



December- 2004
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Snow Dance

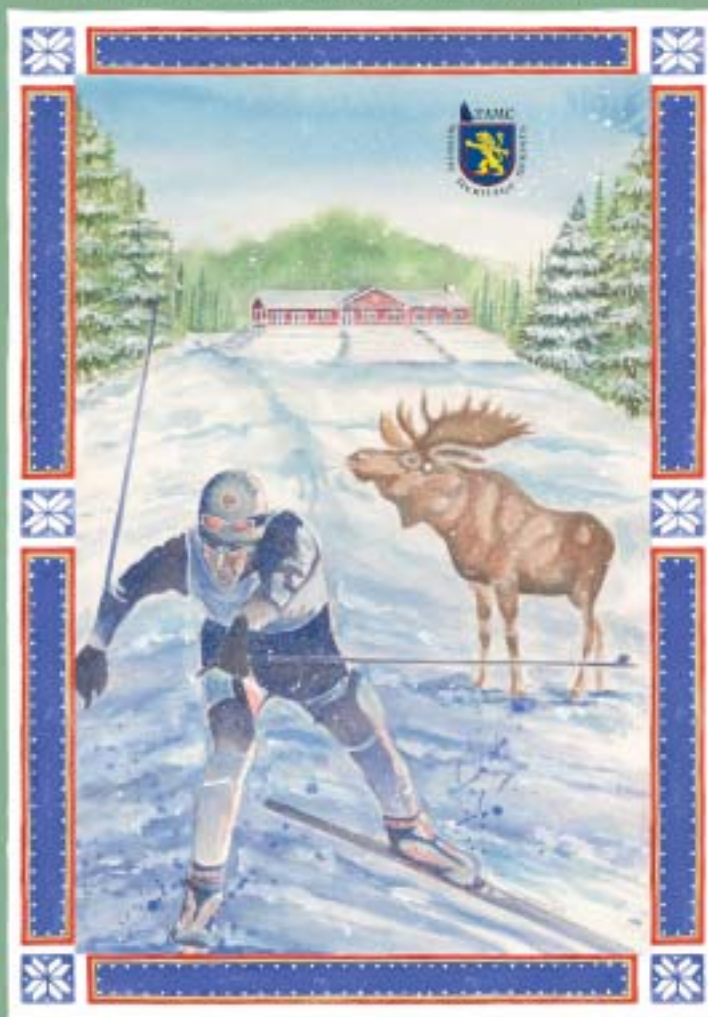
A Quarterly Newsletter
of the Maine Winter
Sports Center



TAMC NORDIC HERITAGE SPRINTS

December 29-30, 2004 in Presque Isle, Maine

This event is made possible by the generous support of The Arrostook Medical Center



A. Baskin & Co. Inc.
and U.S. Ski Team



Home of the 1996 World Junior Biathlon Championships



For more information about the TAMC Nordic Heritage Sprints visit our website at www.mainewsc.org

“OBSTACLES ARE WHAT YOU SEE WHEN YOU TAKE YOUR EYES OFF THE GOAL”-AUTHOR UNKNOWN

by Sherry Dubis
Tenth Mountain Ski Club

Last February I had the privilege of attending the New England Women's Ski Day at Pineland Farms. What I took away from there was beyond a technical application of skiing and waxing knowledge. I learned something about the human spirit and about myself.

As I was waiting for my uphill/downhill classic skiing workshop to begin I spoke with a lady in a sit-ski. She was wearing the latest in Patagonia sports fashion. I had seen her in her wheelchair during registration and I had assumed that she must work for one of the many equipment vendors present or be there in support of a family member. I remember admiring her snazzy hat. It hadn't occurred to me that she was a skier. When I saw her in her sit-ski waiting for the workshop to start I was very excited. "How does that work?" I thought. I wanted to chat with her, but I didn't know what the proper name of her equipment was at the time or even if it was appropriate to broach the subject. Then I thought, I'm here to *learn new stuff about skiing* and this is *new* to me so I'll just jump in. I said, "I love your rig!" I wanted her to know that I thought it was very cool, but I didn't get how it all worked. Then I said something to the effect of "I've seen people who use wheelchairs ski downhill at our local ski area, but I've never seen a cross-country rig before." She was very gracious and replied, "I'm never quite happy with it. I'm continually adjusting it." It was like any two skiers comparing their equipment issues. We chatted with another nearby skier for a minute or so and then I tagged onto the end of the line in the tracks for my workshop.

As I waited for the line to move along she was observing everyone very

closely and making comments like "Good job" and "Looking good" when it suddenly hit me that she was the instructor for the session! I felt like an absolute moron! First of all, I wasn't sure where one group or session began and whether or not I was in the right place at the right time. Secondly, I had made assumptions about ability that were



prejudiced. I kept moving along with the line at a slow pace feeling awkward and out-of-place in more ways than one. She skied alongside us and continued to observe and comment. I'm not much of a classic skier, but even the easy terrain at the Tenth Mountain Ski Center has much more of a grade to it than the trails we were working on. I just needed to move on and ski at a faster pace. The instructor, noticing my misplacement in this group casually called out, "If you feel the *need for speed*, go ahead and do your thing." I took the opportunity to go ahead, and noticed the way I was allowed to be myself at my own level without being singled out. Of course a handicapped individual could be an effective and supportive coach!

Later in the day I watched a group working with the same coach and

an assistant who demonstrated proper kick technique as the instructor talked everyone through it much the way I've seen MWSC coaches do with athlete models. I noticed the strength in her arms, her professional demeanor and her sports-oriented attitude. This lady had *experience* and *class*. I wish I had gotten her name. I thought about my lousy kick and lazy double poling. I wondered about every excuse I ever made not to persevere with something difficult. I realized that if you love something enough you will find a way to do it even in adverse conditions.

This winter the 2005 Paralympic Nordic World Championships will come to the county. We're going to see athletes from all areas of the globe who have turned their adverse situations into new avenues for participation in winter sports. Barriers don't exist because they *love* what they do. As much as last year's world cup biathlon was about welcoming the world to our little corner of it, this year's event is about opening our minds to possibilities beyond our comprehension.

2005
Paralympic Nordic
World Championships
Fort Kent, Maine U.S.A.

**Visit the
2005 Paralympic
Nordic World Championships
at the
10th Mountain Center
Fort Kent, Maine
March 9-21**

SKI CLUBS REMAIN ACTIVE EVEN IN SUMMER



by Sherry Dubis
Tenth Mountain Ski Club

What do ski clubs in northern Maine do in the summer? Well, if you're a member of Tenth Mountain Ski Club in Fort Kent you might get together to support the local community while completing your weekly distance training session. That's what eight of us (two youths and six adults) did on beautiful sunny day in August. The annual Tour de la Vallee, put on by Northern Maine Medical Center, is a Guy Paradis Cancer Fund benefit that supports cancer patients and their families in the St. John Valley. The annual "Tour" offers riders a choice of routes and distances ranging from an easy 25 miles to the 100 mile century ride. Together we raised a thousand dollars for this fund and pedaled about 450 miles. Yes- you read that correctly, four-five-zero! We even used leftover World Cup leg numbers to attach a crest that identified us as the Tenth Mountain Team. Most of the members of our group did the Tour de la Vallee for the fun of it, but my husband and his ski buddy, Rejean, did it just as another way of challenging each other. They continued their good-natured competitive spirits and training

regimens from the ski season into the biking season to prepare for the Tour's "Century" ride. They rode together taking turns to plan challenging routes and distances in order to satisfy their hunger for perpetual motion. The bragging rights of who outperformed who on which day, on hills or flats, climbs or descents closely resembled the winter bantering that some of those on the Aroostook Cup Racing Circuit recall with smiles. It was a great way for them to set and achieve their fitness goals while supporting a great cause. Isn't that what it's all about? We hope to inspire other clubs to get together to support causes all over the state.



MWSC's Adult Coach, Greg Rawlings
and Sarah Dominick

Don't Forget the Sam Ouellett!

Aroostook County was for years the home of true ski marathoning in the United States. Races like the Bangor to Caribou and Riviere-du-Loup to Caribou put the stamina and mental toughness of Maine's skiers on display for the rest of the world to see. Thanks to Maine Ski Hall of Fame inductee Sam Ouellett and his son Ed, Aroostook is still home to a fantastic marathon event. Through the efforts of this ski racing family, the Sam Ouellett Memorial Ski Marathon is run every President's Day weekend.

The Sam Ouellett brings racers back to a simpler, friendlier era of ski racing. Racers can choose from 5 mile, 25 mile and 50 mile (8, 40 and 80km) classic ski contests. The Ashland community comes out in force to cheer and man feed stations, and the post race feed is unparalleled in New England! Come out and test your mettle against some of Maine's best distance skiers this winter.

The Sam Ouellett Memorial Ski Marathon is scheduled for February 12, 2005. Approximate start time 8 a.m. at the Aroostook Ski Touring Center, Ashland, ME. Entry, including feeds and post race meal, \$15. For directions and accommodations information, please visit www.mainewsc.org

Here are the event notes for Tenth Mountain Ski Club:

- * Dec. 4 Rental Ski Pick-up (Tentative)
- * Dec. 18 Youth Ski Program Begins (weather permitting)
- * Feb. 4 Adult Novice Skiers Night & Pot Luck Supper
- * Jan. 9 Citizen Race & Youth Event
- * Mar. 5 Northern ME Youth Ski Festival
- * Mar. 9-21 2005 IPC Nordic World Championships



A New Look for Quoggy Jo



We are very pleased with our new look. The Quoggy Jo Lodge has seen a number of wonderful changes. The building has been painted, a beautiful, large new deck has been put on by the Peter Wilcox Construction Company, eaves repaired and a new light has been installed to light up the parking lot. A small addition is going to be put onto the storage building next month to complete our construction projects. This was all made possible by the Libra Foundations response to our request last fall. We cannot thank them enough!



BEARS, BULLS AND BASE-BUILDING: A WYOMING ADVENTURE



By Will Sweetser
County Team Coach



The MWSC County Team took its first true training camp out of the County this fall during harvest break. Thanks to a generous offer from the Dominick family and the 7D Ranch, a group of 15 athletes from Aroostook County spent two weeks training in the mountains of western Wyoming. From spotting grizzly bears on morning runs to topping out at 11,400 feet on the weekly overdistance workout, this was a trip to make memories.

The team based its training out of the 7D Ranch, 56 miles northwest of Cody, Wyoming in the heart of the rugged Absoroka mountains. The area provided excellent altitude training and fantastic opportunities for getting in some serious vertical. The ranch sits in the Sunlight Basin at an elevation of 6,800 feet with the nearby peaks reaching 12,000 feet.

Our daily schedule was simple: wake up, jog, eat breakfast, study, workout, eat lunch, nap, ranch work, workout,

eat supper, play games, team meeting, go to sleep. By squeezing in three workouts a day, the athletes were able to complete more base training than they'd ever done before. Ranch work (building fences, haying, digging, splitting wood) served as a daily

The trick, it turned out, was to find areas flat enough to get in a recovery workout!

Highlights of the trip included playing cowboy under the tutelage of Larry the corral boss, chasing TinTin the bull

around on horse back, skating up to 10,000 feet on the Beartooth Highway, and spooking a 500+lb. grizzly bear on a recovery run. Most athletes trained between 28 and 32 hours in the two week period. If this training camp translates into great race



dose of strength training. Mountain passes provided the rollerskiing options, which meant that most of the training was uphill.

results this season look for another trip next year!

CONTINENTAL TEAM ATHLETES INSPIRING COUNTY KIDS

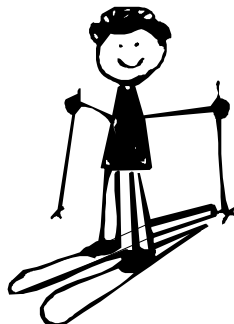
By Walt Shepard

The recent success of the Biathlon World Cup in Fort Kent last March brought Aroostook County into the homes of millions of TV fans around the world. Since its inception, the Maine Winter Sports Center has personally touched the lives of thousands of people from Maine and beyond. As a member of its Continental Biathlon Team, however, it's easy to forget the broad nature of MWSC's operations. It often feels as though their *sole* mission is to provide my teammates and me with the best resources available to help us make the 2006 Olympic Team. In return for this unparalleled support, each of us are given the privilege of performing a community service project of our own to say thank you to both MWSC and the people of Aroostook County. I am the president of a non-profit organization called Healthy Aim, and this is my community service project.

Healthy Aim was incorporated in September of 2003 with a small, but diverse board of directors including America's best cross-country skier ever, Bill Koch. The organization was conceived with the idea that as a young and well-known local athlete, I could have a positive impact on the health and wellness habits of young kids. This idea came at a time when Maine kids needed it most. With childhood obesity rates on the rise and sedentary lifestyles becoming the social norm, I felt this was an important issue for me to tackle.

I developed a plan with the help of Healthy Aim's Board of Directors to visit a list of middle school students from Limestone to South Portland twice during the school year, and a website was created to serve those same students twenty-four hours a day

(www.healthyaim.com). I hoped to inspire these students to become accountable to themselves for realizing their own potential and then making the right decisions in order to meet that potential. I set out with a goal of meeting 1,000 Maine students last year and finished having visited over 2,600 kids. With endorsements from teachers, students, and the Maine Governor's Council on Physical Fitness, Sports, Health and Wellness, it was clear that the program had touched on something. In the spring of 2004 I started to develop new plans for the organization that would foster its growth in the future.



Following the success of Healthy Aim in its inaugural year, I recognized the potential the program could have in Aroostook County, supporting the programming of the Maine Winter Sports Center. Not only do they offer a full spectrum of programs for all ages, as well as venues to accommodate them, they also have a team of elite athletes just like me who could help me bring the Healthy Aim's mission into the schools of Aroostook.

To help execute this plan for 2004-2005, I welcomed the help of Haley Johnson, a fellow Continental Team Biathlete, as the

Vice President of Healthy Aim. Having done many school visits herself in promoting the Fort Kent World Cup last year, Haley has brought exciting new ideas to our organization. Together we planned school visits for both our teammates and ourselves, with the intention of reaching out to communities and schools across most of Aroostook County. Our team of role models met with over 1,000 students this fall, and we are committed to visiting those same students again in the spring.

Health and wellness awareness is an issue that deserves a great deal of attention in Maine and the rest of the country as well. We at Healthy Aim look forward to continuing our work with both the Maine Winter Sports Center and the people of Aroostook County in order to make the state of Maine a healthy place to live.

For more information you can visit us online at www.HealthyAim.com, or email Walt at waltsheward@yahoo.com.

WEBSITES TO CHECK OUT!

www.usbiathlon.com

www.usoc.org

www.ussa.org

www.mainewsc.org

www.nensa.net

COLD WEATHER RACING CAUTION

By Will Sweetser

Recent reports from Norway are stoking a fiery debate about extreme cold. According to several top World Cup racers, including former sprint World Cup winner Jens Arne Svartedal, racing in last season's Norwegian National sprint may have caused them serious lung damage. The temperatures at Norwegian Nationals hovered right around the FIS cut-off point of -18C (0F). Norwegian National Ski Team doctors have confirmed that Svartedal and two other racers suffered pulmonary damage during the event, likely as a result of the low air temperature.

Similar temperatures at last season's U.S. Nationals, U.S. Masters' Nationals and the Noquemenon Marathon, in particular have many American racers wondering if extreme effort in subzero temperatures may have caused similar damage. Of even more concern, according to Norwegian exercise physiologists, is the impact that cold air can have on children's developing lungs. According to researchers from Norway, Finland and Canada, heavy exertion at temperatures below -12C (10F) can cause both long term decreases in lung capacity and an increased risk of asthma, even in well-trained, adult racers. Interestingly, the incidence of asthma and exercise induced asthma among national level racers in Norway is roughly six times higher than that of the overall population. Anecdotal evidence suggests a similar pattern here in the U.S.

So, what do we do? Especially here in Aroostook County, where daily high temperatures are often far below the -12C (10F) guideline. A Canadian club

coach worked to develop a scuba-like breathing apparatus to heat in-coming air after his daughter struggled with cold-weather induced asthma. Finnish coaches cite temperatures in the -40C (-40F) range as part of the inspiration to construct the DNA/Vuokatti Ski Tunnel—by skiing indoors, on manmade snow, they can keep the temperature set at -7C (20F).

But short of multi-million dollar construction projects and uncomfortable breathing devices, there are some practical solutions. At temperatures between the FIS -18C cutoff and the physiologist suggested -12C, a facemask or neck warmer pulled over the nose and mouth can work quite effectively to warm incoming air a few degrees. A painter's dust mask is another option in this range. Additional research suggests that a short, easy warm up followed by a slower than normal start can ease the strain of racing in extreme cold.

However, none of these options is a total fix, and none work particularly well below -18C (0F).

The only total solution is to avoid racing in extreme cold. While the Norwegian Ski Federation argues that holding a minimum number of races per season is critical to developing the next generation of cross-country and biathlon racers, I would argue against such a position. If we create a generation of skiers who suffer from exercise induced asthma, require an inhaler to function normally and struggle continually in cold weather, we have done far more harm than we would have by postponing or canceling races. Skiers are developed over years of training and racing. Patience in development is a fair price to pay for lungs that work!



THE CLOSING OF THE SUMMER SEASON

While we have moved on from the summer season for over a month now and I have been back to the books for nearly six weeks, I can't quite put the summer behind me quite yet. While this may seem strange from someone who's prime season starts as soon as the snow flies, this past summer isn't just ready to be put behind yet.

I spent my full season in Fort Kent Maine this past summer and while very few people from Northern Minnesota, where I am from, actually probably no one beside other biathletes, have any clue where that is I can't help but smile when I say, it is actually North of here, (and of course a little further East!). I have to admit I got a few strange looks after stating that a few times. I, of course, then needed to explain my reasoning to spending my summer months, often considered the best time of year in Duluth, MN, in a tiny little town NORTH of here, (Duluth).

Just the same I ventured my way out East, final destination Fort Kent, ME, (you can imagine the looks on the customs officers when I told them that). Upon my arrival I was very excited to be greeted by a many friendly faces. That is one of the greatest aspects about biathlon in this country; you get to know everyone, all of whom are equally if not more so friendly and great people than all the "Minnesota Friendly" people I know from home. After unloading everything and settling into my new home for the summer, in the beautiful 10th Mountain Division Lodge, my summer began, training! And while in my decision to move out to Fort Kent was to do just that, I knew it would be more than that and, of course, I was right. What I mean by this is that I didn't travel half way across the country just to train, but I came to become involved in a great program and community. While I realize that

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summer continued from page 7

biathlon is an individual sport, I truly believe that if you want to make the most out of what you are doing and working so hard for, nothing will do so more than having teammates to share both the good and the bad times with. This is what makes all of us stronger and helps us become the best each of us can be. This is exactly what I feel this group does. The support and to me really makes those tough times not so bad and really worth it.

I feel very luck to have been able to spend my summer training with an incredible group of athletes, all of which I have the greatest respect and admiration for, and work with amazingly supportive and skilled coaches along with being a part of a program that is so supportive and encouraging in more ways than one. And while a lot of time and hard work was put forth by everyone I think we all managed to have a little summer fun; b-ball games, barbeques, lobster night, (it was my first time having lobster), and our wonderful Elk tacos!! (Thanks L & T!!). While I packed up my car in late days of August, I said my goodbyes, until Thanksgiving camp, when we all meet again, I must say I wasn't as excited to go home as I thought I once would be. My only disappointment, I never saw a moose! Don't ask me how.

By Beth-Ann Ellingson

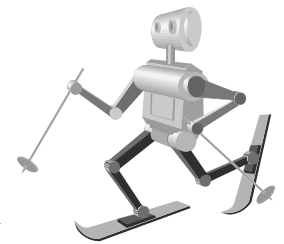


Maine Winter Sports Center
154 Development Drive, Suite E
Limestone, Maine 04750
Phone 207-328-0991
Fax 207-328-0992
website: mainewsc.org

FROM LOLLIPOPS TO BIG AIR

By John Farra
Youth Team Coach

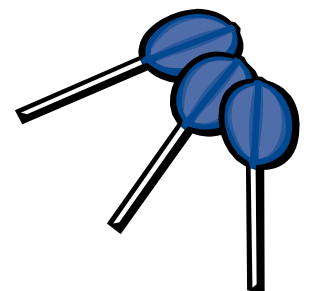
My life-long love affair with skiing began with the sheer energy and enthusiasm of a bunch of kids coming together on skis. When I was growing up in upstate NY, I participated in a whole series of youth XC ski races, which were called “lollipop races” – because the prize for each finisher was, you guessed it: a lollipop. And each year I traveled to the Bill Koch Youth Ski Festival to see and participate with the fastest young skiers in the East. I looked forward to these events with excitement and loved them! It was and still is a great format. MWSC has been taking a small group of committed skiers from Aroostook County down to the NENSA Bill Koch Ski Festival for a few years now and the kids love it. After spending many highway hours with a van load of young people snoozing in the back seats, I have decided that all the kids of Northern Maine should enjoy the exhilarating experience of a Youth Ski Festival right here in our backyard.



A chance to race in a Youth Ski Festival, right here in our own backyard will bring many of our young ski racers out, but I'm aiming to get some of the others too: who are the others, you ask? The kids I've met all around the County who love the FEEL of skiing and will spend the whole day climbing up hills just so that they can take another crack at the downhill or the 2 foot high bump someone made for them. But many of these same kids really don't have any interest in putting on a bib and “racing” other kids their age around a course. While a ski race is a good challenge and a great test for skiers who value how fast they can go on skis, we want to challenge kids with other ways they can demonstrate their SKILL on skis.

So, with a whole new way to celebrate youth skiing, I am proud to announce the Aroostook Youth Ski Festival, which will take place on March 5th, 2005. This festival is designed to highlight and celebrate the many different ways kids can MOVE on XC skis. The 10th Mtn Ski Club in Fort Kent will be hosting this inaugural event and will offer one traditional distance event (3km - 500meters), along with other events such as: Super Short Sprints, a Big Air Competition, Speed Skiing, Power Ski Drag, Vertical Jumps, XC Jump Turn competition, XC Slalom course, Double Poling for Distance event, Tandem skiing relays, Laser Rifle demos, and the Sharks and Minnows World Championship match!!

To help get geared up for the festival fun, this season's thirteen Aroostook Cup Youth XC Skiing events throughout the County will provide young skiers from Maine and Canada chances to test out the Festival events and to become familiar with them by the time the Festival rolls around on March 5th. We welcome all young skiers to participate and expect that this unique ski festival will become a big hit for years to come! Of course we will have plenty of Lollipops on hand!



A website is in the works which will help describe the events and provide more information at www.youthskifest.org



Maine Winter Sports Center

154 Development Drive, Suite E

Limestone, Maine 04750

MARK YOUR CALENDERS FOR COMING EVENTS!!!

Dec 29/30 TAMC Nordic Heritage Sprints – Presque Isle

Jan 1st New Years Race – 5km FR – Northern Skiers Club – Caribou
Jan 9th 10th Mtn Ski Club Citizen Race – 5km & 40km FR – Fort Kent
Jan 16th Split Cedar Classic – 14km CL – Van Buren
Jan 22nd Nordic Heritage Ski Club Skiathlon 3.5km CL & 3.5 FR – Presque Isle
Jan 23rd New Sweden Ski Dag - 8km CL - New Sweden
Jan 30th Big Rock Nordic Dash 5km FR – Mars Hill

Feb 3-6 U.S. World Jr. Biathlon Trials at Nordic Heritage Center - Presque Isle

Feb 12th Sam Ouellett Ski Marathon – 8km Junior, 40km, 80km CL – Ashland
Feb 13th Karen Sprague Memorial Relay – 6 X 1km CL Sprint Relays – Stockholm
Feb 18th Caribou Rotary Centennial Ski-A-Thon-24hr Event - Caribou
Feb 20th C-Me-Ski Race – 21km CL – Limestone
Feb 27th Henry Anderson Ski Dag – 8km CL – Caribou

Mar 5th Aroostook Youth Ski Festival - 10th Mtn Ski Club -Fort Kent

Mar 6th Madawaska Valley Ski Sprints – 5km FR – Madawaska

Mar 9-21 2005 Paralympic Nordic World Championships at 10th Mt. Center - Fort Kent

Mar 12th Himie Towle Memorial Race – Sprints & 7.5km FR – Presque Isle
Mar 19-20 3rd Annual Arooski Ski All County Trails in 24 Hours
Mar 24th Season End Celebration – 10th Mtn Ski Club Host -Fort Kent