

The Inside Track

A newsletter for members of the Porcupine Ski Runners



President's Message

-Denis Charette

Reflecting on this season, it started with the Race Team in the last week of October preparing for ground training that turned into a snow camp. I remember seeing the kids having so much fun and being excited that they could actually ski.

The Ski Swap saw new participants getting geared and introduced to skiing while at the same time raising funds for PSR programming.

The Ladies Night was once again a success, which partnered up with the Timmins Women's Wellness Program & Timmins District Hospital. The Timmins Family YMCA and the Timmins-Misiway Healthy Kids Community Challenge organized an Amazing Race Week event in order to promote and support the health and well-being of children in our community, which PSR was proud to participate in. The after school groups saw close to 900 participants enjoy their weekly outings.

As PSR is getting ready to close out the season, we are working on a Strategic Plan that will build on a rich 45 year history, and look forward to reaching a 50 year milestones.

Thank you to the many volunteers, corporate sponsors, members that made this year memorable.

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Spring Issue

May 2018

The Inside Track is distributed to the members of Porcupine Ski Runners to keep them informed about club activities. There are two newsletters issued each season.

Thank you to those who contributed reports and information. Suggestions and comments from members are always appreciated.

Editor: Jennifer Bonsall

THE PORCUPINE SKI RUNNERS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
will take place on

Tuesday, June 5, 2018 at 7:00 PM

Porcupine Ski Runners Chalet

All members are invited to attend.

Box 250
Schumacher, ON
P0N 1G0
www.porcupineskirunners.com



Facilities Report

~Alan Heino

In our eighth season with our new chalet, we continued to manage our facilities well in support of many events. Our three most notable events held this year were the Family Day promotion held on February 19th, the Annual Loppet held on February 24th and Timmins Biathlon Club race, held on March 17th, 2018.

The Annual Loppet was very popular this year with a total of 127 participants. Our chalet was particularly busy with all the participants and their family & friends during lunch, especially so during the remittance of the prizes.

For our day-to-day operations, the rental room opened for business on the weekend of December 16th and continued with weekday rental room hours—3:00PM to 7:00PM—and full day rental room hours on the weekends. Equipment rentals have continued to grow in popularity and allowed many people to experience our trails for the first time, whether it's cross-country skiing (classic or skating), or snowshoeing. Hopefully, many of this year's rental equipment users will consider purchasing memberships next year.

During the off-season the Porcupine Ski Runners main lounge is available to rent for a variety of events and gatherings such as business meetings, social gatherings and day camps. In order to obtain more information on our facilities or book a rental, please use the following link: <http://www.porcupineskirunners.com/offseason.php> We have changed service providers for our telephone and internet services in order to make improvements to our WIFI services available in the lounge. In order to reduce sun glare and facilitate presentations by our off season customers, we purchased window blinds for our lounge and the were installed on May 1st.

I would like to take this time to thank the members of our Facilities committee: Gerry McNair, Gerry Perreault, Ray Denis, and Jim Bielek, as well as all of our staff for their contributions in managing the facilities in a first class manner.

Equipment and Trails

~Gerry Perreault

What a great winter we just had; our season started in mid-November and lasted until April 22 when some were still skiing. That is very close to six months.

Thanks go out to Ray Denis' dedication. Even at the start of the season we were able to ski on good trails. Ray had help from Rob White, Denis Brûlé, Gerry Perreault and Germain Lauzier. The Fun Park was mostly maintained by Dave Vodusek and Rhys Lucas. The aim is to have everything done for 8:00AM each and every day, so these fellows are up very early.

A big bonus for our grooming crew was the addition of the Alpina Sherpa. This unit has replaced the old Alpine double track Ski-doo. With the main donation coming from Goldcorp, the unit allowed for that early skiing and late season trail maintenance where we experienced state of the art conditions.

The new Loppet Loop short cut was made especially to avoid some challenging hills and was well used.

The end of season equipment checks have now started. The larger units only registered a little over 110 hours of operation, which is very low.

For the summer season, we are hoping for more wood waste and will concentrate mainly on the inner trails followed by the Jr. Olympic. We are looking to install additional culverts, due to erosion and run off ground water on certain sections of trails.

Enjoy your summer and remember that we will need you come September and October.



Like



Membership

~Neal McNair

This year we had a total 871 members join PSR. This is 7% lower than last year, but still a very impressive membership for a community of our size. I suggested to the Board earlier in the season that it may be time that we focus less on raw membership numbers as a measure of a successful season, and judge our success based on the quality of our trails, facilities and programming, and the value our members get for their money. I think by that measure, we have had an extremely successful season. Thank you to all the volunteers who make it possible to operate such a fantastic club at such a reasonable cost.

This season a membership sub-committee was formed to study the membership fees and categories. The main criteria for the review were: optimizing per-member net revenue, ensuring fairness and consistency in pricing across categories, and simplifying the administration of the membership data. At the time of writing, the committee is in the process of finalizing a recommendation report. Any changes to membership fees must be approved by the membership at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), so I encourage you to attend the meeting to hear about and vote on any proposed changes.

Lockers

Many of our members continue to take advantage of the convenience of renting a locker. This season we had 164 lockers rented out of the 192 that are available. If you had a locker this season, it will be held for you next season until December 31st 2018, meaning you will have to purchase your membership before the new year in order to keep your claim to your locker. If you do not plan to renew your locker, please let us know as soon as possible, and be sure to remove your equipment. We also encourage all our members to remove their equipment for the off-season as we cannot be held liable for any loss or damage that may occur.

Summer Chalet Contacts

During spring, summer and fall the chalet does not have regular hours of operation. For assistance call:

Ray Denis (primary contact)	705-365-7670
Gerry McNair (alternate)	705-264-9093
	cell: 705-266-4213
Neal McNair (alternate)	705-363-7719
Alan Heino (alternate)	705-264-9107
Gerry Perreault (alternate)	705-264-6939
	cell: 705-363-7716

Membership Breakdown 2017-2018 Season (871 members)

Membership category	# of memberships		# of members		% change from 2017	% of total membership
	2018	2017	2018	2017		
Family with kids	80	93	308	364	-15%	35%
Family, two adults	56	62	112	124	-10%	13%
Family, two seniors	18	19	36	38	-5%	4%
Adult	174	186	174	186	-6%	20%
Senior	59	54	59	54	+9%	7%
Student	81	79	81	79	+3%	9%
Family Snowshoe	16	13	48	40	+9%	5%
Adult Snowshoe	32	34	32	34	-6%	4%
Senior Snowshoe	21	21	21	21	0%	2%
Student Snowshoe	0	1	0	1	-100%	0%
Totals	537	560	871	941	-7%	



Personnel Report & Family Day at PSR

~Alan Heino

We are pleased that Brent Cleverdon returned to the PSR in mid-November as our lead rental room attendant. Brent began with working on pre-seasonal duties for the chalet opening, and after the season opening managed the rental room and trained our six hired students: KarLee Lefebvre, Kristen Kornell, Vincent Neron, William Bernier, Emmalynne Bacvar and Madison Bouffard.

Brent trained all of our students supportively in providing ski/snowshoe equipment rental services and performing janitorial duties in the chalet. In addition, the students cooperated well in taking turns working as gatekeepers. As Brent and KarLee alternated weekends beginning in January, both provided team leadership to our staff.

Collectively with the help of volunteers, they all did a great job providing rental room services on weekends and weekdays for individual and family rentals, and for our various group rental activities such as daytime and after-school programs, Jackrabbits, Evening Snowshoe, Ladies Night, the Annual Loppet and the Family Day Promotion.

The Family Day Promotion, which featured "Half Price Rentals/Day Fees" had a great turnout despite the declining weather conditions that day. Thanks very much to our volunteers: Amanda Roy, Diane & Lorne Luhta, John Labine and Mike Kornell and our staff for making it such a successful event. To this effect, interested members wanting to lend helping hand are always appreciated.

In closing, I would like to thank Christine Dorion for assisting me with recruiting all of our students and taking the lead in scheduling their shifts throughout the season.

Evening Events

~Christine Dorion

Tuesday evening snowshoeing was very popular once again this year, with many new members and day users enjoying the great trails at PSR. It was a late start due to weather during December, but once ready, off we went to enjoy the amazing snowshoe trails maintained by Larry & Sylvie Labelle, Ray Denis and, new to the crew, Samuel Miron. Thank you to everyone who participated in the event.

Thursday was a busy night for the ladies in Timmins as we offered both snowshoe and skiing this year. Many ladies enjoyed a night out on both the snowshoe and ski trails. This year many newcomers tried skiing for the first time in years, or ever, all thanks to the Women's Wellness Program who sponsored some spots and Timmins and District Hospital. I would like to thank Brenda Smith for helping me out and all my other ladies who helped during these events.

We should be able to continue with these events next season, most likely on the same nights and times. Please refer to the website and Facebook next season to confirm.



*Photo provided by
Christine Dorion*

School Groups

~Neal McNair

This season saw a continuation of the high usage of our trails and facilities by local schools and youth organizations. The school groups certainly keep our rental room staff busy during the months of January through March!

The benefits to PSR are a significant amount of revenue and, most important, the exposure of potential new members to our trails and facilities. In total we had approximately 785 individual students use our facilities this year, with a third of those coming 8 times as part of our weekly program. The school program contributed almost \$10,000 in revenue through registration, trail and rental fees.

I would like to thank volunteers Gerry McNair, who did all the invoicing and receipts, and Ray Denis who helped regularly with the rental equipment. Our lead rental room attendant Brent Cleverdon also deserves recognition as he went above and beyond to prepare for these groups and manage our student staff during the visits.

Thanks also to all the teachers and parent volunteers who put in the time to organize these programs at their schools and ski or snowshoe with the kids!



2017-18 Financial Summary

~Beverly Beaven, CPA CGA, Treasurer

As you read through the spring letter, you get the sense that there was a lot of activity that transpired throughout the year. We even hired more people this year. We raised \$3,600 in donations this year.

You will note our 3 biggest expenses are payroll, insurance, utilities and property taxes. Closely behind is the cost to keep our trails in great shape.

Our fiscal year is from June 2017 to May 2018. The information provided is up to April 2018 but the few expenses to come in for May will still provide a positive net income this year for our club.



Photo provided by Christine Dorion

Jackrabbits Youth Program

~Christine Dorion

Jackrabbits this year was so much fun. I enjoyed my season teaching the little ones and with the older groups too. With over 70 kids registered and many new participants, it was nice to meet all the new families. New friendships were made, all while having fun during the winter months. I would like to thank all the parents for involving their kids in this great winter program. Jackrabbits would not be possible without the involvement of parents and of course the volunteer coaches and helpers.

A big thank you to Marilyn Mcrae, Jeff Amos, Derrick Cremin, Denis Charette, Angie Bernier, Amanda Roy, Richard Warriner, Tom and Genevieve Sulatycky, Craig and Alana Graham, Diane and Lorne Luhta, Natalie Clement, Kim Dorion and all those parents who helped tag along with each group.

As promised, the kids who participated this year will be guaranteed a spot in the program next year, as long as we have the number of coaches available. Jackrabbit registration for next season will be November 17-18 2018.

We are always looking for Coaches, Assistant Coaches and helpers. This fall we will be offering a coaching course to those interested in helping out. If anyone is willing to help next season, please contact Christine at christine@nconn.com

REVENUE:	Memberships	75,127
	Rental Equipment	19,778
	Day Fees	17,835
	Chalet rentals & Locker rentals	14,565
	Jackrabbit	4,558
	Donations	3,600
	Loppet	1,699
	Other	7,082
TOTAL REVENUES		144,245
EXPENSES	Payroll	25,564
	Insurance	23,992
	Utilities & Property Taxes	22,936
	Equipment & Trails	16,618
	Management Co-ordinator	13,000
	Other	14,142
TOTAL EXPENSES		116,252
Revenues less expenses		27,993



1000 Kilometre Challenge

~Diane & Lorne Luhta

In 1984 while visiting Lappe Nordic Ski Club in Thunder Bay we noticed a 1,000 kilometre board and we decided it would be a good way to motivate the ski team racers and other club members. So we copied their idea and that first winter nine people (mostly racers) skied 1,000 km or more. We even had a plaque engraved with their names and hung it on the wall.

At Lappe the skier with the most km won a bike. At PSR you got your name on a plaque. We eventually started giving out special pins designed by Gerry McNair to indicate membership in this prestigious group.

1000 KM CLUB

Kevin Montgomery	1,706
Ray Denis	1,702
Brenda Smith	1,674
Claude Gagnon	1,560
Nick Kanya-Forstner	1,389
Mary Anne Church	1,309
Mike Kornell	1,283
Claude Castilloux	1,265
Spyke Pintar	1,250
Dave Kapias	1,175
John Sullivan	1,065
Dave Schultz	1,063
Gerry Perreault	1,025
Erik Luhta	1,025
Lorne Luhta	1,018
Isaac Rondeau-McNair	1,008
Dave Mullen	1,004
Vincent Neron	1,002
Jane Schultz	1,000

For readers who are new to skiing you have to understand that in 1984 there was no skate skiing, which is faster and easier because you do not have to worry about grip waxing in icy and changing snow conditions. There was no South Porcupine or Loppet Trail, where the flats made it easier to put in those “clicks”. There were no lights for night skiing, although many “die-hards” skied with headlamps prior to the installation of lights. Equipment has improved considerably which also makes it easier to accumulate kilometage (I made a new word).

Looking at the numbers of skiers who hit the 1,000 km mark is like looking at a weather history for Timmins, in addition to a history of the club membership. From a low of nine in 1984 to high counts of 54 in 1996, 55 in 1998, and 51 in 2006 and 2009, the numbers suggest an active membership and a good long ski season. In 2012, the number of people reaching the golden number suddenly plummeted. Meteorologists called it “The Year That Winter Died” and warm weather put a quick end to the ski season with only 13 skiers hitting 1,000.

We did not always post the actual numbers of km skied but I can tell you that the race team would often ski over 3000 km. The K Count also is indicative of injuries or ill health; you will see a person getting 1,000+ several years in a row and then they miss a year. A broken leg, injured shoulder, and other reasons cause a break in their streak.

As of this year, 2018, 210 individuals have reached the magic 1,000 mark at least once since 1984 and approximately 25% are females. At the age of 65, newly retired Jean Guy Drainville skied the most recorded km in one season, hitting 5,000. He put in an 8 hour shift every skiing day eating his bag lunch at the club. Gerry McNair and Raimo Peltoniemi hold the record for the longest streaks without missing a year at 26 and 27 years respectively. Gerry Perreault, Lorne Luhta, and Raimo Peltoniemi have each skied 1,000 km 27 times. Gerry McNair is close having skied 1,000 km 26 times.

These “stats” are not 100% accurate. Just take a look at the board and you will see why, but it is all in fun. Congratulations to all who earned the special pin this year! You can pick it up at the AGM.



Biathlon Report

~Angele Caporicci

This season, 18 athletes, from 8 to 18 years of age, registered to be part of the Biathlon Bears or Racing Team with the Timmins Biathlon Club. The club has grown over the past 5 years, thanks to the support and assistance of the Porcupine Ski Runners Board of Directors, PSR members and parents. This year, we saw a greater number of athletes, as well as an expansion of our Range Area near the Sprint Trail. This allowed the club to provide the athletes the ability to really improve and hone their marksmanship skills.



Photos provided by Angele Caporicci

The Bears and Racing Team attended several races including Biathlon O' Cup, Cadet Biathlon Area, Regional and National Races, Cross-country OFSAA, and the PSR Loppet. Our biggest and most successful event was our very 1st official club race, held on March 17, 2018. 26 competitors from Northern Ontario regions of Iroquois Falls, Englehart and Timmins participated in this historic event. A great time was had by all.

We finished the official season with a Badge and Pizza Day at the end of March. The racers will continue to train and do off-season practices in order to stay in tip top shape for the coming season. Overall, it was a very successful year for the program.



Registration for the new season will be in the fall. Please keep an eye out for information on the PSR webpage, and Facebook page and group. Timmins Biathlon Club also has its own Facebook page and group.

Rookies vs. Veterans

~David Vodusek

It was a record turnout at this year's Rookies vs Vets race, and the Veterans once again prevailed over a young, but up and coming, Rookies team. Although the gap is getting smaller each year, the veteran skiers were able to defend their long standing title by just under 9 minutes this year. This year's event returned to the 2 km blue loop but featured a grueling climb at the start of the course and comprised of four relay teams with the combined times determining the winner.

The first Rookies vs Vets race was held in 1978. A big thank you to Ray for grooming, Kristen, Sylvain and Chris for timing, Diane for making the fantastic lunch, Andrea for the pictures and the many other volunteers who help keep this tradition going year after year.

Rookies vs Veterans 2018 (Skate 2KM)

Group 1 Rookies		Group 2 Rookies		Group 1 Vets		Group 2 Vets	
Skier	Time	Skier	Time	Skier	Time	Skier	Time
Isaac Rondeau-McNair	05:48.0	Vincent Neron	07:05.0	Erik Luhta	06:28.0	Ray Denis	07:10.0
Julia Vodusek	07:37.0	Xander Frappier	06:13.0	Derrick Cremin	07:36.0	Josef Nycz	07:31.0
Dillon Frappier	08:56.0	Oscar Clarke	08:31.0	Brenda Smith	08:06.0	Lorne Luhta	08:37.0
Brielle Charette	09:33.0	Claire Young	11:31.0	Nick Kanya-Forstner	07:17.0	Roxanne Bedard	10:10.0
Mari Luhta	09:10.0	Marissa Pladzyk	10:01.0	David Vodusek	07:18.0	Dave Kapias	06:42.0
Derek Christie	11:21.3	Will Little	07:35.0	Shawn Roy	08:21.0	Brenda Finnila	08:01.0
Chloe Young	09:25.8	Allysha Grey	09:20.0	Mary-Anne Church	7:50.0	Heather Young	09:27.0
Andraya Johnstone	07:18.0	Cole Rudell	07:50.0	Kevin Montgomery	09:13.0	Sarah Campbell	08:59.0
Nathan Lloyd	09:03.0	Conor Stewart	06:45.0	Josef Nycz	07:36.0	Erik Luhta	07:47.0
TOTAL	1:18:12	TOTAL	1:14:51	TOTAL	1:09:45	TOTAL	1:14:24
2:33:03				2:24:09			
Winners: Veterans							



PSR Junior Development Ski Team

-David Vodusek, Coach

The PSR Junior Development Ski Team proudly represented the Porcupine Ski Runners at the Ontario Cup events held at Mount Ste. Anne and Walden Nordic, Ontario Youth Championships in North Bay, Ontario Winter Games in Huntsville and several local invitational races and loppets in Northern Ontario. The PSR team includes Allysha Gray, Brielle Charette, Chantal Kukulka, Chloe Young, Derek Christie, Julia Vodusek, Kristen Kornell, Marissa Pladzyk, Mari Luhta, Nicole Kukulka, Oscar Clarke and Xander Frappier.



At the World Junior Trials in Mount Ste. Anne, Kristen Kornell, placed 3rd (2001 year of birth) and 7th overall in the 5km classic and 5km freestyle Junior Girls category. Kristen was unfortunately injured early in the season and discontinued skiing for the remainder of her ski season to allow her injury to heal. She continues to serve as a mentor to our young racers in the region and her attitude throughout this injury has remained positive, despite her shortened ski season. Her recovery has progressed well and we expect to see her back in full stride for the 2018-19 season.

We attended the Ontario Cup #2 event held at the Walden Cross-Country Fitness Club where Julia Vodusek brought home gold in both the 2km classic and the 2.5km freestyle events, finishing as the 1st place aggregate winner for the weekend (Peewee Girls). Also in the Peewee Girls category, Brielle Charette achieved a 3rd place finish in the freestyle event and 4th place in the classic event, making her the 3rd place aggregate winner for the weekend. Allysha Gray finished 4th overall with teammates Marissa Pladzyk finishing 5th, Nicole Kukulka (6th) and Chantal Kukulka (7th) overall (Peewee Girls). Sisters Chantal and Nicole were also crowned 1st and 2nd overall in their year of birth respectively (Peewee Girls). In the Peewee Boys category, Oscar Clarke finished 5th in the 2.5km freestyle event and 8th in the 2km classic technique event with teammate Xander Frappier, in the Juvenile Boys category, finishing in 45th place in the 5km freestyle event and 43rd in the 6km classic technique event out of 177 racers.

At the Ontario Youth Championships, hosted by the North Bay Nordic Ski Club, the PSR collected nine medals over the 2-day event. On the first day of competition in the Peewee Girls 3km classic technique, Julia Vodusek captured the bronze medal with 2006 year of birth teammates Allysha Gray (8th), Marissa Pladzyk (14th) and Brielle Charette (15th). In the 2007 year of birth category, Mari Luhta was 4th and Chloe Young 7th. Chantal Kukulka captured the gold medal (2008 year of birth) and Nicole Kukulka won bronze. On Sunday's 3 km Peewee Girls freestyle event, Julia Vodusek was first overall capturing the gold medal, with PSR teammates Brielle Charette in 10th, Allysha Gray in 12th, and Marissa Pladzyk in 17th place (2006 year of birth category). Mari Luhta was 6th and Chloe Young 7th (2007 year of birth) with Nicole Kukulka winning the gold medal and Chantal Kukulka taking the bronze medal (2008 year of birth category).

At the Ontario Winter Games, Xander Frappier in the Juvenile Boys category placed 19th in the 5.2km skate and 22nd in the classic 1km sprint. Xander is new to the PSR race team and also competes competitively in biathlon.

The skiers continuously improved in both fitness and ski technique since beginning training in November. Results from this past season reflect the commitment of both the racers and their parents. We held 2 practices weekly, however, many of these young athletes demonstrated their dedication by training an additional 3-4 times each week on their own. Congratulations to Brielle Charette, Allysha Gray, Julia Vodusek and Xander Frappier for skiing over 600km this season.

The team extends a big thank you to the club, grooming crew, coaches, trainers, waxers and race team parents for their countless hours volunteering and helping to make competitive ski racing/training a fun and rewarding sport at our club. We are excited to welcome several new members for the 2018-19 season including Cole Ruddell, Jade Shalton, Rowan Stinson, Dillon Frappier and Claire Young. Training continues throughout the summer months. Anyone with any questions about the program can email David Vodusek at psrrace@gmail.com.