don't we all!

The team is led by three coaches this year. Yuri Gusev and myself have returned, and joining them this year is Lori Wesolek. The rest of the team and the coaching staff are very happy to have Lori on board. She brings a lot of expertise and energy to the position and we all benefit by having her with us.

Sign-up will not be complete by the time this goes to press, but it looks like we will have about 20 participants on the team. The balance of gender power



Junior skiers Corrina Jones, Dylan Meacham, Florian Braun, and Eric Delain deal out the brats during their Brat-Fest fund-raiser at REI on Madison's west side on November 18th. Photo: Ben Neff

has switched. We'll probably have twice as many boys on the team as girls. The ranks are about split between returning skiers and new athletes.

We already had one big fund-raiser; the very successful "Madnorski Brat

Continued on page 6

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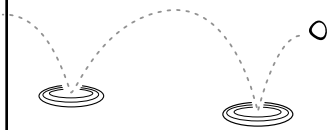
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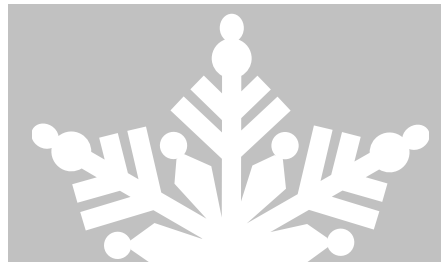
Tom Kaufman

The second annual MadNorSki Ski Swap and Resale on November 11 was a tremendous success. The Swap allowed skiers to sell equipment that they could no longer use and others to find items that were just the ticket. This year's swap doubled the money taken by the sellers and raised nearly \$650 for the Club. Most of the equipment for sale found good homes and nearly everyone looking to buy was able to find something of interest. Cash for the sellers will be available beginning with the December Club meeting. Folks should find me (Tom Kaufman) and I will have your envelope ready for you. If you missed this year's Swap, mark next November (date to be determined) on your calendar. Keep those extra boards ready to go. They will be sure to make someone very happy.

Continued from page 4

Fest". The team pitched in to sell brats in front of REI on Saturday, November 18th. Thank you to all who bought brats from us. The team would like to give a very special thanks to Gordy Bartholomew. Gordy was instrumental in providing the food and gave us his expertise on how to run a successful event. We would also like to thank REI for their generous help in making this event a success.

You will easily recognize us on the ski racing courses this year because we'll be wearing our distinctive Madnorski/Blackhawk jerseys. Last year's grant from the Birkebeiner foundation made the team uniforms possible.



Volunteer Corner

The Capitol Square Sprints are back even bigger and better, bringing great Nordic skiing and racing to downtown Madison. And we're looking for volunteers.

Capitol Square Sprints is looking for people to commit to a at least 12 hours over the weekend in a variety of positions. We will have vests, hats, raffle prizes and a post event party for volunteers: 12 hour shift receive a CSS hat and one raffle ticket for volunteer party; 16 hour combined shifts receive a CSS hat and three tickets; 24 hour combined shifts receive a CSS vest, hat and one ticket; in excess of 24 hours combined shifts receive a CSS hat, vest and three tickets. Everybody has a great time; please join us! We're looking forward to having you! Contact Pete Anderson, Chief of Volunteers with questions (608) 222-1928.

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An early chance to get on snow at Tyrol Basin left most MadNorSkis enjoying the warm temps and socializing. But it was sure fun! Photo: Ben Neff

2007 Ski Trips to Scandinavia

Tom Schirz

Hotels with wax rooms and saunas, mountain villages linked with hundreds of kilometers of x-c ski trails groomed round the clock, the Birkebeinerrennet linking Rena and Lillehammer, outside the back door.., the Sjusjoen solution to scarce snow. (Sjusjoen is a mountain town 14k before the finish of the Birkebeinerrennet in Norway.)

Five years ago I went to Norway for the first time with a group of MadNorskis, and had a wonderful time. So much so, I've gone back twice since, and am going again in February 2007. If you are interested in forming a group to ski in A. Sweden, Vasaloppet, or Halvvasan; B. Norway, Birkebeinerrennet; C. Both, Vasaloppet, contact me at taschirz@tds.net.

Heija!

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