



December - 2005
Volume 5, Issue 1

Snow Dance

A Quarterly Newsletter
of the Maine Winter
Sports Center



29,30 DECEMBER 2005
2,3 JANUARY 2006



TD Banknorth

start time—10:00am

FESTIVAL AT FORT KENT

A CELEBRATION OF BIATHLON IN AMERICA



TD Banknorth

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IF YOU BUILD IT...

By Melanie Stewart
Event Manager 2006 BJWC

To quote a line from the movie Field of Dreams, "If you build it, they will come." Well, guess what! We built it and now they are coming! From January 26 – February 3, 2006, many of the best athletes from all over the world will be in Presque Isle, Maine competing for the title of Junior World Champion.

It has been just over a year since the Organizing Committee for the TD Banknorth 2006 Biathlon Junior World Championships was formed and what a year it has been! As you read this, volunteers are working feverishly on the final preparations for the arrival of 450+ athletes, coaches, wax techs, support crews and families from over 30 different nations. Since this is the first time that the Junior World Championships has been held in the United States, we are finding that many countries want to come several days earlier than we had expected. This is great news for the County!

"How in the world are you going to feed, house, transport and entertain this many people for almost 2 weeks?" What a great question and one that I get quite often! This is when I answer, "It's all about YOU!" It is all about you, the people who have stepped up and committed their time and energy into making it happen. It's all about you, the businesses, who have worked with us to make this a viable financial option for the teams so they can make the trip. It's all about you, the employer, who has allowed your employees the time and resources to help put it all together. It is all about you, the community, who has rallied to the challenge once again and made the magic happen. Without your time, money, energy, ideas, goods or services, these World Championships could not happen!



"How can I help or get involved?" Another great question! It's not too late to register as a volunteer for the event. Don't think that just because this is a skiing event that the only places to work are outside. Every committee from transportation to VIP hosting to the competition office is still looking for help. If your time is very limited, we can find a position that fits what you can give. We need you. This is the perfect time to commit and officially sign up to volunteer. Go to the event website www.nordicheritagebiathlon.org and click on the volunteer tab to register!

Of course the TD Banknorth 2006 Biathlon Junior World Championships are about skiing and the athletes; however, we can't pass up the opportunity to have a little fun while we are at it. The city of Presque Isle is revving up festivities throughout town leading up to and during the event. Keep your eyes open for the event poster and spectator guides that will have more information.

Now, let me ask you, can you feel the magic? The energy that is floating amongst us? Something amazing is about to happen! Don't miss your chance to view and cheer on several of our very own local athletes who will be representing the USA. Come be a part of this first class experience! Just imagine, Aroostook County is going to host the World! This is our time to shine!

Don't miss these great events!

TD Banknorth Festival
Fort Kent, Maine
Dec 29th & 30th
and
Jan 2nd & 3rd



TD Banknorth
Biathlon Jr/Youth
World Championships
Jan 28 to Feb 3, 2006
Nordic Heritage Center
Presque Isle, Maine

NATIONAL COACHES EDUCATION CONFERENCE

By Bob Sprague

What happens when you put a MWSC coach, a high school coach, and a middle school coach in a van and send them off to the National Coaches Education Conference in Lake Placid? I mean, besides the forgettable jokes to a captive audience during the long ride over and back. Well, to mention a few things—technical and organizational seminars, opportunities to share thoughts with experienced coaches from across the country, interactions with national team members and their coaches, insights into new products from ski reps, lots of ideas about improving your coaching, and even a tour of a lesser known part of Montreal—in general, good vibes, good ideas, good times!

Montreal you say? Well, yes. After 350+ miles of cruising up the St. Lawrence valley on the Trans Canada, we needed a break and some supper. So Greg directed us around the streets of the town until we found a place to park and located a lovely minus-one-star hotel. We hit “one of the best crepes places” for some food, and then spent some time wandering around the village, where there was an international film festival going on. It was entertaining just to watch the people milling around and to listen to the street musicians.

The next morning we trekked the rest of the way to Lake Placid and checked into the Olympic Training Center. To be able to stay there and see the training and testing facilities was awesome. But the conference itself was the highlight of the weekend.

On Friday afternoon John Underwood, the director of the American Athletic Institute, gave a presentation on intensity training. His technical details were beyond me, but his powerfully delivered message included

the following. In general, the best training years are ages 14 – 21. There are two particular windows of opportunity to train young people. The first is ages 9 – 11 for girls and 10 – 12 for boys. The second is 14 – 18 for girls and 15 – 19 for boys. The development must include power training and speed training. Power training includes appropriate weight training, and speed training includes many, many, many, MANY sprints. You can check out his website at americanathleticinstitute.org or contact him at jundie@frontiernet.net or 518-494-2447.



Torin Koos

Friday evening was a little less intense as vendors described their products (Swix, Rossignol, Holmenkol, Atomic, Fischer, Saloman, Madshus to name a few) and gave out freebies. Each conference participant went home with 4 more water bottles, ski ties, stickers, and samples of sports nutrition products. (GOOD DEAL!) And later, after seeing more displays and sampling some local brews, lucky raffle-ticket holders won Country assistant coach, described his goals of improving the athletes’ lactate tolerance, strength, techniques, and mental focus. The athletes do 1 – 4 interval workouts per week. About 3 times per week they lift heavy weights

(on squats and pull-downs especially) and do plyometrics. The training is also designed to avoid imbalance in muscle groups and to prevent injury. Torin Koos, one of the Olympic Team athletes, spoke about his training regimen, and recommended that some short sprint bursts be part of most workouts. Trond Nystad, the US Ski Team Cross Country head coach, discussed how to teach some specific classical and sprint techniques. Other points he made were that fitness and strength are paramount in developing an athlete, that skiing without poles is important, and that you should teach them and then let them ski.

Chris Grover, the director of the Sun Valley Development Team, and Zach Caldwell, former NENSA director well known in New England especially, described a pyramid of season strength training. Early in the year stress general strength as the base, then progress to increasing core strength as the center, and then work on ski specific strength as the apex. Kris Freeman, another Olympic Team athlete, shared some thoughts on what kinds of training are necessary, and he emphasized the importance of young athletes setting high goals early in their careers. (Wasn’t it Kris who, when he was 18, made a 10

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Zack Simons & Kris Freeman



NHC MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS

By Dawn & Chad McPherson

Even though summer has passed, the hard work of the Nordic Heritage Ski Club, mountain bikers, volunteers, and MWSC staff means we can all enjoy and continue to use the NHC mountain bike trails well into fall. Countless hours have been devoted to designing, building, and maintaining this new trail system. Spring and Summer 2005 brought with it a strong focus on mountain biking beginning in May with the work of International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) trail designer Rich Edwards (he is part of IMBA's Trail Solution team). During his visit, Rich spent time riding with locals on the existing trails while discussing layout and pointing out trail building "do's" and "don'ts". The enthusiasm generated by Rich's visit carried through the summer months. Below is a summary of the Nordic Heritage Center's mountain biking activities and events from Summer 2005.

July saw much trail building activity following Rich's visit. Groups of local riders spend weeknights and weekends building trails laid out by IMBA.

August 5 – 7 brought the IMBA Trail Care Crew to the NHC. Jill Van Winkle and Chris Bernhardt made their way to the NHC to host a 3 day trail building school, design a terrain park, and lead field and trail work. Thirteen people showed up to learn about and build new trail and, of course, ride.

August 7 was the official open house and dedication ceremony for the new mountain bike trail system. Group rides of all levels were available as well as bike and gear demos, food, and a chance to show Jill and Chris (the IMBA Trail Care Crew) some Maine hospitality. This event emphasized the multi-use potential of this trail system as guided group walks and tours were also available. These trails are now signed and will be available for snowshoe use when the snow arrives.

August 12 – 14 brought former world champion mountain biker and WOMBATS founder Jacquie Phelan to the NHC. On Saturday, August 13, 2005, Jacquie worked with fourteen ladies on various mountain biking skills such as track stands, reading a trail, and bike set-up. On Sunday, August 14, 2005 she led a co-ed group of fourteen people on rides and through some skill work. This event has helped create a new group of users for this trail system.

September 17 NHC mountain bike race boasted 30-plus participants. This year saw the addition of a downhill course and the cross-country race incorporated man-made jumps.

On September 29 a showing of *Har*di*hood* was held from 6 – 7:30 p.m. This is a film by Nicole Hahn that features Jacquie Phelan along with other professional women mountain bikers.

Although trail maintenance is an on-going effort, there have been two formal trail clean-up days in which the mountain bike trails have been raked and debris from recent wind and rainstorms removed. Special thanks go out to Greg Rawlings, all MWSC staff and the NHC Ski Club for their support this summer. Thanks to all those who volunteered time and equipment to make this summer the success it was.

Ride on...

continued from page 3

– year plan to reach an Olympic podium?)

Late Saturday afternoon we had an outdoor break next to the Olympic ski jumps. Trond had the X-C skiers warm up and then do several roller ski classical relay races. Watching those guys bomb down a big hill in tucks and soon after really book it back up to tag their teammates was inspiring.

Saturday night and Sunday morning sessions concentrated on discussions about improving the quality of coaching across the country, from Bill Koch League level to the Olympic dream. Working in small groups we shared ideas on competency levels for coaches, education materials and sources for improving ski coaching, and on the future growth of cross country skiing in America.

Too soon the conference ended, and we headed back to Maine. As we drove toward Montreal again, we listed about 25 good points we gained from this weekend. Hopefully we can share these and other thoughts at coaches' training sessions here in the County. Did we learn something? Yes! Is it useful? Absolutely! Would we do it again? Hell, yes! (Well, maybe without the crepes?)



Jens Johansson, Rob Kieffer, John Farra, Eli Brown, Greg Rawlings

FROM GEOCACHING TO ROLLER SKIING WITH 8 TO 10 YEAR OLDS

By Tom Keefe, Continental Team Member



Tom Keefe leads the Train

Throughout the summer and now into the fall, I've had the privilege of working with the Fort Fairfield School Department's 21st Century Program. During the summer months, I created a geocaching and mountain biking unit that lead kids on this adventure packed program at the Nordic Heritage Center. For those of you who don't know what geocaching is, I recommend checking it out at www.geocaching.com. Basically, it's an advanced GPS treasure hunt which, at the Nordic Heritage Center, can be done on foot or on mountain bike.

Now, with winter fast approaching and the temperatures dropping, I've switched my focus from geocaching to roller skiing. My hope is to spark the kid's interest in cross country skiing and to instill in them what it means to live a healthy lifestyle. Mondays and Wednesdays are dedicated to roller skiing around the paved loop at the Nordic Heritage Center. The kids look forward to this every week, so much that they ask about roller skiing on Tuesdays and Thursdays when the MWSC athletes are training.

I meet with the kids Monday through Thursdays from 2:30 to 5:30pm at the Nordic Heritage Center. The first hour of each session is dedicated to school work and tutoring when needed. Recently, the kids have been working very diligently on their homework in hopes of getting everything done with five or ten minutes to spare. The kids are aware that when their homework is done, and done correctly, that they have earned the privilege to roller ski. Currently, I have eight kids that have been on roller skis at least six times.

The next step for this program is learning about biathlon. Teaming with MWSC, we are teaching the kids about the fundamentals of shooting on the range, coordination skills, body awareness, and balance techniques. The kids will be ready to switch from roller skiing to actual snow skiing sometime in November or December.

My dream is to see these kids at the MWSC practices when they are old enough to attend. And, who knows what the future holds for these kids. Maybe I will see some of these kids applying for college ten years from now. And maybe, by sparking their interest at such an early age, they will grow as individuals and as skiers through the MWSC programs. And maybe, one of these kids has the potential to be the next Junior National Champion. And maybe, some of them will be offered a full ride to several colleges or universities across the country. And to think that all of this is possible by just picking up a pair of roller skis, boots, and poles and giving it a whirl!

Enjoy winter Lance, Tyler, Travis, Melissa, Nathan, Shane, Collin, and Brandon!



Shoot & Scoot!



Bjorn Bakken teaching shooting.

**MWSC WELCOMES HEALTHY HOMETOWN SKI
PROGRAM COORDINATOR -MIKE YEO**

Mike Yeo grew up in Maine, exploring nature with an outdoor family of nine. Skiing began at age five, and was supplemented by hiking, soccer, and alpine climbing in the White Mtns. At seventeen, after hitch-hiking from Belgium to North Africa, the urge to explore was ingrained deeply. Following high school skiing at Greely High School, in Cumberland, ME., Mike attended the Univ. of California, Santa Barbara. Life in Colorado, Utah, and Maine again included avid ski racing, particularly the loppett/marathon format.



Mike Yeo smiling as usual.

The chance to improve the team in his home town, led to six years of coaching high school skiing and soccer. With his brother, the two created a high caliber nordic legacy in Cumberland, and then both coached at Bowdoin College in Brunswick.

With a degree in Geography and Anthropology, Mike recently began work on a Masters Degree in Oslo, Norway (Viking/Medieval archaeology). While there, he also studied the Scandinavian ski club system, and achieved the life-long dream of skiing both the Vasaloppett and the Birkebeiner ski marathons. Work is ongoing with a project on American nordic ski history.

After visiting over seventy countries on foot, ski and bicycle, home is now in Gorham Maine. Sharing the wax bench is his wife of 12 years, Amy, five year old, Eva, and a new baby, Aksel.



10TH MOUNTAIN TROPHY

The 10th Mountain Trophies in cross country and biathlon are awarded at the highest level junior events held in Aroostook County each winter. This winter's 10th Mountain Trophy will be awarded to the top male and female Maine juniors in the 7.5 km Classic race at the Eastern High School Championships held at the Nordic Heritage Center on March 19, 2006.

The biathlon 10th Mountain Trophy winners will be the highest placing Maine athletes in the youth & junior sprint competition at the 2006 TD Banknorth Biathlon Jr. World Championships held at the Nordic Heritage Center on January 28, 2006.



**4TH ANNUAL AROOSTOOK
CUP CROSS COUNTRY SKI
RACE SERIES**

*By Greg Rawlings
Adult & Community Programs*

The smell of snow is in the air, and the excitement of another year of racing is as well. Again this year we will travel to different trails hosted by clubs, recreation departments, and volunteers. This year we will have five classic races and five freestyle races of various lengths and formats. As in any year, it's all about participation: one point for racing, one point for top three overall female and male, and one point for winning age groups both male and female.

This year we will also host two citizen biathlon races open to everyone. One will be in Fort Kent at the 10th Mtn. Lodge, and one will be in Presque Isle at the Nordic Heritage Center. There will be a separate points system that will hopefully morph into a year round Aroostook Biathlon Cup series.

Check out the back page for the schedule.



**WEBSITES TO
CHECK OUT!**

www.usbiathlon.com

www.mainewsc.org

www.nensa.net

www.usoc.org

www.ussa.org

KONTIOLATHI KULTURA

By Hilary McNamee

This past August, Hilary had the opportunity to travel to Kontiolathi, Finland for a training exchange. Kontiolathi played host to the 2005 Biathlon World Junior/Youth Championships. They have an active ski club and pioneered the use of refrigerated ski tracks to extend their ski season. Next summer, MWSC will host a young athlete from Kontiolathi here in Aroostook County.

The most important thing I learned in Finland was how to relax—a lesson many have tried to teach me here at home with little luck. In Finland, however, this proved an easy lesson to learn: sauna, 22 hours of daylight, lakes and wild blueberries everywhere. It was like a month-long spa retreat. No homework, no alarm clocks, the time to train whenever I felt inclined to do so, these were just some of the freedoms I enjoyed.

This relaxed atmosphere did wonders for my training. If I was tired, I slept in until noon. Then, I would get up, eat, and take another nap. There would still be a twelve hour window to do my training. Training was fun and flexible, and I did a lot of it. 15+ hour training weeks were the norm. Despite the volume of training, I lived by the principle “take it easy”. That also seems to be the motto by which the Finns themselves live.

The Finns are fantastic people. During the summer, stress doesn’t exist. They spend lots of time at their cottages, host sauna parties, go fishing, pick berries and drink beer. They are very sociable and witty once you get to know them, but they also value being alone. They are intelligent, sincere, and self-motivated people. Finland reminds me of the County in many ways!

EARLY SEASON SCHEDULE FOR MWSC SENIOR ATHLETES



As usual at this time, our senior athletes are all over the continent chasing the snow and traveling to races. This is the moment of truth, the moment when we will find out if all the hours of training have paid off. It is important to come to the first US SuperTour races well prepared and ready to race fast, because those races determine who is picked for the early World Cup races. Skiers who were not on the national team at the end of last season need to pull off some great early season races in order to be considered for this year’s team. This year the first races are extra important since the world cup circuit makes a stop in North America in December for the first time in many years. The US Ski team will send a large troop to the Canadian World Cups, which makes for a great opportunity for our skiers to represent the US for the first time ever on the

World Cup Circuit. The early SuperTour races together with World Cup results in December and US Nationals in January also determine who will be chosen to represent the US at the Olympics (Feb 10-26) later in the season.

Early season schedule

Oct 28-Nov 14: Training Camp, Alaska

Nov 5-6: Sprint Skate+ 5k/5k and 7.5k/7.5k, Fairbanks, AK

Nov 12-13: Sprint Classic+ 5k and 10k Skate, Anchorage, AK

Nov 14- Nov 28: Training Camp, West Yellowstone, MT

Nov 25-26: Sprint Skate+ 10k and 10k Classic, West Yellowstone

Nov 28- Dec 27: Depending on SuperTour results athletes go to Canadian World Cups (Dec 10-11, Vernon, Dec 15-18, Canmore), or do other races to prepare for US Nationals

Dec 27- Jan 14 US Nationals, Soldier Hollow UT



SKI VACATION OR SKI EDUCATION? WHAT CAN A SKIING TRIP OFFER OUR YOUTH?

*By Will Sweetser
MWSC Jr. Coach*

The Maine Winter Sports Center mission is three part: reestablish skiing as a lifestyle in rural Maine, leverage that lifestyle to provide opportunity for the youth of rural Maine, and further leverage that lifestyle to promote economic development in rural Maine. My work revolves primarily around that second part of the mission—providing opportunity for the youth of rural Maine. In my work around the County, I frequently face the same question: why should my son or daughter join the program? My answers have run the gamut, but I really need only to revisit the mission: MWSC provides opportunities.

Let me offer a few examples. Last month, MWSC sent a team of juniors from Aroostook County to West Yellowstone, Montana. Meagan Toussaint, of Madawaska; Hilary McNamee, of Fort Fairfield; Newt Rogers, of Fort Kent; Russell Currier, of Stockholm; and Joey Bard, of Woodland, all trained and raced with the top junior, collegiate and senior athletes in the U.S. Earlier in November, Justine Cyr, of Fort Kent and Nils Koons, of Sidney, traveled to Russia as Maine's representatives on a New England Nordic Ski Association exchange. In Russia, Justine and Nils trained at a Russian national training camp with some of the best juniors in that country. In August, Hilary McNamee traveled to Kontiolathi, Finland as part of a MWSC exchange. While in Finland, she trained at some of the Finns' top training centers (see article this issue). Next summer, a young woman from the ski club in Kontiolathi will join MWSC for training in the County.

So, are these opportunities basically ski vacations, or should we expect something more? I would argue that travel, in and of itself, is an opportunity for education. Every time you exchange the familiar for the foreign you gain valuable insight into just how you perceive the world and its' inhabitants.

Traveling to West Yellowstone gives our young skiers a chance to see some of the most striking geological and ecological areas in the U.S. They had the opportunity to learn about the development of our national park system, the formation of the Rocky Mountain landscape, and the ecology of Yellowstone National Park. At the same time, they were provided with a view of just how skiing can influence the development of a rural town during the cold, isolating winter months. Finally, these same junior skiers had the time to see how the top collegiate and senior skiers train, race and organize their studies and other responsibilities.

Justine and Nils had an even more dramatic opportunity in Russia. They did not speak the language, were not familiar with the geography and had no prior experience with Russian training system. In this environment, they were forced to observe and become students of their surroundings. During the exchange, they also had the chance to form the beginnings of friendships with some of the young Russian racers. This spring, Aroostook County will benefit from these friendships when the Russian team sends a group of junior racers to participate in the NENSA Eastern Scholastic Championships and the U.S. Spring Series, both held in Presque Isle.



Justine Cyr, Kate Whitcomb, Grace Boutot and Sarah Dominick training at Sugarloaf/USA.

Are these trips ski vacations? Sure, to a certain extent. When Hilary McNamee traveled to Finland, when Jeff Alden spent the year in Solleftea, Sweden, did they have fun? I hope so! When Swiss skier Dimitri Luthi joined our program during his Rotary Club exchange to Caribou, did he learn something from training and racing with MWSC? I am absolutely positive that he did. Exchanges and opportunities for travel provide our young athletes with valuable insight into who they are and who they can choose to be. Traveling to another ski center, a different area of the country or another country altogether gives racers a view not only of what the new area offers, but also just how much we have here at home.



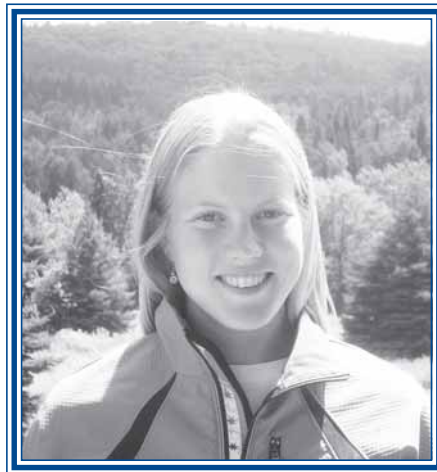
ATHLETE APPRECIATION

By Sherry Dubis

Biathletes and cross-country skiers in this country are pretty much on their own to finance their efforts to achieve greatness, and to live day to day. Corporate sponsors provide most of the gear and clothing needed, and modest stipends come from various organizations. However, with a travel schedule that is often dependent upon the weather, or the results of the next competition, it can be tough to find housing and ways to earn much needed cash. MWSC athletes have become very creative in their efforts of self-support without sacrificing training schedules. Besides that, many of them give numerous hours of community service. I've had the privilege of watching these amazing people train in all kinds of conditions, and they still take time out to talk to people who are just checking out the venue. They are constant ambassadors for sport and community. As I thought about how the athletes conduct themselves in the face of their challenges, one person kept coming to mind; Haley Johnson.

Haley struck me as being particularly ambitious in the area of community service when I stopped to think about the variety of tasks that have fallen to her since she has become a regular in Fort Kent. Last year Haley helped to pull together supporting documentation for a much needed grant that will allow The Tenth Mountain Ski Center to secure trails and access for future generations. Her outreach to the community has included public speaking on this behalf, and participation in the Healthy Aim Program. She's quick to give a welcoming smile to visitors, and has on several occasions listened to my training comments, and consoled without ridicule as I unbelievably botched-up a great pair of skis. During strenuous pre-season training she worked on a team to publish

a school curriculum guide for last year's IPC Nordic Skiing World Championship events. Like many of the athletes she is always willing to lend a hand even at last minute's notice. She's helped with buildings and grounds work, and set-up for special events. Last March during the IPC events Haley was a course forerunner, and more significantly, a guide for a blind skier that spoke no English. Now there's dedication to sport! I'm hoping to involve her in another service project involving archiving some Tenth Mountain Division artifacts, but now that I see all this on paper, maybe I've asked enough of her for the time being! I just want Haley, and *all of the athletes*, to know that they are appreciated. Some of them are known best in one community or another, but each one makes a huge impact on the lives of the people of Maine.



Haley spends some of her off-training hours designing nature inspired greeting cards. She has worked up a portfolio of designs and is cooperating with a local graphic designer and printer to mass produce her pieces. The back of each card promotes her cause and draws attention to the self-supporting efforts of U.S. biathletes.

How Can You Support Athletes?

Donate time and or money to your local ski club. Help maintain the types of trails and facilities that world class athletes are seeking. Keep them coming back.

Offer flexible opportunities for athletes to do work in your home, business or community.

Do you need a room painted, a lawn mowed, a scrapbook made for a gift, or do you simply need a house or baby sitter for a short time? Many of these athletes are skilled workers and artists that have the talents to do customized projects or grant writing for your organization.

Offer an encouraging smile, words of support, and a welcoming community.

Offer to take an athlete or group out to dinner.

Share your surplus garden vegetables. Healthy eating is a must for training.

Learn athletes' names and follow their progress online at www.skicounty.org

Start a local fan club. Adopt an athlete and rally community members to support your favorite athlete with letters and posters in your community.

Show up at competitions and wave the American Flag.

House an athlete.

Offer to transport an athlete to/from the airport. Offer to store a vehicle or gear temporarily. Overweight luggage can be costly. Athletes need to travel light, but they also need to keep their year-round items someplace accessible.

THE TORCH PASSES IN FORT KENT

By Carl Theriault
Board Member MWSC

After coaching the Fort Kent High School Ski Team for the past twenty five years, Ben Paradis has decided to retire from high school ski coaching. The legacy of Ben in the Maine High School Coaches Association will be difficult to live up to. During his career he had five State Championship teams in Class A and Class C, numerous State Champion skiers in every discipline, and every year at least half of the top ten State Skimeisters hailed from Fort Kent.

In the Aroostook County ski league, Fort Kent has always been one of the teams to beat. In one stretch during the eighties and nineties, the boy's team held the championship for twelve straight years!

But for those who knew him well and skied on the team, or coached alongside him as I did, it is not final results that set Ben apart from others. Ben was passionate about skiing and about helping as many kids as possible enjoy the sport. No one on the team was ever treated special or as an elite athlete. The seniors worked with the newer skiers, and Ben always made time to help struggling skiers gain confidence. He inspired his athletes to work hard and always help each other. "The chain is only as strong as the weakest link," he is famous for saying. He was always on the course to the very end, encouraging the very last skier into the finish.

No matter how bad the skiing conditions were, Ben always found a way to make skiing fun with a smile on his face. I don't think he has ever had a bad day skiing, and his enthusiasm was infectious. I have never seen him blame

anyone for anything. If the wax was wrong, or the conditions changing, he would always accept the blame even if the temperature changed 20 degrees during the race.

Not only did Ben spend countless hours coaching the kids, but he was also a tireless supporter of a team that had to compete for funding with other higher profile sports. Before the popularity of skiing grew here in the county with the help of MWSC, skiing was the black sheep program that received funding cuts every year. But Ben was undeterred. He



Ben Paradis (rear) encouraging a Fort Kent Warrior

knew that skiing was a great lifelong sport that kept mischievous teenagers out of trouble during the long winter months of northern Maine. When funds were cut, Ben would buy skis himself to make sure every kid who wanted to could ski. He spent countless hours maintaining and grooming trails with his own snowmobile. Soon the parents saw how hard he was working to keep skiing alive, and they formed the famous

"Green Bean Ski Club" to raise funds needed to keep the team together.

Ben also made sure the kids had opportunities to travel to other areas to ski. Every year, he took kids to other races in Canada and New England. He always gave the kids the opportunity to ski in the New England J1 and J2 championships by loading them up in his family van, at his cost, to make sure they wouldn't miss the experience.

Ben is a true Aroostook Gem. All of us who enjoy skiing in northern Maine today owe a huge debt of gratitude to Ben for keeping skiing alive here through many struggling years. In today's world of high paid professional sports, where competition is rewarded more than compassion, we need more people like Ben Paradis, demonstrating that getting along and helping others has more value than winning. I really believe that the world would be a better place if more of us followed Ben's example.

It has been my privilege to know and work with someone as humble, caring, hard working, and dedicated to the next generation as Ben Paradis. Ben has been a great example for hundreds of kids who were lucky enough to ski in Fort Kent, Maine. Good luck in your retirement Ben, and I hope you never miss a day skiing.



MAINE WINTER SPORTS CENTER MOVES TO CARIBOU, MAINE

The Maine Winter Sports Center (MWSC) has purchased an office building at 552 Main Street in Caribou, Maine to serve as its new headquarters. The move from its Loring Development Centre office in Limestone will be completed by December 1, 2005.

“The Loring Development Authority was very important to our success in the early years,” said Max Saenger, Chief Operating Officer for the MWSC. “They introduced us to the community and provided us with a very professional work environment. We could not have asked for a more supportive environment to get our company started.”

“Our programs now support more than 50 communities statewide, including two of the top nordic skiing facilities in the world and two of the top community alpine ski areas in the Eastern United States,” said John Farra, Program Coordinator for MWSC. “Over the past six years our staff has grown, as has the need for storage space, including more than 1,000 ski packages for our Healthy Home Town Ski Program. We loved our time at Loring but we were looking for a specific set of features to meet our unique needs and the building in Caribou was perfect.”

The Caribou office will serve as the workplace of the MWSC coaching and administrative staff. There will be meeting space and a large storage area for the Healthy Hometown Ski Rental Program. It is also centrally located between the 10th Mountain Center in Fort Kent and Big Rock in Mars Hill.

There will be an open house for the community on Friday December 9th. The public is invited to view the new space and get to know the MWSC staff.

Please note our new address is 552 Main St., Caribou, Maine 04736, Telephone 492-1444, Fax 492-1442

MEET THE MAINE WINTER SPORTS CENTER TEAM



*John Farra, Will Sweetser, Sheri Sirois, Brenda Cote, Greg Rawlings,
Jens Johansson, Max Saenger, Gary Colliander, Andy Shepard*



Maine Winter Sports Center

552 Main St.

Caribou, Maine 04736

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STANDARD
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Permit No. 90
Presque Isle, ME
04769

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MARK YOUR CALENDERS FOR COMING EVENTS!!!
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Dec 3	MWSC Coaches Education Summit – Caribou
Dec 29-Jan 3	TD Banknorth Festival – Fort Kent
Jan 1	New Years Race & Youth Event – Caribou
Jan 8	Fort Kent Citizens Race & Youth Event – Fort Kent
Jan 13	NHSC Full Moon Party & Citizen Biathlon – Presque Isle
Jan 22	New Sweden Ski Dag – 8km C1 – New Sweden
Jan 28-Feb 3	TD Banknorth Biathlon Junior World Championships – NHC- Presque Isle
Feb 5	Big Rock Downhill Dash, 5km FR – Big Rock – Mars Hill
Feb 11	Sam Ouelette Ski Marathon – Ashland
Feb 12	Karen Sprague Memorial Relay & Skiathlon – Stockholm
Feb 17	10 th Mtn Ski Club Full Moon Party & Citizen Biathlon – Fort Kent
Feb 19	C-Me-Ski Race & Youth Event – Limestone
Feb 26	Henry Anderson & Youth Event – Caribou
Mar 5	Madawaska Valley Ski Sprints, 5km FR – Madawaska
Mar 11	Aroostook Youth Ski Fest – Caribou
Mar 12	Himie Towle & Youth Event – NHC – Presque Isle