



Kivitski

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SASKATOON NORDIC SKI CLUB

www.saskatoonnordicski.ca

April 2022

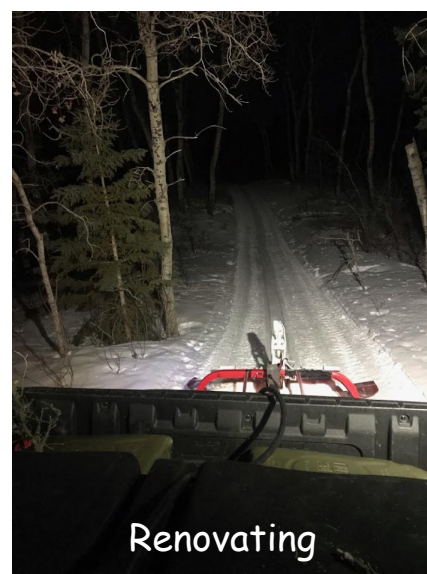
The Road to great skiing at Eb's Trails



Getting set up



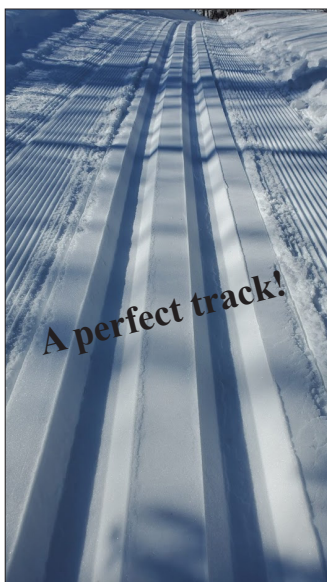
Oops, there's a problem



Renovating
is better at night!



Great! Let's go!



A perfect track!



Look at that!

Photos courtesy of Kate Germin

SASKATOON NORDIC SKI CLUB PERSONNEL

President
Gail Motsi

Past President
Vacant

Vice-President
Ivan English

Secretary
Susan Wall

Treasurer
Robin Robinson

Bookkeeper
Nancy Howse

Membership
Jeff Thorpe

Youth Programs
Geoff Meinert

Eb's Trails
Kate Germin

Communications
Vacant

Touring & Hiking
Sheryl Riis

Instruction/Competition
Bruce Simms

Junior HiPer
Alison and Geoff Meinert

Ski-at-School
Jan Sedgewick

Equipment Manager
Brian Anderson

Blind and Visually Impaired
Joanne Ferguson

Member-at-Large
Vacant

Newsletter Editor
Renate Bishopp 343-0156
hisrib@shaw.ca

Contact SNSC via the web!
www.saskatoonnordicski.ca
Box 2062, Saskatoon, SK
S7K 3S7

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Gail Motsi



The ski season is over, skis put away, and equipment gone for servicing and storage. We were pleasantly surprised to see a continued interest in cross country skiing in Saskatoon as our membership numbers were close to last season's. Our youth and adult instruction programs were over-subscribed, our high performance teams did well in various competitions in and out of province, and we hosted a very successful provincial race at the new Gordie Howe Sports Complex and neighbouring Holiday Park Golf Course.

Unfortunately, we were not able to continue the popular Ski At School Program because of the new Omicron wave and had to cancel a planned Loppet. We were also not able to groom at Kinsmen Park because of a lack of storage for our grooming machine.

A big thank you to all of the volunteers in programs and on the Executive and in Committees, as well as the team of groomers at the three locations. The Club is almost entirely dependent on volunteer effort and thousands of volunteer hours have been spent. With the continued and heightened interest in cross country skiing, the Club will be considering more sustainable resourcing in the future as the scope of our operations is exceeding the capacity of volunteers to cope. Further details will be provided in the fall at our Annual General Meeting. A big thank you as well to our donors – especially Cross Country Saskatchewan and the City of Saskatoon. We received grants for programs, grooming equipment, outreach and publicity. And our members and businesses have also provided support for various initiatives.

During the off-season, don't forget to enjoy the spring and fall hiking trips that have been organized for members. I still hope to see you on the trails.



SASK LOTTERIES

SKI-AT-SCHOOL by Jan Sedgewick

Ski At School: 2022 and beyond (Makes me think of Toy Story and “to infinity and beyond”)

As with so many programs that the SNSC operates Ski At School 2021/22 was impacted negatively by the Omicron/ Covid virus and the plethora of extreme cold spells. There was no lack of interest on the participant side. We had 92 of the 94 possible spaces filled. The other two were Mondays after the Christmas break and the Family Day / February break. These classes are often not filled as the teachers need time to remind and prepare their students the day before.

We were only able to teach eight sessions out of the first 30 due to extreme weather. By the end of the first three weeks it became apparent that we just couldn't proceed due to fear/ hesitancy about the new surging Omicron and the school sadly being the hotbed for this outbreak. Over

half of our 13 instructors felt the need to withdraw their services due to their rightful need to protect their families from the virus.

All I can say is we tried.

It is our hope to move the program to Holiday Park Golf Course in the 2022/23 season.

The program Coordinator (ME) is hoping to find an assistant or new coordinator. It is a phenomenal program that I and the teachers of kids in Grades 4 and 5 would love to see continue.

The instructors are compensated for their time and they always work in teams of two.

If you want more information about this program and /or would like to work with us please

call me, Jan Sedgewick at 306-931-3305 or email at skiatschool@sasktoonnordicski.ca.

FACILITIES COMMITTEE by Ivan English

Thank you to all the great volunteers in our club that make everything happen! It was a great year in many ways, and memorable for being the first year using the new building at the Gordie Howe Sports Complex. Covid 19 and its host of variants put a bit of a damper on being together indoors, but our Club used the venue to host a very successful Provincial Championships on the trails at GHSC and Holiday Park golf course.

This year our Club decided to not groom at Kinsmen Park as we had lost our place to store our machine, and so we put more resources into grooming at Holiday Park, taking over the entire trail system and making some changes to the trails. The City of Saskatoon in turn took over grooming at Kinsmen, with the possibility of our Club returning there to groom if the City can assist in finding appropriate snow machine storage in the future.

As like all years, our Club owes a great deal of gratitude to the groomers who put in tremendous hours again due to the many snowfalls and effects of melting, wind, and various forces of nature. There were over an estimated 1000 hrs put in by volunteers in the city at Wildwood and Holiday Park/GHSC, in trail prep in the fall, grooming, and clean up in the spring. Keeping the equipment working was also a great undertaking, and our tireless equipment manager and machine maintenance wizard kept things

working and got machines serviced when needed. A special thank you goes to Richard Koch who is stepping down after this year as the head groomer at Wildwood. We thank him for his countless hours, often on holidays, in frigid weather, or anytime the trails needed grooming. Many times he turned ice back into snow, keeping us skiing when it didn't look possible.

Eb's Trails were also looked after with incredible dedication thanks to some new and veteran groomers who cleared trails in the fall and put in 10-12 hour days when the trails needed grooming. At times this involved grooming in the night, and sometimes ending with a hike out of the bush if there were equipment problems.

As we look forward to next year, stay tuned in the fall for opportunities to help either at Eb's Trails or with grooming the in the city, as we continue to strive to bring the best skiing experiences to our members.



SUNDAY SPRING HIKES 2022

by Sheryl Riis, Touring Co-ordinator 306-382-9462

All members are welcome to join us for a variety of spring hikes! We usually hike about 10 – 12 km, every Sunday, starting April 24th until the end of May. We leave from different meeting places, at 9:45 a.m. and usually return between 5 and 6 p.m. Carpooling and masking are optional, according to individual needs.

Please bring water, a lunch, hat, layers, of clothing, sunscreen, a sit-upon..., and wear sturdy footwear. The terrain and weather can vary, throughout the day.

When carpooling, we pay the driver \$10.00 per person. Hikers should also be Saskatoon Nordic Ski Club members. Newcomers may attend one “free” hike to check out the club before signing up.

The hiking schedule is below, and on the website calendar, under “Events.” Please also sign up for the club Google Group, to receive up-to-date messages between members. The icon is on the bottom right corner, of the main website page.

<https://groups.io/g/SNSTouring>



See you on the trails!!!

Hiking Schedule

Sunday, April 24th – Douglas Park Sand Dunes

Meet: 9:45 a.m. at the Saskatoon Field House parking lot, off Preston

Leader: Sheryl Riis - 306-382-9462

–hiking the Douglas Provincial Park nature trail, and sand dunes, located south of Elbow

Sunday, May 1st – Eb’s Trails

Meet: 9:45 a.m. across from the Lawson Civic Centre, in the Lawson Heights Mall parking lot, by the park

Leader: Sheryl Riis – 306-382-9462

–hiking about 12 km of a selection of the forested Eb’s Trails, north of Duck Lake

Sunday, May 8th – Buffalo Pasture Mother’s Day Hike

Meet: 9:45 a.m. across from the Lawson Civic Centre, in the Lawson Heights Mall parking lot, by the park

Leader: Gail Motsi – 306-203-0527

–a leisurely hike along the South Saskatchewan River, northeast of Rosthern

Sunday, May 15th – Borden Hike

Meet: 9:45 a.m. across from the Lawson Civic Centre, in the Lawson Heights Mall parking lot, by the park

Leader: Sheryl Riis – 306-382-9462

–hiking about 12 km in mixed grassland and wooded areas, near the North Saskatchewan River, with lunch at the river

Sunday, May 22nd – Eb’s Trails Long Weekend Hike

Meet: 9:45 a.m. across from the Lawson Civic Centre, in the Lawson Heights Mall parking lot, by the park

Leader: Sheryl Riis – 306-382-9462

–hiking about 12 km of a selection of the forested Eb’s Trails, north of Duck Lake

Sunday, May 29th – Eagle Hills

Meet: 9:45 a.m. in the west Walmart parking lot, by the Bulk Barn, off 22nd Street West and Betts Avenue

Leader: Jeff Thorpe – 306-250-9266

–hiking in rolling hills and protected wildlife habitat, about an hour west of Saskatoon

EB'S TRAILS REPORT by Kate Germin

We are thankful to have had a very good snow base this year at Eb's Trails. Our groomers are committed to maintaining the ski tracking as long into the spring as they can. In order to get a better track the team has groomed in the night when the snow is firmer, several times this spring.

There have been record numbers out skiing and snowshoeing all season.

A big thank you to the team of groomers and to the snowshoe trail setters.

Throughout the summer the snowshoe signs will be labeled and junction maps updated. We may even see a few more rest benches throughout the system.

Have a great summer and we will see you again in the fall.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT by Jeff Thorpe

In 2021-2022, membership in the Nordic Ski Club stayed high, at 1,104 members. This followed on an even higher membership in 2020-2021, the first winter of the pandemic. As can be seen in the following table, both years were much higher than in the previous five years. It appears that many new people have come to appreciate cross-country skiing and the benefits of belonging to our club.

YEAR	# OF PEOPLE
2015-2016	745
2016-2017	674
2017-2018	722
2018-2019	650
2019-2020	654
2020-2021	1,251
2021-2022	1,104

As in other years, most people joined as part of a family membership. Here is how registrants were distributed among different types of membership:

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP	# OF PEOPLE
Single adult membership	289
Single youth membership	62
Family membership	753
TOTAL	1,104

Many registrants also expressed their appreciation for the club by providing a donation in addition to their membership fees. Donations this year amounted to \$9,940, also much higher than in most years. Donations were directed to the following programs:

PROGRAM	AMOUNT
Grooming ski trails in Saskatoon	\$6,770
Eb's Trails – maintenance and grooming	\$1,905
Ski at School program	\$145
Unspecified	\$1,120
TOTAL	\$9,940

The current membership database closed on March 31, 2022. The database for next year will open in September of 2022. We will put a notice on the club website when the new system is open for registration. A reminder to parents hoping to register their children in youth instruction next year: classes fill up quickly, so get your registration in as soon as possible in September.

ADULT INSTRUCTION UPDATE by Bruce Simms – brucesimms@sasktel.net

This season's adult instruction program achieved solid success but also some challenges. Many new skiers come to xcountry as adults. Providing a learning path geared specifically to adult needs is an important club service to our growing membership. Higher skill levels can lead to an increased sense of accomplishment, well-being and more fun on skis!

The key challenges were weather and COVID. An early lack of sufficient snow to set classic tracks led to delays in getting Learn to Classic underway. Postponements in both classic and skate classes due to cold weather are an unavoidable part of the program. Sadly, a number of participants had to drop out or re-schedule due to COVID.

The three instructors taught an expanded program this season - four Learn to Classic courses, one Learn to Skate, Intermediate Classic, and new this season, Intermediate Skate and Xcountry Downhill Skills courses. All offerings were fully subscribed at eight spots per course with the exception of one Learn to Classic and Intermediate Classic. The new courses offerings were well received based on enrollment and participant feedback. Skating is increasing in popularity in Saskatoon. When asked, instructors often recommend learning classic and then skate to get the most out of the sport. As an example, we could skate, but not classic early in the season, as we had enough snow to pack a trail, but insufficient to set classic tracks. The two disciplines also provide different skier experiences.

Most instruction took place in the Gordie Howe and Holiday Park ski areas.

While intermediate level courses are intended to build upon a basic familiarity with the techniques, as instructors we work to improve upon the actual skill levels of the students so that all come away with a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. Based on student progress and feedback, the downhill skills course next season will be two sessions at the Gordie Howe hill, with the final session again on the challenging hills of River Ridge Nordic. While all key downhill maneuvers are taught, the mental aspects of achieving downhill safety and success are also covered off.

As instructors we enjoy assisting skiers and supporting our club. Please email brucesimms@sasktel.net if you have feedback or suggestions.

Cliff Speers, Rob Howse, Bruce Simms



YOUTH PROGRAM by Jana Hambleton

Another fun season of youth lessons wrapped up on Sunday March 20th and Wednesday March 23rd. The Wednesday lessons finished the season in the traditional rubber boots, mud and puddle festival, but lots of fun was had! Looking back at the season we had some difficulty with weather cancellations, but the coaches did their best to try and sneak additional lessons in when they could make it happen. We were able to hold a few fun events when the weather cooperated. There was a 'Ski-olympics' day in February where the participants rotated through different obstacle courses and games, the annual Beckie Scott sprint challenge was held in early March, and participants are always welcome to come to the last lesson dressed in costume!

This was our first year of adding in a level 5 to the program and it was well attended. We will continue with this level going forward and have further ideas for this class for next season.

The Youth Learn to Ski continues to be a popular group. This is intended for skiers who are in the 10-14 age range who are just beginning. This group is typically split into a beginner group and a more intermediate group. Hopefully the interest in this continues next season and we can offer more options for this age range.

More information about each youth level is available on the Saskatoon Nordic club's website; also watch for more

information regarding next season registration in mid to late September 2022.

The youth programs would not happen without our excellent volunteer coaches! A big thank you to all the coaches who stepped up and provided their time and enthusiasm for skiing! You are all greatly appreciated and are the ones that make these programs happen!

Last, but certainly not least, a big standing ovation to the groomers who provide us with the most outstanding trails to ski on every week. These are volunteers who dedicate a lot of their time to ensure Saskatoon has the most wonderful groomed trails! Hats off to all the groomers for all your hard work this season!

That is a wrap for the 2021-2022 youth season!
I hope everyone has a wonderful summer,

HIGH PERFORMANCE UPDATE by Alison Meinert and Geoff Meinert

Our club's high performance (HiPer) programs had another successful season. We had 36 athletes training 3 times a week throughout the season. For our athletes age 12+ we kicked off training in May 2021. Lead by our amazing Junior HiPer coaches Robin & Kathy Butler, the athletes trained hard over the spring and summer months to improve their strength and fitness.

Our on-snow season began with the always popular Cross Country Saskatchewan Lake Louise Camp in early November. It looked a little different this year because of Covid mitigations but it was great to be back training in the mountains after missing last year. The athletes put in lots of kilometers and worked hard on improving their technique over the 5-day camp.

With no competitions since March 2020 it felt extra special this year to be back racing. Saskatoon Nordic had athletes attend Alberta Cups in Canmore, Western Canadian Championships in Red Deer and National Championships in Whistler. All results are available on www.zone4.ca. It took a dedicated effort from coaches, parents and the wax team and our athletes couldn't do it without them. A heartfelt

thank you goes to everyone who supported these events. As our programs continue to grow we plan to make these out-of-province events a regular part of our competition schedule.

At a more local level, most of the athletes competed in the provincial Sask Cup Race Series with great success. Our team was consistently on the podium at the races held in LaRonge, Humboldt, Sturgeon River and Saskatoon. A highlight was hosting the Provincial Championships in Saskatoon in February. 27 of our athletes participated, collecting 27 podium finishes over two days of racing.

The big disappointment of the season was the cancellation of the Saskatchewan Winter Games in February. Although the whole team was disappointed we have turned our attention and energy to next year. Sask Sport has announced that the games will go ahead in February 2023. 2023 will be busy because the quadrennial Canada Winter Games are also scheduled for the end of February, with Prince Edward Island as host. Saskatoon has a number of athletes vying for spots on Team Saskatchewan.

For new members interested in high performance or young athletes transitioning from our youth programs, the SNSC HiPer programs have two steps. The Youth HiPer program is an introduction to racing program with a focus on developing ski skills, physical literacy (agility, balance and coordination), speed and approaches to racing. It introduces nine to 14 year olds to the fun of competition, different types of races and exposure to training. Participants in the program need to have intermediate classic and skate skiing abilities equal to completion of at least one year of Jackrabbits Level 4 program. The program runs from September to March, starting with rollerskiing and other dryland activities until the snow flies. If you are interested in finding out more about the program please contact us, our contact info is below.



The next step in an athletes progression is Junior HiPer. This program is geared towards athletes competing in the U16 category and above. Workouts are more intense with a focus on preparing athletes to compete at inter-provincial and national events. Please contact Robin at ski robin@sasktel.net for more information.

For more details about the programs please visit the Ski Club website.

saskatoonyouthhiper@gmail.com

To check out photos from our season please visit <https://nordicphotosk.weebly.com/2021-22.html>. Thanks to Cory Farthing for capturing our athletes hard at work.



SK Cup #1, LaRonge, SK



SK Cup #2, LaRonge, SK



**Provincial Championships, Pursuit
Race #1
Saskatoon, SK**



**Provincial Championships, Pursuit
Race #2
Saskatoon, SK**



**Provincial
Championships,
Classic Distance
Saskatoon, SK**



**SK Cup #4,
Sturgeon River Nordic, SK**



**Western Canadian
Championships (Classic),
Red Deer, AB**



AB Cup #1, Canmore, AB



AB Cup #2, Canmore, AB

BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED SKIERS REPORT by Stanley Windels

This year the blind skiers had a shorter season with about 11 weeks of skiing. It ended on March 19th. From now until May 14th, we plan to hike on Saturday mornings at various locations around the city. We meet between 9:45 and 10 a.m., walk for about an hour, and then, if anybody is interested, we go for coffee at a nearby restaurant. If anyone wishes to join us as a low vision walker, a volunteer guide, or just a friendly participant, please contact Joanne at: joanne.ferguson@sasktel.net for more details.

Thank you to Jeff Whiting and Lorelei Ehman for the two training sessions we had on January 22 and February 5. We, the skiers, certainly appreciate the guides, both new and old, for coming out and making our Saturday mornings such a pleasant experience.

The Blind Skiers wish again to thank Saskatoon CO-Op for their financial support.



We hope you all have a good summer and that we can all get out and ski again next winter.