



Snow Dance

A Quarterly Newsletter
of the Maine Winter
Sports Center

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A BUSY SUMMER MEANS AN EXCITING WINTER AT MWSC

As we approach the fourth year of operations at the Maine Winter Sports Center, we do so with a lot of momentum. The announcement in July that the Nordic Heritage Center in Presque Isle will host the World Biathlon Championships for Juniors in 2006, a successful IBU inspection this summer, grants from the Libra Foundation that will allow us to continue to expand our world class Nordic facilities in Fort Kent and Presque Isle as well as expand skiing at Big Rock Alpine Ski Area, and the addition of new staff members all ensure that there will be little chance for moss to grow under our feet in the near future.

Included in the nordic projects currently underway and scheduled for completion by the end of next summer are additional trails, a roller ski loop in Presque Isle, 26 room waxing buildings in both Fort Kent and Presque Isle and the completion of the biathlon range in Presque Isle to name a few.

We also have ambitious plans for mountain development at Big Rock, our Alpine Ski Area in Mars Hill, Maine. We are doubling our snowmaking capacity with a goal of opening the Mountain by Thanksgiving. We are also doubling our lighting on the mountain to expand our night skiing. We will also be opening new trails, including glade skiing to increase the variety of terrain. When you add all of this to ticket prices between \$10 to \$15, Big Rock has to be considered one of the best skiing values in the Northeast if not the U.S.

Those who have skied our areas in the past will find a lot of new features that add to the quality of the skiing experience we have offered to this point. Those who haven't made it to our areas yet should make it a point to come see what all the fuss is about. Aroostook County has the most reliable snow in the east, the best facilities in the country and the friendliest people in the world. All of this will ensure that your skiing experience will be a memorable one.

Please check out our website often for updates on our development projects and to get information on upcoming programs at www.mainewsc.org.

By Andy Shepard, MWSC President from Yarmouth, Maine.



THE ALL-STAR TEAM COMES TO MWSC

In just a few days the All-Star Team takes to the field... the rollerski loop, the bike paths and the ski trails. I am not talking baseball, here, although the Great American Pastime also showcases All-Star Teams in the second week of July. I am talking about the Maine Winter Sports Center All- Star Coaching Team. Will, Per and Eli will join forces with three new coaches to form the strongest coaching team of any Nordic program in the Nation.

Kris Cheney Seymour recently earned his Master of Architecture degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Before returning to school, Kris coached cross-country and biathlon for six years with the New York Ski Educational Foundation and National Sports Academy in Lake Placid. In addition, he worked with the US Biathlon Junior National Team on many trips and camps and in 1999 earned the US Biathlon Association Development Coach of the Year award. Many County skiers will remember Kris, Amy and their son Lauchlan from the 2000 Talent Identification Camp in Lake Placid. Starting this fall, Amy will be finishing her masters in Environmental Science through University of Maine system as Kris coaches the growing number of biathletes when Per returns to Sweden in August.


The Farra Family- John, Tess and their daughter, Lina- also hail from Lake Placid. John is a 1992 U. S. Olympian in cross-country skiing and was a US Ski Team spokesperson for the Youth Development Program. For the past 6 years, John has been a driving force at the National Sports Academy in Lake Placid where he currently holds the positions of Assistant Head of School and Facilities Manager. John holds a private pilot's license and also built his own plane. While John is busy teaching the Youth skiers how to fly ...on

skis, Tess will pursue her passion for teaching English at the university level.

Greg Rawlings is currently a commercial airline pilot for a regional air carrier in the southwest, but what he really likes to do is share his love of skiing with others. Greg, Liz and their daughter, Elena, come from Steamboat Springs, Colorado- Ski Town, USA. As head cross country coach for the Steamboat Springs Winter Sports Club, Greg ran a program with nine coaches and over 60 ski racers ranging from middle school to middle aged. As an accomplished alpine, backcountry and telemark skier as well as recent father, Greg is well suited to help families re-establish skiing as a lifestyle in Maine as the MWSC Citizen's Coach.

In the new five-coach model, Eli will coach the Regional and Continental Team athletes while the County Team and High School skiers can count on Will to coach them to their skiing goals. Kris, John, Greg, Eli and Will- each one is a highly skilled coach on the MWSC All-Star Team. Come out and experience a different All-Star Game this summer!

By Max Saenger, MWSC Chief Operating Officer from Stockholm, Maine.



MWSC MISSION STATEMENT

- * *To re-establish skiing as a lifestyle in Maine.*
- * *To leverage that lifestyle to create a new economic model for rural, isolated communities of Maine.*
- * *To further leverage that lifestyle to create opportunity for the youth of Maine.*



COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

OPPORTUNITIES



The Maine Winter Sports Center was established specifically to reintroduce the skiing lifestyle to Aroostook County communities. Over the past three winters, MWSC has helped nearly 3,000 residents of Aroostook County learn more about skiing. We have provided skis for programs at 14 schools. We have offered lessons for skiers of all ages and helped in the construction of nine community trail systems. As we look forward to the coming winter, however, there is still something missing in many communities: families enjoying skiing together as a part of their lifestyle.

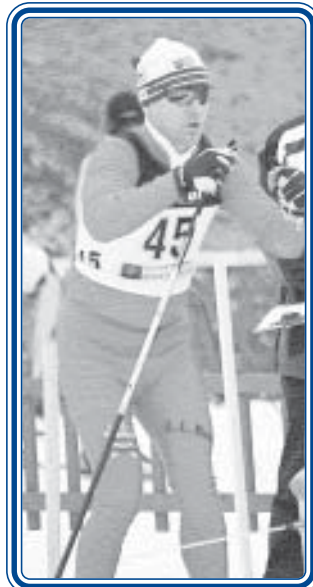
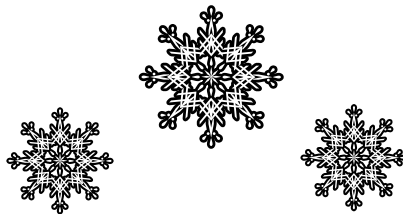
Aroostook County kids ski more than kids from almost any other part of the country. Some County adults are growing into avid citizen racers. But, skiing as a group, with friends, with family has yet to take hold. As we schedule next season's events, MWSC would like input from those who are active in our programs about how to best reach Aroostook County families. What can we do to create a sense of greater community among the skiers in the County? What can your club, rec center program, or school do to bring families together on skis? What kind of programs would you like to see at our 10th Mountain Division and Nordic Heritage Ski Centers?

Please respond with your suggestions to: john.mainewsc@ainop.com or will.mainewsc@ainop.com or to John or Will at MWSC, 154 Development Drive, Limestone, ME 04750.

By Will Sweetser, MWSC County Team Coach from Stockholm, Maine.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE VERIZON NORDIC HERITAGE SPRINTS



ANYONE CAN NORDIC SKI!

I made a good friend while skiing on a glacier in Norway during the month of June. I must admit that I do not have too many friends who grew up just outside of New York City, and I certainly have never met anyone of the like on a glacier in Norway. However, I met Chris at a ski training camp in Norway and while we grew up in two completely different lifestyles, both of us share an addiction to Nordic skiing.

A Norwegian coaching here in the States, Stein Gulbrandsen, organized the trip to Sognefjellet, a glacier four hours drive from Oslo, close to the west coast of Norway. It is a training spot for many of the national teams in Europe in the early summer. The Estonian and Swedish National Teams were there at the same time, as well as a handful of Norwegian and Swedish clubs. We were a small group, Stein and fellow coach Matt Whitcomb, Chris and myself. Stein and Matt were making the trip to further develop as coaches and to do a little training, while I decided to tag along to get in an intense training camp on snow. While small, we were a colorful group and we spent two weeks living in close quarters in the Sognefjellshytta, a rustic inn a short distance from the trails.

Training and living on Sognefjellet is not a



MWSC Continental team athletes Dave Stewart and David Chamberlain finishing a hard double pole rollerski workout up the 3rd street hill in Fort Kent.

typical European holiday. The daily schedule was as follows: breakfast at 7:00, two hour ski in the morning, lunch at 11:30, nap, two hour ski in the afternoon, dinner at 6:00, cards at 7:30, aftensmat (evening snack) at 9:30, asleep by 9:45. We did not stray very far from this schedule day to day, and it was repeated every day for two weeks. The weather is often nasty, sometimes blowing snow or rain and very cold. It is a hearty lifestyle, enjoyable only to those who appreciate a good training camp. Stein and Matt were both athletes before they became coaches, training camps were not new to them, and I am at my happiest when I am in the middle of a hard training camp. At the start of the camp we worried about Chris, would he enjoy himself?

A little bit about Chris: the story he tells is that one day four years ago he saw a Nordic ski race on the television, and decided that he would buy a pair of rollerskis and give it a try. His first "cross country ski trip" was in Central Park on a pair of V2 rollerskis, and that is where he does the majority of his training. He works 9-5 in New York City for Olympus, where he is an engineer who services endoscopes (yeah, endoscopes) and trains everyday before or after work. Chris is thirty-one and first stepped onto cross-country skis at the age of 28. Chris is a New Yorker down to every last bone, his accent completely gives him away and his favorite words are "rat bastard". We also came to find that he is a die-hard Nordic skier. He loved every minute of the training camp in Norway, didn't miss one morning or afternoon session, and skied the exact same number of hours as I did. He certainly enjoyed himself.

The first few days Chris was prone to falling. Despite having skied for three years, he does not often get a chance to

ski on real snow, and he has had no real technique training. Days when Stein would bring the video camera out on the trails we would find ourselves the same evening huddled around the screen in hysterical laughter at a fall that Chris might have taken on camera. He would laugh along with us, but would also soak in Stein's technique tips. Out on the trails he would work the next day on whatever we told him. He would shadow skiers that passed him on the trail and he had no shame in asking anyone for tips or advice, even if it meant trying to get a Norwegian national team skier to speak English with him. By the end of the two-week trip he was a different skier.

It took me just a short while to disbelieve the story Chris tells about the ski race he saw on television four years ago. I could see it in the way he was perfectly at home on a glacier in Norway during a tough two week training camp. One morning Chris must have simply been seized by a desire to be a skier. It is nothing short of a primal urge that keeps a man doing laps on his rollerskis in Central Park.

There are many excuses not to train, and I have heard most of them from skiers young and old. I have also heard many reasons why people cannot be Nordic ski racers, too old, not the right equipment, not in the perfect location, started skiing too late. My friend Chris is about as unlikely a Nordic skier as will ever be found. If a man in his late twenties who has lived on the edge of New York City all his life can suddenly discover his passion for Nordic skiing, couldn't just about anyone do the same?

By David Chamberlain,
MWSC Continental Team member from Bethel, Maine.



YOU ARE U.S. SKIING: AN INVITATION AND A CHALLENGE!

One of my personal goals as a member of the US Ski Team staff is to communicate regularly with the American skiing public so as to disseminate US Ski Team training and racing info as well as updates as to what we're doing, what we're planning, our goals, our means to achieve those goals, and how we are progressing toward achieving them. You are cross-country skiing in America. Each of our up-and-coming skiers relies upon a support system of family, friends, coaches and competitors to become the best skiers they can be. You are their family, their friends, their coaches, their sponsors and their competitors. I want to invite you to participate in the goal of US international excellence. I want to challenge you to take ownership in the success of US Skiing. What that means is something we'll get to in a minute.

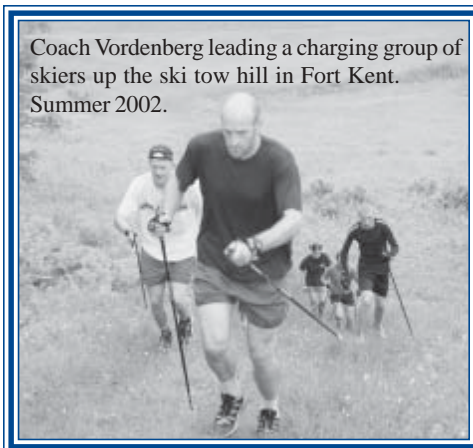
The US Team consists of Carl Swenson, Justin Wadsworth, Wendy Wagner, Kris Freeman, Andrew Johnson and Torin Koos. The Development Team is made up of Lindsey Weier, Kristina Trygstad-Saari, Kikkan Randall, Melissa Oram, Aubrey Smith and Andrew Newell. After the Development team there is a group of talented junior and up-and-coming racers pushing for the top. Our champions will emerge from this pool of athletes.

The US Ski Team staff includes the Nordic Director, Luke Bodensteiner, Team Manager, Katie Gould, Head Coach, Trond Nystad, Development Coach, Chris Grover, and myself as assistant coach. We also have a full and part time staff of ski technicians, physiologists, sports nutritionist and sports psychologists. The USST Nordic Department is organized solely to win Olympic medals. The staff and athletes are a team. Winning Olympic medals is our goal. Here is how you can be a part of our team and take ownership in our

success:

Ski: Find the time to do the things you love.

Race: Not only is it fun and rewarding but it supports our sport at many levels. Specifically I invite you to race in the Nor/Am races — see the ads in magazines such as *The Master Skier* and check out the schedule to be posted at www.uskiteam.com. This is your chance to go head-to-head with North America's best skiers. These races are not just for



Coach Vordenberg leading a charging group of skiers up the ski tow hill in Fort Kent. Summer 2002.

elite racers; they are for YOU. Join your local ski club and participate as a volunteer, as well as a skier. Each club depends upon its members and its unpaid volunteers. North American skiing depends upon the success of each club to create and support skiers, ski races and its ski related activities. Ask your ski club what THEY do to support the development of local skiers. Ask them or your local ski race organizer what YOU can do. Educate yourself so that you can be an asset to others. If you are a racer, we want you to be as fast as you can be so that you push from the bottom or pull from the top. If you are a coach we want you to be up to date on the latest in training and technique theory, methodology and practice. If you are a parent we want you to understand what it will take for your young athletes to become the fastest skiers they can be.

Some good resources are: The US Ski Team. We have and are constantly discovering and developing info for ski clubs, ski coaches, and athletes. We also have a coaches education program that we encourage coaches to join and contribute to (the US regional, junior and college coaches are an incredible resource of info and experience.) We will be posting this info at www.uskiteam.com and sending it to our registered coaches and athletes. Read ski magazines such as *The Master Skier*, *Cross Country Skier* and *Ski Trax*, *The USST Coaches Newsletter*, as well as, fasterskier.com, xcskiworld.com, skipost.com, wintersport.com and langrenn.com just to name a few.

Take Positive Action: Work constructively, creatively, and cooperatively. We are all on the same team.

Give: Time, Energy and Money. There is a tremendous amount of satisfaction you can gain from supporting a local athlete, a local junior program, ski club or the US Ski Team. The US Ski Team has a variety of programs allowing donors to earmark donations specifically for the US Cross-Country Team and even for specific programs within the cross-country program. To achieve our goals we are going to need to expand our education and development efforts. We also need to create improved and more training and racing opportunities for our Ski Team and Development Team athletes as well as our up-and-coming athletes. This takes money. Info on giving will be posted at www.uskiteam.com

Believe: We have the talent. We can achieve our goals. We WILL achieve our goals, and you have been and can be a vital part of our success. Thank you and good skiing!

By Peter Vordenberg, Stride Ahead Summer Ski College Coach from Park City, Utah.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

After a year in Maine, I am returning to Sweden. It has been an amazing year and we will have memories for the rest of our lives. We will remember your hospitality and the generous way you took us “strangers” into your part of the community and your lives. I have had the opportunity to work with a lot of athletes and all of you come in to the trainings with a high motivation and a willingness to learn.

I am proud to have been a part of MWSC, and you all should know that the set-up here is pretty unique in the entire ski-world. Andy Shepard has promised that I can be a lifetime member of MWSC and I will for sure! I hope that in the future we can start some type of exchange between the similar communities in northern Maine and in Sollefteå, Sweden.

It has been interesting to learn a new culture, and a lot of things that you Americans are good at. When you want something, you make things happen!

I would love to stay in contact with you. Please email me at: per.nilsson@skola.solleftea.se Thanks for this year and good luck in the future to all of you.

By Per Nilsson, MWSC Biathlon Coach (2001-2002) from Sollefteå, Sweden.



SWEDISH EXCHANGE

On August 11th I will be leaving for the journey of my life. I will be traveling to Sollefteå, Sweden to compete, train, and go to school at Sollefteå Skidgymnasium for one school year. This is one of the premier sports academies in Sweden.

I will be following in the footsteps of two other people affiliated with Maine Winter Sports Center; Walter Shepard, who is now a member of MWSC's continental team and the Junior National Biathlon Team, went to Sollefteå three years ago, and Per Nilsson came from Sollefteå to coach our biathlon program this year.

Through these exchanges it is apparent that we have initiated a partnership that will hopefully lead to great things for Maine Winter Sports Center athletes.

I am very excited to go. I hope to bring back with me knowledge of the Swedish language and culture as well as new training techniques and styles that will make me a better athlete.

By Jeffery Alden, MWSC Regional Team athlete from Caribou, Maine..



MWSC YOUTH TEAM EXPERIENCE

My name is Catherine Collins and I am a part of the MWSC Youth Team. The youth team has a total of 20 skiers, ten from the north and ten from the south part of the county. Our coach is John Farra who just recently moved here from Lake Placid, New York. This summer we practiced two times a week. The northern team practiced at the 10th Mountain Center and the southern team practiced at the Nordic Heritage Center or at the University of Maine at Presque Isle. The practices varied from week to week. Sometimes we did strength training, technique exercises and then there are times when we just played games. Being on the youth team has been a great experience, I have improved on my technique, made new friends and I can't wait to get skiing this winter.

By Catherine Collins, MWSC Youth Team member from Caribou, Maine.



PERSONAL CHALLENGE

BRONZE

Leg Lifts: Lie on your back with hands next to your body and do 25 leg lifts

SILVER:

Cherry Pickers: Lie on your back with your legs straight up in the air. Reach and grab your right toe with your left hand, left toe with right hand. 25 times.

GOLD:

Kick the sky: Lie on your back with your legs pointed up straight in the air. Kick your legs straight up in the air lifting your lower back off the ground. 25 times.

STRIDE AHEAD SUMMER SKI COLLEGE A SUCCESS!!

What am I going to do all summer in Fort Kent? That's what I was asking myself when my dad told me about the Stride Ahead Summer Ski College camp. So I signed up for the six-week camp and for a college class and was determined to train harder than I had ever trained before instead of hanging out with my friends and training very little. I slept for seven hours during the drive from my home in Portland to this tiny town, deep in the woods, or in this case the potato farms of northern Maine. By the end of that first day of camp, I knew that I had made the right decision and would learn what it means and what it takes to be a true nordic ski racer.

"Stride Ahead Summer Ski College" is hosted by the Maine Winter Sports Center and the University of Maine at Fort Kent. The purpose of this camp, beginning in late June and ending in early August, is to allow youth skiers between the ages of 16 and 19 the opportunity to spend a summer in a college dorm, take a college class for credit at the university, train at the world class facilities in Fort Kent, and to be coached by an amazing staff including, Pete Vordenberg (2 time Olympian and current U.S. Ski Team Coach) from Utah, Dave Stewart

(Factory team member) from Vermont, and Holly Brooks (college racer from Washington).

Each athlete was required to enroll in a college class. The classes that were chosen include art, business, and English composition. The purpose of the classes was to give the athletes the feeling of college and to teach how to successfully balance academics and training. The classes have been rewarding, but haven't been much fun. Training has been difficult and the classes don't allow us time to nap afterwards. Each class is Monday through Thursday.

This summer has been the best experience of my life. The camp has been a complete success and has far out reached the goals that I had for it. I came here to help myself in the following ski season and I feel that I have made so many improvements that even I will be stunned by what I can and hopefully will accomplish this winter and in the future. I came to the camp to learn how to be the best and I have learned it along with much, much more. This camp has helped me to fully realize my goals and has acted as a significant stepping block in my ski and academic careers. I know that I will be back at the camp again next year and I would recommend anyone serious about their ski career to seriously think about attending. This is an opportunity that can't possibly be passed up.

By Tim Whiton, Stride Ahead Participant from Portland, Maine.



BIG ROCK SCARE

Last night I had a nightmare. A nightmare where I had to climb Big Rock three times in one workout! For me that's three times nearly eighteen minutes of intense, lung-busting intervals, 3x18 minutes of brutal pain, and three separate chances to run into bears that roam the abandoned ski slopes of the downhill area outside of Presque Isle.

In actuality, the eight athletes that comprise Summer Stride Ahead Ski College are climbing Big Rock today. For us, this morning's workout represents a chance to witness personal improvements in our level of fitness and validate a month of working out hard twice a day: Getting to know every crack in North Pearly Brook Road, (rollerskiing) having to listen to horrible music in the UMFK weight room, (Creed) and eating oatmeal every morning at 6:45am.

Right now my alarm clock reads 4:30 am and I'm wide awake, (thanks to proper hydration) hoping that all this hard work and dedication will pay off. Not just this morning in the time trial but during the winter when I'm feeling the lactic acid near the finish line, looking up at a seemingly endless hill during a mass start race, or when my kickwax is failing and I have to rely on technique and strength to pull me to the finish. Thanks to the long runs on local ATV trails, specific strength workouts on the MBNA hill, and attempting to conquer Big Rock, my results will improve and I will be able to credit summer training in Aroostook county for a portion of my success.

By Holly Brooks, MWSC Regional Team Member from Seattle, Washington.





Maine Winter Sports Center

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MARK YOUR CALENDERS!!!

MWSC has some big events coming up. You don't want to miss these. For more information on a specific event see our website at www.mainewsc.org

Aug. 10 - Trail Maintenance,
10th Mountain

Aug. 31 - Trail Maintenance,
Nordic Heritage

Sep. 6/7 - Riviere du Loup to Caribou
Mt Bike Marathon

Sep. 14 - Trail Maintenance,
10th Mountain

USSA/NENSA Cross Country Officials
Education at Pineland

Sept ???- Mars Hill Climb Foot Race
(Please check website for accurate
date)

Sep. 28 - Trail Maintenance,
Nordic Heritage

Oct. 12 - Trail Maintenance,
10th Mountain

Oct. 26 - Trail Maintenance,
Nordic Heritage

Nov. 9 - Trail Maintenance,
10th Mountain

Nov. 16/17 - NENSA/MWSC
Coaches education seminar with
guest speaker, Tim Gibbons

Nov. 24 - Nordic Heritage Grand
Opening Celebration 1pm - 4pm

Nov. 30 - Trail Maintenance,
Nordic Heritage

Dec. 30/31 - Nordic Heritage Sprints,
Eastern Cup.

Jan. 18/19 - Festival at Fort Kent. US
Biathlon Championships

Mar.20/25 - Eastern Spring Series.
Nordic Heritage Center

Feb. 2006 World Junior Biathlon Cham-
pionships. Nordic Heritage Center.



Comraderie on the trail. Emily Michaud, Jeff Alden, and Chelsae Jarvis after a hard interval session at the Nordic Heritage Center, March, 2002.