

The Inside Track

A newsletter for members of the Porcupine Ski Runners



President's Message

-Mike Kornell

Pre-season Greetings!

PSR is starting its 41st season and we are not resting on our laurels. We have a full event calendar with many new activities, as presented by Diane Luhta, our new Events Co-ordinator. These activities depend on your volunteer support and attendance. Please provide your support.

In late February, we are hosting 500+ skiers for the provincial high school cross country ski championships. We have great facilities, and this type of event further showcases PSR and the City of Timmins.

This year, we are increasing the use of email, our website and Facebook to get information to you faster. Please provide your feedback as to its effectiveness.

You, our current members, 1000+ strong, are our best spokespeople. Help us to spread the word to your non-skiing/snowshoeing family and friends, and together boost the PSR ranks even higher.

See you on the trails.

PSR to Host OFSAA Nordic-February 24, 25 & 26, 2014

-Greg Deyne

Porcupine Ski Runners will be hosting the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations (OFSAA) Provincial XC Skiing Championships. The number of participants could be in excess six hundred and for this reason it is absolutely necessary for the safety of our members and the high school athletes to close the parking lot, chalet and all interior trails (both cross country and snowshoe trails) to our members for February 24, 25 and 26, 2014. The Olympic and South Porcupine trails will remain open for skiing to our members during these three days.

This is a major undertaking for our club that is expected to generate significant financial benefit for our community, and your cooperation is greatly appreciated. If you wish to volunteer your time to help make this event a success for our club and community, please e-mail Greg Deyne (deyne@vianet.ca).

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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.

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Membership

~Cheryl Allard

A new ski/snowshoe season is upon us. In early October at a special General Members Meeting, participating members agreed to an approximate rate increase of 20% in fees over last year. Day fees and equipment rental rates did not change. Continuing increases in utilities, fuel, and insurance costs required this request to be made to the membership in order to keep the club viable. PSR is able to hold some of the lowest membership rates in the province thanks to the generosity of many member volunteers. Please consider some of the volunteering options on your membership registration or a few hours of time at a club event.

Again this year, we are happy to offer online registration through Zone4.ca for your convenience. Cash, debit and credit card payments are available through Zone4. Paper copies of registration forms are available at the chalet during operating hours or on the PSR website www.porcupineskirunners.com. Completed registrations may also be dropped off at the chalet during operating hours. Please don't send cash in the mail.

Volunteers worked through the summer building additional lockers. Members wishing to rent a locker may complete the appropriate section on the registration form. An initiation fee (which may be paid in installments) is required with the first year's rental charge. Members may contact Cheryl at 705-288-1030 (skiingtim@live.com) if they have any questions.

Trail Improvements and Site Preparation

- Gerry Perreault

As I write this, it has turned cold and we have been getting snow flurries for the last few days, a bit early but it does get the blood flowing in many, especially when everything is white.

The brush cutting and removal of downfall started the first weekend in September and is now almost complete, thanks to our leader and organizer Ray Denis, and the assistance of many other volunteers.

The following is a list of dedicated helpers: Richard Demers, Robert White, Mike Columbus, Lorne Luhta, Greg Deyne, Cheryl Allard, Dale Columbus, Eric Luhta, Colten Labine, John Labine, Pat Boiley, Robert Coderre, Collin Finnila, Luciano Torresan, Rene Lacasse, Ron Toivanen, Lee-Ann Wearing, Jeff Morrish, Brenda Finnila, Ray Denis, Gerry Perreault, Bob Boisvert, Mike Kornell, Neal McNair, Jim Bielek, Karl Laiho, Kevin Terthof, Larry Labelle, Matt Fennell.

Rob White was a great help in using the club equipment (Brush Hog) during the week, allowing us to gain on the weekend work, and shorten the time usually required to complete this chore.

Rick Demers and Ray Denis were able to modify the new Brush Hog and it is now working very well. These units have saved us many hours of manual work.

Germain Lauzier repaired and installed the interior signs with the help of Rob White.

Lorne Luhta managed to layout, and arrange crews to cut a by-pass around the Blue uphill to avoid the steep S-Curve that was difficult to groom and also hard for the Jackrabbits and many skiers. A backhoe was brought in to level the ground and also perform repairs on the Olympic Trail. The improvements on the Blue Trail will be noticeable very early in the season.

We still have maintenance to do until such time as we have enough snow to ski. We are doing a final clean-up of the facility, a crew has been out on the snowshoe trail and Don Sutton will be making sure all of our trail lights are operational.

Dave Stiles completed the equipment checks and maintenance in the spring on all of our major pieces of equipment. We do have work and servicing to do on the sleds.



Facilities

- Neal McNair

I am entering my second year as a PSR director, and my first full season as Facilities Chair. The only reason I accepted the role of Facilities Chair is that I knew there was an incredible team of people who already do all the work, making 99% of my job merely saying “keep on doing that”. This dedicated group ensures that the building is always kept in good repair, that special events go off without a hitch, and that the club is an enjoyable place to be. A big thank you goes out to Gerry McNair, Kelleigh Manseau, Jim Bielek, George Dasovich, Gerry Perrault, Ray Denis and Don Sutton for all their efforts in keeping the facilities in fantastic shape all year round.

The off-season is fairly quiet at PSR, but there has been some activity:

- The biggest event of the off-season was the Alzheimer Society Mud Factor fundraiser held on the PSR trails on July 20th. By all accounts the event was a tremendous success and we hope that the club will host similar events in the coming years.
- The facilities also get rented out on occasion by companies and individuals for meetings and social gatherings. This requires regular cleaning and upkeep during the summer months, so thanks again to Kelleigh Manseau who coordinated most of the facilities rentals with assistance from Gerry McNair.
- The lockers in the chalet remain a very popular feature for our membership, and this year saw the addition of even more lockers, bringing the total number to 196. Thanks to Gerry McNair, Jim Bielek and George Dasovich who carried out the construction and installation of the new units.
- The usual preparation for the next ski season includes patching, repairing and adjusting. Even a relatively new chalet requires upkeep in order to maintain its best appearance.



www.porcupineskirunners.com



Website

- Neal McNair

The PSR website has been revamped with the goal of making it a more useful tool for our members. While the cosmetic changes are relatively minor, “under the hood” it has been completely re-done. What that means is that going forward you can expect to find a more frequently updated and interactive website. There is already a “News and Updates” section where regular communications to our members will be posted. Other ideas that have been put forward include sections for the wax of the day and trail conditions, as well as allowing members to track their kilometres online. We are open to any ideas from the membership, so have a look at www.porcupineskirunners.com and let us know what you think! A special thank you goes out to Rick Cecconi for his years of service as the PSR webmaster.

You will notice a new Facebook presence for PSR this year. We now have a Facebook “page” at www.facebook.com/porcupineskirunners. This is a little different from the thriving Facebook “group” that is already well established. Unlike the group, the Facebook page is accessible to everyone, even people without Facebook accounts, and we are able to embed the “feed” from this page on our own website. You can think of the PSR Facebook page as the more official channel for PSR news and announcements, while the group will continue to be a more informal place where our members can exchange questions and feedback about the club and related events.



What's Happening at PSR?

- Diane Lubta

I am predicting another normal winter (just like last year) and that means many days with great ski conditions. We are planning some fun and challenging events for club members so get ready to enjoy our wonderful winter.

These are some of the events in the planning stages so far.

- *Jackrabbit Registration* online at Zone4.ca from October 28th to November 10th.
- Midget, Junior and "Older" Racers start on snow training as soon as there is snow on the trails.
- *1000 km Challenge* also starts as soon as there is snow – members may sign up in the hallway.
- *Jackrabbit Coaches Course* – November 16th and 30th
- December 7th and/or 8th – *It's All About You!*: A women on skis day.
- December 14th and/or 15th – *Introduction to Skate Skiing* for members.
- December 18th – *Wednesday Night Toonie Sprint Series* begins.
- December 28th and/or 29th – *Take Your Skating to a Higher Level* for club members who are more advanced skate skiers.
- January 1st, 2014 – *New Year's Resolution Ski and Snowshoe Activities*
- January 12th – First *Time Trial* for members: Test your fitness and technique on longer distances during the day. Time trials will be held every month if there is enough interest.



- February 14th – *Valentine's Day MOONLESS Ski and Pot Luck Supper*
- February 17th – *Family Day Fun*
- February 24th–26th – *OFSAA PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS*
- March 8th – *Short and Sweet NOD Race Day*
- March 9th – *PSR Annual Loppet*: This year we are going to have longer distances, plus a first time event for PSR, a 46 km Challenge.
- March 22nd or 23rd – *Ski and Snowshoe Duathlon*
- March 29th – *Twelve Hour Challenge*

Annual General Meeting and Volunteer Appreciation Party – June date to be announced.

It would be fun to have a geocaching event too if we can find an organizer.

Also Jim, the Chalet Manager, and I are working on creating a **Friends of PSR** group that would be available upon request to welcome and guide new members.

All of these events are in the planning stages and **will require volunteers to make them a success**. Please check the PSR web page and Facebook pages for details, costs, and how you can get involved as a participant or volunteer helper. I am just the coordinator and an old one at that!

If you are organizing a club event check with me please. If you have an idea for an activity you would like to see happen at PSR please give me a call at 705-235-8048 or email me at Lubta@ntl.sympatico.ca



Schools Program

~Neal McNair & Lee-Ann Wearing

For many years Porcupine Ski Runners has been inviting schools to bring groups of students to the club to have them experience outdoor winter fun by cross country skiing. More recently that invitation has extended to snowshoeing.

And the schools have responded. Students within our city have the opportunity to come to PSR to ski and/or snowshoe through the weekly after school program, for special activity days such as winter carnivals, or as part of physical education classes. Staff within our schools do a great job promoting the club's ski and snowshoe programs and now with the availability of cost friendly rentals, numerous kids – who didn't have a chance to come before – now can.

The schools have to pay a modest fee for these activities. This helps offset the club's expense of cleaning and trail maintenance but the objective of the program is more about providing an opportunity for students to be active and to learn to enjoy the winter. Our experience has been that entire families often take up skiing and/or snowshoeing after being introduced to these activities through the schools program.

We send invitations directly to schools but any parent or school staff member can visit our website: www.porcupineskirunners.com to get more information and to access the various forms associated with the schools program.

Jackrabbits

~Mireille Fortier, Carole Larche & Christine Dorion

As the snow starts falling, we think of getting ready for another season of skiing. So for our little ones we need to start planning.

Our Jackrabbits program consists of three categories. We start with the Bunnies for those under the age of 5. Mom or Dad will need to accompany them. Then we have 3 levels of Jackrabbits, and for the older ones, Track Attack!

Registration is from October 28th to November 17th (or earlier if all spots are taken). Simply go to www.zone4.ca, find Porcupine Ski Runners Cross Country registration and follow the instructions (a nominal fee applies for this online registration). The fee for Jackrabbits is \$35 per child. Note that your child must be a paid member of PSR, either as part of a Family membership or as a Student member. If he or she is new to the JR program, please email us with your child's skiing ability (i.e., years skiing).

For those wishing to rent equipment, you need to come by the Chalet for fitting before January 5th. We will advise of the date and time. The fees for rental will be \$27 for 10 sessions.

The sessions will start Sunday, January 5, 2014 at 1:30 and continue until Sunday, March 9, 2014

For more information, or to volunteer, you can reach us at psrjackrabbits@gmail.com.

Remember, cross country skiing is a sport for life; starting children early on will assure a healthy and strong cross-country community!





Les écoles et PSR

~Neal McNair & Lee-Ann Wearing

Depuis plusieurs années Porcupine Ski Runners invite les écoles à se rendre au club avec des groupes d'élèves pour les initier au plaisir hivernal que participer au ski de fond peut apporter. Plus dernièrement la disponibilité de nos sentier de raquette offre un deuxième moyen de bien s'amuser en hiver.

Les écoles ont répondu à notre invitation avec enthousiasme. Les étudiants de notre communauté ont l'occasion de se rendre à PSR pour faire du ski et/ou raquette comme activité parascolaire, comme activité intégrale dans leur curriculum ou même pour une journée spéciale d'activité tel qu'un carnaval d'hiver. Les enseignants encouragent fortement leurs élèves à participer et maintenant que le club offre la location d'équipements à bon marché plus d'élèves peuvent participer.

Les écoles paient un coût modique un montant qui contribue envers le maintien des aménagements. Mais le but primordial du club est d'encourager les jeunes à être physiquement actifs tout en jouissant de la saison d'hiver. Nous sommes arrivés à la conclusion que les jeunes aiment tellement ces activités que souvent toute la famille devient membres du club.

Les invitations sont dirigées directement aux écoles mais pour plus de renseignements adresser vous au site www.porcupineskirunners.com. Tous les détails sur le programme des écoles s'y retrouvent.

Programme des Jackrabbits

~Mireille Fortier, Carole Larche & Christine Dorion

Avec l'arrivée de la neige, on doit préparer la saison de ski pour nos tout-petits...

Le programme des Jackrabbits compte 3 catégories. Pour les plus petits il y a les Bunnies (moins de 5 ans). Ils doivent être accompagné d'un parent. Ensuite il y a 3 niveaux de Jackrabbits, et pour les plus vieux : Track Attack !

L'inscription se fera du le lundi 28 octobre au 17 novembre prochain. Simplement aller à www.zone4.ca, trouver Porcupine Ski Runners Cross Country et suivre les directives (des frais minimes pour cette inscription). Les frais Jackrabbits est de \$35 par enfant. Veuillez noter que votre enfant doit être un membre du PSR – soit famille ou étudiant. Si vous inscrivez votre enfant pour la première fois, SVP m'envoyer un courriel afin de m'indiquer son niveau d'habileté.

Si vous désirez louer de l'équipement, vous aurez à vous rendre au Chalet avant le 5 janvier pour l'ajustement (grandeurs). Nous vous indiquerons la date et l'heure. Les frais de location sont de \$27 pour 10 sessions.

Les sessions commenceront le dimanche 5 janvier 2014 à 13h30 et se termineront le 9 mars 2014.

Pour de plus ample renseignements, ou pour offrir vos services aux Jackrabbits, rendez-vous à psrjackrabbits@gmail.com.

Pensez-y: le ski de fond est un sport pour la vie, y introduire nos enfants tôt assurera une communauté de ski forte et en santé!



PSR Nordic Ski Teams

~John LaBine

Interested in enhancing your Nordic ski technique while training at a higher level? PSR has a number of groups that do exactly that.

PSR Midget Ski Team: Youth from Grades 5-8 will train approximately 3 times a week. The goal of the team is to enhance their fitness level while improving their overall Nordic skiing technique. The team competes at local Loppets, some Ontario Cup (OCup) races and the Ontario Midget Championships. This year, Temiskaming Shores will be hosting the Midget Championships. Contact Mike Kornell at kornell41@gmail.com for more information.

Junior Development Race Team: Youth from Grades 8-12 will train approximately 6 days a week, for most of the year. Training consists of summer training which involves jogging, cycling, hill bounding, Nordic walking, roller skiing and core strengthening. Winter training consists of strength training, along with improving classic and free skate ski technique. The goal of the team is to enhance their fitness level and compete at the provincial and national level with other Nordic skiers across the country. Participation at local Loppets is encouraged. Ocup race information can be found on the Ontario Cross Country Skiing website www.xco.org. For additional information, contact John LaBine at psrrace@gmail.com

High School Teams: This year will be a great opportunity for local high school athletes to take up Nordic skiing. Timmins High and PSR have joined forces to host the 2014 OFSAA NORDIC Championships (Ontario High School Championships) from Monday, February 24 to Wednesday, February 26, 2014. For the most part, the goal of the high school teams has been to have fun while working on improving your fitness level and Nordic ski skills. For more information contact your local high school. If interested in helping as a volunteer, please email John LaBine at psrrace@gmail.com.

Master Skiers: A group of dedicated adults that train through the summer and winter while competing at local and national events.

Ski Swap and Open House

November 30, 2013 (9:30AM to 12 NOON)

December 1, 2013 (9:30AM to 12 NOON)

The Porcupine Ski Runners (PSR) Race Team is busy preparing for the annual PSR Ski Swap and Open House to be held on the weekend of November 30 and December 1, 2013.

The ski swap/open house provides the public a great opportunity to: purchase cross country ski equipment at a reduced cost, sell equipment that you are no longer using, have their skis waxed, and learn about our snowshoe and ski rentals.

20% of every sale at the ski swap goes to support the PSR Race team. There is no better way to start the season that with a newly waxed pair of skis: \$20/pair plus additional cost to remove grip wax.



Saturday, November 30th (9:30AM to 12 NOON): PSR will be accepting sale items and skis for waxing – item donations are always greatly appreciated.

Sunday, December 1st (9:30AM to 12 NOON): PSR ski sale starts at 9:30, door passes will be handed out starting at 9:00AM. Additional waxing service may be available.

Donations?

Email John LaBine at psrrace@gmail.com or Mike Kornell at kornell41@gmail.com for pick up prior to November 30th. Volunteers are needed to help set up, sell, and wax - please email Mike Kornell for more information.

www.porcupineskirunners.com



Why Buy Vauhti Ski Wax

~Lorne Lubta

The number one reason is that you can purchase it at the club and the proceeds go to support PSR. Number two is that it's offered at competitive prices. Number three is that it is manufactured in Finland where most of the company's wax testing is done and the climate and snow conditions are very similar to what we have here.

Vauhti ski wax was first produced in 1935. In the 1960's and 1970's it was popular among racers in Canada. During that time their cold weather grip wax (-10 to -30) was the fastest cold wax on the market. In fact when fibreglass skis came out it was faster in cold weather than any paraffin glider at that time and racers used to use it on the tips and tails of their classic skis (skate skiing was not yet done).

In the 1980's when fluoro waxes were being introduced the owners of Vauhti who were thinking of retirement didn't want to face these challenges and the company went dormant. In 1991, Aki Karvonen, a former Finnish National Cross Country Ski Team member and Olympic and World Champion medalist in the 1980's purchased the company with another partner. The company hired a well known chemist who had worked with the Finnish National Team and their main goal was to develop waxes for top skiers. They succeeded and joined the 2 other world renowned Finnish wax companies Start and Rex in providing great products. Aki Karvonen and his wife still are 50% owners of the company Vauhti Speed Oy. Sales have increased steadily since 1991 and record sales were achieved last ski season. Vauhti waxes are extremely popular in Finland and the Scandinavian countries. Russia is the company's largest export country.

Vauhti has a web site which gives a waxing guide for touring skiers and competitive skiers for various snow conditions. www.vauhti.fi

Learn to wax and skiing will be even more enjoyable.

Ski Instruction ~ New this year!

PSR would like to offer classic & skate lessons to new skiers. Members with time and interest in providing lessons at mutually suitable times, are asked to contact Mike Kornell (kornell41@gmail.com) for more details.

Race Season 2013-2014

~Diane Lubta

December 28-30, 2013

O Cup #1 (Highlands Nordic, Duntroon)

January 31-February 2, 2014

O Cup #2 www.porcupineskirunners.com
(Nakkertok, Ottawa)

February 8, 2014

Silverspoon Skifest (Deep River)

February 9, 2014

Temiskaming Loppet

February 15-17, 2014

O Cup #3 (Lappe, Thunder Bay)

March 1-2, 2014

Midget Championship (Temiskaming Nordic)

March 9, 2014

PSR Loppet

March 16, 2014 (date to be confirmed)

Sophie Marin Loppet (Laurentian)

Racers should try to participate in the Wednesday Night Sprint Series and the time trials on the weekends.