



Madison Nordic Ski Club  
3202 Lake Mendota Dr. Madison, WI  
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Indicia

## Everyone Working Together



*Russian Style Ski School instructor Yuriy Gusev (left) and ski school participants Scott Akatz, Dirk Mason and Pete Anderson demonstrate a little teamwork to celebrate the end of a great season. Now this is what ski training is all about!*

**SPRING 2007**

# MADNORSKI News

News for members of the Madison Nordic Ski Club

Spring 2007 Vol. 26 No. 6

## A Look Back—A Look Ahead



**Dirk Mason and Walt Meanwell**

Your club is in a good place right now. In many ways this was our best season ever! Ample natural snow after the holidays provided weeks of good skiing. In addition, several of the programs that the club has been developing these past years came to fruition. The fact that Madnorski has so many talented and dedicated volunteers makes all this possible. Here is a quick review of the season along with some thoughts for next year.

### A look back

- **Trips.** A full bus went to ABR in December complete with two instructors who provided free lessons. This has proved to be such a popular event that we are looking to expand the bus trips next season.
- **Instruction.** It was a banner years for lessons. Jimmy Vandenbrook and his team provided over 17 different sets of both classic and skate lessons. One lesson in January had 48 participants! This continues to be the single most requested item from club members and the local ski community. Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time and expertise to teach.
- **Website.** The club invested \$4500 and Co-President Dirk and webmaster

Craig Heilman put in a lot of time completely revising the website. It shows. Thank you to them and to the folks who contributed the money. The local conditions page in particular sees a lot of hits. Craig continues to do a great job on the site; please thank him when you see him next!

- **Fit City Kids.** Madison Public Schools, the City, the Blackhawk Ski Club and the Madison Nordic ski clubs all came together to launch a new program teaching young kids to ski. Every Wednesday afternoon after school in January and February two buses full of children arrived at Blackhawk to ski. Many of the kids are from low income households and several individuals and families donated winter clothes to them. It was cold this winter and the kids were able to ski in all temperatures and weather.
- **Racing.** It was an awesome year for racing in town. The Capitol Square Sprints went off despite 11 other races canceling as of mid-January. We also raced at Elver 5 times, Tyrol twice, and had a great Ice Age Challenge. The Southern Wisconsin H.S. Regional came together and we had over 104 folks racing at Elver park with TV coverage from two local stations. Special thanks to Dave Bell, Tommy Galliger, Renee Callaway, Mark Torresani and the Coneheads.
- **Youth Programs.** The coaching just keeps getting better. Kidski, Silvers, Juniors and the Fit City Kids program all benefit from wonderful instruction. Greg Jones, Mark Torresani, Mark Webber, Don Fariss, Dale Fanne, Yuriy Gusev, Lori Wesolek, Ann Pollack,

Duncan Bathe, Mark Plane and many others put in untold hours with the kids.

- **SkinnySki.com.** We continued our support at the \$200.00 level.

### A look ahead

- **Grooming.** We will get this dialed-in this for upcoming year. We have a special committee in place and work has already begun.
- **Membership.** We are simplifying membership by placing everyone on the same renewal date (see Margie's note inside), and we have a new ambassador for new members— Liese Pfeifer.
- **Fit City Kids.** We have been contacted by several schools to be included in the program next year. We are considering writing a couple of grants for funding to expand the program.
- **Sponsorship.** We may expand the scope and number of club sponsors. No decision has been reached on this yet.
- **Trips.** We might run the bus trip in January in addition to December.
- **Coaching.** We are always looking for new talent. If you like working with and training kids please consider helping out.
- **New blood.** Organizations benefit from new ideas and perspectives. Some board members have indicated that this will be their last year so we'll be looking for some new talent.

Thank you for all of your help, friendship, and support this past year. It was really fun!

# Biathlon Gains Momentum in Wisconsin

**Mark Torresani**

During the past several ski seasons there has been a steady increase in the interest in biathlon throughout Wisconsin. Much of this has been the result of what has been taking place at McMiller State Park and at Blackhawk Ski Club. This interest is now spreading to Hayward and Ashland where plans are being developed to build a biathlon range and start programs. Within the next few years there could be a biathlon race series in Wisconsin similar to what now takes place in Minnesota.

During this past ski season there were three biathlon safety clinics at McMiller Park to teach the fundamentals of biathlon and safety related issues. Over 90 participants of all ages and skiing abilities from the

Chicago, Milwaukee and Madison areas attended the clinics that were taught by Mike Zeigle and MadNorSki member Mike Conway. This interest also spilled over to the annual air rifle biathlon at Blackhawk Ski club held on February 18th held in conjunction with the Ice Age Challenge. There were 25 adults and 10 youth that ranged in age from 9 to 62 that participated in the biathlon. For most participants it was their first biathlon and all enjoyed the additional challenges that biathlon brings to a ski race. It was also Tom Gallagher's first experience with timing a biathlon and he quickly learned that what appeared to be mass chaos with racers starting, shooting, skiing penalty laps and finishing all at the same time in the same area had a certain amount of order to it. I am hopeful we can get Tom back again next year now that he

is one of the few experienced biathlon officials and timers in the state of Wisconsin. Thanks for your help Tom! Plans are already being made for next year to increase biathlon opportunities throughout the State and at Blackhawk Ski Club. A clinic with US Biathlon Association for masters and coaches is being planned for May 18, 19 in the Hayward area. At Blackhawk Ski Club, instruction and open biathlon (with air rifles) and a race series are scheduled to take place on Thursday evenings December through February. At McMiller State Park there will be additional biathlon safety clinics, practice sessions and possibly a biathlon race on the 50 meter range.

If you would like to participate in or help with biathlon, contact me for more information at [torresam@chorus.net](mailto:torresam@chorus.net).



*This ski season three biathlon safety clinics took place at McMiller Sports Center in the Kettle Moraine State Forest to teach the fundamentals of biathlon. Over 90 participants of all ages and skiing abilities from the Chicago, Milwaukee and Madison areas attended the clinics that were taught by Mike Zeigle and Mike Conway (above, with scope).*

# Madison High School Skiers Have Fun in the Korteloppet

As you all know by now the Birkebeinner and Korteloppet were not timed events this year. Some of us were very happy to ski it as a fun event (this author included). Some on the other hand were disappointed. Madison Memorial skier Corrina Jones was disappointed. After winning her age class in the classic event by over 13 minutes last year she was ready to go. On race day she pulled out a pair of old fishscales and said "I'm not using my good skis for this". She agreed at the end that it was a fun event. There was plenty of time during the race to converse with all of the friends she has

made from around the state in the ski community. Elisa Becker a senior from Memorial was also all smiles at the end of the race. Her Brother Michael put on skis for the first time this year and had a fun Kortie. Molly Minden of West High got a second year pin after skiing it this year. Gavin Folgert finished his first Kortie this year thanks to the generous donation of Dick Stinle's free entry form.

Congratulations to all of you high school skiers for finishing this event. We look to you as the future of our sport. You make us proud!

## Lodi Juniors finish a successful second season

### Dale Fanney

The Lodi high school and middle school xc skis teams had a great xc ski season and despite the early season lack of snow, participated in nine out of eleven planned races. This year's events included the first time ever Tyrol Sprints, Oconomowoc Invitational with Waukesha West and Oconomowoc, as well as the South Conference High School Race at Elver Park. Other races included the Snekkevik, Iola, Badger State Games and State Championships. Lodi sent 24 skiers to State improving to 10th for girls and 13th for boys. Twelve skiers went on to ski the Korteloppet.

The Lodi team has five graduating seniors, but hope to return twenty high school and eight middle school skiers next year. Goals for 2008 include an early season sprint race with Madison, participation in more Elver nite races, cooperation with the Waukesha West, Oconomowoc and Madison teams to hold a conference meet at Lapham Peak on Wednesday, January 23rd and host another Elver nite high school race on Tuesday, January 15th.

The Lodi teams would like to thank MadNorSki for their willingness to rent ski equipment to beginner skiers and to host a high school race event at Elver. See you next year!

## Grooming Survey Coming Soon

The new MadNorSki Trails Committee will soon be seeking your opinion on trails and grooming in the Madison area. Let us know what you think by filling out the survey. And we'll be giving away THREE \$50 prizes to respondents!

## Halloween Membership Renewal

MadNorSki memberships all expire on October 31. This change greatly simplifies record keeping, and allows everyone to easily be aware of the date renewals are due. Renew prior to the November 12 meeting and receive a free MadNorSki Wax Scraper!



**2006-07 Board**

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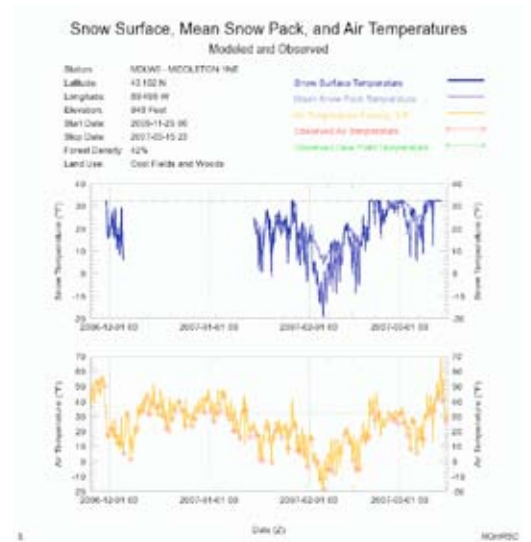
# A Meteorological Perspective of the Season

**Scott Bachmeier**

During the Winter of 2006/2007, jaded MadNorSki's laughed in the face of El Nino and managed to experience a not-so-bad local ski season (there were even 5 consecutive weekly Elver Park Races!). Things got off to a slow start, however, with much of December practically snow-less (save for a scant 2.6 inches falling during the first few days of the month). Yet our faith remained unshaken, and in mid-January the sleeping giant was awakened: the 5-inch snowfall on the 14th was greeted as a Liberator, and the stage was set for an extended period of snow cover and pretty good local skiing. Middleton's underpaid and under-appreciated snowfall observer (OK, me) logged 57 consecutive days

with 4 inches or more of snow on the ground—other than the winter of 2000/2001, the Madison area has not experienced such a persistent “groom-able” snow cover since the early 1990s. My snow/air temperature data <[http://www.ssec.wisc.edu/~scottb/winter\\_0607\\_snow\\_2.jpg](http://www.ssec.wisc.edu/~scottb/winter_0607_snow_2.jpg)> showed only 2 brief flirtations with above-freezing temperatures and klister conditions—otherwise, the snow cover held up remarkably well. February actually ended up being the second-snowiest February on record, with a total of 22.3 inches (this included the big 16.5-inch post-Birkie storm, which also gave us the first time on record with 3 consecutive days having snowfall of 4 inches or more). February

*Continued on page 6*



## Classifieds

For sale: Alpina SK Skate Racing boots; size 40 (run big; fit women's size 9, men's size 7 to 7 1/2; paid \$260, asking \$120; worn once. Also, NNN-3 bindings to use with the boots; \$85 new, asking \$40. Also used once. Contact Mike Capp 238-2480.

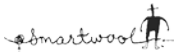


*MadNorSki junior Nick Powell finishing the classic race comes in on one ski at the Wisconsin High School Championships.*

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# Deer-dodging Birkie

## Caroline Senty

I knew it wasn't a typical Birkie morning when the gang staying with us slept 'til 7 am and we were watching ski videos at 8 am and had not had breakfast yet! The shortened race had relieved a lot of the usual pre-race anxieties, and the delayed start and non-timed event washed away any remaining stresses. Once at Telemark, our group (Jim Coors, Ann Pollock, Leslie Taylor, and myself) took our time getting ready and walking to the start area, planning to start well after the first "wave" had gone, but before the second "wave". As it turned out, it was show-and-go by the time we got there, so we were skiing with folks from every wave from 1 to 10 and, like everyone else, enjoying the relaxed and courteous atmosphere.

In addition to the unique open track

aspect of this Birkie, I had one other first-time experience as I was skiing uphill around the 14 km mark. With a sudden rush of brown fur, white tails, and hooves flying, FOUR deer came bounding out of the woods on the right side of the trail at full speed, dodging most skiers and crossing in front of me. One ran down the edge of the trail and crossed behind us, but the first deer had knocked down the skier in front of me! The whole surreal experience was over in just 3 seconds and the dozen or so skiers who witnessed it just let out a big "WOW"! After determining the skier, whose poles had been knocked off his hands, did not have any injuries or broken equipment, we were all still stunned and standing there halfway up the hill with our poles planted as skiers from behind caught up to us wondering why we were all stopped. As one of the other Birchlegger skiers said, "I've

never seen anything like that in over 20 Birkies!"

My other memory from this Birkie weekend will be the 2.5 km that we strided on Sunday from our cabin north of OO to Fish Hatchery. The same four of us used our waxless skis to ski on the 6 inches of fresh ungroomed snow on the Birkie trail. A few previous skiers had skied in a track for the first 6K or so, but Jim took the lead and set the track most of the way until well past Mosquito Brook. Thank you, Jim! The only other ski tracks we saw were from two very strong and determined skaters who had skated through that deep snow from OO and continued past Fish Hatchery, probably all the way to the lake or Main Street! Sunday's 2.5 km took us twice as long as Saturday's, but it was equally special to be on the isolated Birkie trail in deep un-groomed snow.

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Continued from page 4

was a fairly cold month though, giving us our first day with a sub-zero high temperature since 1996 (a show of hands if you skied on that day). It all had to end, however: a mid-March surge of temperatures into the 60s erased all that bountiful snow cover after the 13th. All in all, the winter of 2006/2007 will be probably be remembered as one of the better recent ski seasons around here. It was a season where many discovered local gems like Pleasant View golf course in Middleton (where grooming expertise was appreciated after the big post-Birkie snows). For me, it was also the season when I discovered the simplistic freedom from “waxing mania” that a paste wax product (like Fast Wax Slick Pro) could offer—despite the prolonged snow cover, I glide waxed less this winter than any other!



MadNorSki Ben Neff, Mike Conway, Mark Torresani and Bill Coady celebrate a unique Birke in the finish area with the “Baby Spaten” and Guinness that they and others carried in two backpacks from the start. Photo: Jimmy Vandenbrook

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(former Junior MadNorSki coach)

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## Help Wanted

Job Title: High School Cross Country Ski Coach

Job Duration: Late October to the first week of March

Job Description: Coach for Madison Area High School Nordic Ski Teams. Practice two to four nights a week for an hour and a half. Practice times have been 4:45 to 6:15. This is negotiable. This position will likely job share with another coach, this could reduce coaching times to two nights per week. The scheduled nights would be coordinated with the other coach. Attendance to two or three out of town weekend trips required. Again coordinate with coaching staff which trips you want.

Typical duties: Run a ski specific dryland work outs. Run a roller skiing practices while roller skiing with team. Direct ski practices on snow while skiing with team. Teach waxing techniques. Help apply kick wax for races Have fun with bright energetic athletic teenagers.

Benefits: Satisfaction of promoting this wonderful sport to young people. Making new friends, both young and old. Respect and admiration from the ski community.

Salary: Negotiable, depending on level of commitment and other staffing. This is a paid position. Most out of town expenses are reimbursed.

If you are interested contact Greg Jones at 273-3919. The High School racers need you!

# Twentieth Anniversary Brings Back Memories

## Dave Robb

"It was 20 years ago today, Laura Scherer led me all the way!"

Well as the time flies, it's been 20 years since I, along with my friend Laura started and completed our first American Birkebeiner together. That '87 race had even less snow in the woods than this year's but about an hour before the first wave went off (Laura and I were in the last) it started to snow, and it continued to snow, hard at times, the entire day. So aside from it being my first race of any length, coupled with the attending anxiety, not much of a pre-race sleep, a totally inappropriate breakfast, and the wrong wax on my 215 touring skis, throwing in a snow storm panicked me into 'skating' that race!

In short, my very first Birkie 'experience' was just shy of a personal Bataan Death March! Only the occasional sighting of Laura's red hat bobbing like a carrot on the trail in

front of me kept me from collapsing and signalling for Med-Flight!

I finally caught up with her three Km's from the end when the snow kept covering her glasses forcing her to walk down some of the hills. Together we eventually crossed the finish line and I vowed I'd never do this race again.

Fast forward to my 18th Birkie and 2007 and the memory of that first Birkie with Laura prompted me to relive the 'Adventure' and start in the last wave again. (I could have gone out in the first of the three waves with MadNorSki big dogs and hammered along with them—adult beverages that is—but I had planned my own sentimental journey and a different way to have fun and relax.

To ensure this outcome and eliminate a couple of my '87 problems I chose my waxless striders. Adding director Ned's wonderful last minute decision to make the race only a 'Tour' -- save for the poor stressed-out elite wavers—let me

start my celebratory jaunt early even though I was already on my way.

The night before I had wine with my dinner and stayed up late watching a movie whilst sipping a beer. On Saturday morning I slept in (thanks again Ned) and took my time getting to the starting area and 'our' spot in the last wave. I too wore my brand new MadNorSki 'clown' suit but I topped it off with a red hat!

As for the tour itself, I I had a ball. I have never had this much FUN doing a Birkie! I skied with friends—old and new. Sometimes I hammered (skiing that is—nobody caught me on the hills); other times I stopped and took in the scenery. I chatted with fellow ski patrollers and hugged half the volunteers; tried to thank all the rest. It took me over 10 minutes just to climb 'Bitch Hill'—what with all the distractions along the way.

At the entrance to a later aid

*Continued on page 9*



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# Wisconsin State High School Championships

**Greg Jones**

The Wisconsin State High School Championships were held at Rhinelander's Northwoods Ski Trails on Saturday and Sunday February 10th and 11th. They used an exciting pursuit format over the two day event. The classic race was held Saturday, starting two skiers at a time in 30 second intervals. The results were tabulated and awards were given out to the top ten girls and boys after the spaghetti feed banquet. On Sunday the first place skier from Saturday's race went out first in the skating (and combined) event. The second place skier went next after waiting their time back from the first place skier. The third skier went next after waiting their time back and so on until all the skiers were on the course. The first skier across the finish line has the fastest combined time over the two days thus winning the coveted pursuit. The pursuit format made a very exciting event for both the competitors and the spectators on Sunday. Results were also tabulated for individual results in the skate race. Awards were presented to the top ten skiers in all 3 events.

Madison was officially represented by 2 high schools in the event, Madison Memorial Girls and Madison West

Boys. There were individuals from 5 area high schools on the 2 teams. Our fastest boy from the area was Birken Schimpff of Madison West. Birken had a hard time with asthma on Saturday, but still finished in 17th place. He came out very determined on Sunday and skied to 8th place in the skate race, good enough for a medal. In the pursuit he was 14th. Birken had wanted to finish higher, but we are all very proud of his showing out of 128 other boys. The top girl from the area was Corrina Jones from Madison Memorial. Corrina was pretty even over the weekend. She was 14th in the classic race and 16th in the pursuit. Next year we are hoping that Birken can help Corrina skate faster and that Corrina can help Birken classic faster.

Tom Ostby and Eric Delain are both returning skiers who made a strong showing over the 2 days. Martin Ventura returned for his second year at State. He was disappointed with his classic time on Saturday, but passed several skiers on Sunday making up a lot of ground in the pursuit. Dylan Meacham was our highest placing "rookie" making his first appearance at State. One of the most amazing performances came from Senior Nick Powell. In the classic race he broke a

binding with about 2k left in the race. He finished with what we are calling a "skate board" style using only one ski. He was able to move up 34 places on Sunday using 2 skis the whole way. To round out our boy's team we had Brian Williams, Zack Eskrich, and Gavin Folgert making their first appearances at State.

Elisa Becker and Molly Minden both returned to the State meet this year. Both of them had much better skate races than classic. First year skier Anna Young had a very good weekend putting together 2 solid races and finishing in the top 50 in the pursuit. Freshman Stina Seaberg from Middleton made her first trip to State and is a strong skier with a bright future on this team.

Results are computed for a team score at the end of the weekend. Our Madison Memorial Girl's team was 8th out of 14 schools. The Madison West boy's team was 9th out of 15 teams.

State Championships is the centerpiece of the High School season. It can be exhilarating and inspiring. It can be disappointing and downright heartbreaking. One thing is for sure, friendships are forged this weekend that last for years to come.



*Birken Schimpff shows good form during the freestyle race on Saturday of the Wisconsin High School State Championships in Rhinelander (above left). The 2007 Madison High School team celebrate a successful year.*

Continued from page 7

station I came to a complete stop and announced that, "water, energy drink, and bananas were not going to make it! Where are the doughnut holes?!" After initially telling me there were none but realizing I was not going to drop my request, one lady said they might have some in the truck just off the road 50 yards behind them but I would have to go check myself as they were understandably busy. I hugged her and then broke ranks for the rear. It's amazing how adaptable waxless skis are.

To a way over dressed friend of mine from the Twin Cities I even 'found' the time to demonstrate some skate skiing tips -- now that I actually know how to do it.

My favorite moment, however, occurred when I shot down the icy hill where the 'Beelers' gather to critique our falls. I took a direct line towards them only to make a last second hard right turn banking off the piles of snow

they were still scrambling from. I tell you I chuckled for several K and I'm glad they keep showing up.

My aim was to truly have fun and

celebrate this year and my goal was met. Thank you Ned and thank you Laura!

Oh yes, did anybody see Ivey?



*A group of MadNorSkis finish the Birkie en-mass. Chris Lawn downs a Guinness as his father Tom celebrates a truly memorable Birkie. In all their combined years of avid skiing, this was the first time they skied the race together.*

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