



Kivitski

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SASKATOON NORDIC SKI CLUB

www.saskatoonnordicski.ca

April 2023

The faces of skiing adventures during the 2022/2023 season



Youths and coaches enjoying a beautiful day
Courtesy of Dan Fuller



True Winter Fun
Courtesy of Dan Fuller



Having fun and keeping warm
on a frigid Eb's Day
By Sheryl Riis



Blind Skier and guide making tracks
Courtesy of Joanne Ferguson

SASKATOON NORDIC SKI CLUB

PERSONNEL

President
Gail Motsi

President-Elect
Geoff Meinert

Vice-President
Ivan English

Secretary
Susan Wall

Treasurer
Lisa Brundage

Bookkeeper
Nancy Howse

Membership
Lindsay Tumback

Youth Programs
Geoff Meinert

Eb's Trails
Jelmer Wiersma

Communications
Dan Fuller

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
hisrib@sasktel.net

Contact SNSC via the web!

www.saskatoonnordicski.ca

Box 2062, Saskatoon, SK
S7K 3S7

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Gail Motsi



What a great season we have had this year – plenty of snow and relatively mild temperatures for most of the winter. My first ski was on November 10th and my last ski on April 1st, both at Eb's Trails. I hope everyone else had a chance to get out on the beautiful trails that the Saskatoon Nordic Ski Club grooms in and near the City.

This season we introduced a new event, the Loppetalooza, that was a lot of fun and brought 250 Club members of all ages together to have fun and socialize. We hope to repeat this event again next year.

Our membership numbers and member donations remain high and our youth and adult instruction programs were mostly full. The high performance group did well at provincial, regional and national events. And we were able to run the Ski At School program for the full season for the first time since COVID-19.

A big thank you to all of the volunteers in programs and on the Executive and in Committees, as well as the team of dedicated groomers at our three locations and the snowshoe track setters at Eb's Trails. Without all of your support we would not be the premiere club in the province, with the highest number of members, the most programs offered, and the most extensive and diverse trail system.

We also continue to receive strong support from our provincial sports body, Cross Country Saskatchewan, and the City of Saskatoon. Their support in addition to membership and program fees allow us to run a broad spectrum of high quality programs and purchase, operate and maintain our grooming equipment.

On a sadder note, we have lost a strong advocate for cross-country skiing with the passing of Kevin Robinson, owner of Eb's Source for Adventure. Look for a memorial event in Kevin's honour in the next Ski season.



SASK LOTTERIES



Happy Spring from Wildernook! We loved helping SNSC with the Loppetapalooza event this winter, and we're excited to share the spring and summer learning adventures we have lined up in the months ahead! Wildernook Fresh Air Learning is a nature education service provider run by experienced outdoor educators. We design creative and convenient learning experiences that get kids outside and hooked on nature. We offer caregiver and child programs, drop-off child programs, after school programs, summer camps and our children's pedal bus tours on the Punch Buggy Express. Visit us at wildernook.com or [@wildernook](https://www.instagram.com/wildernook) on social media to learn more and register for a program.

SKI-AT-SCHOOL 2023 by Jan Sedgewick

Another year of Ski At School has been completed. The program has been offered since 2016 but Covid took out two seasons.

Once again our program was extremely popular. We had 84 spaces available and they all filled within three or four days of registration opening. We created two separate Sign-Ups so that we can give fair access to both school systems. The program is for students in grades 4, 5 or 6.

We had 10 instructors who shared the responsibility for leading each session in teams of 2.

Gail Motsi, our president, also assisted one morning per week to gain coaching hours for a Coaching certification. We are always happy to have extra help as class sizes have grown.

Lack of snow was NEVER an issue this season. We did have to cancel 17 sessions due to extreme weather but oddly enough the first one was due to RAIN and 90km winds. The groomers at GHSC, Ken English, Scott McGibney and John kept the trails very well maintained and allowed us to offer the best introduction to cross country skiing possible.

We were able to instruct and introduce at least 2040 children, their teachers and parent helpers to x-country skiing. The potential was there for 2520 if all sessions had gone ahead.

This program was funded by many sources. The City of Saskatoon awarded us a \$2,000 Wintercity YXE grant this year. Next year we have been approved for \$4,300.

Cross Country Saskatchewan extended \$2,052 in funding from their Field Staff worker budget, to help with compensation for the instructors.

The participating classes paid a class fee, which we hope to lower next season.

The SNSC, that's us the Ski Club, supports this important community outreach by covering the grooming expenses, facility rental and the treasurer, Lisa Brundage and bookkeeper, Nancy Howse to keep track of the finances.

Last, but by no means least to be recognized, are the team of instructors. A huge debt of gratitude goes to:

Jeff Whiting Daryl Sexsmith Malin Hansen Dana Amos Wendy White Sheila Regush Nancy Howse Ava Henderson Brian Thorstad Jan Sedgewick

Ski-At-School is very rewarding work.

The exclamation **I DID IT** from students, the huge outcry at the end when the kids say **Boy, THAT WAS FUN**, the **rosy cheeks and exuberant smiles** and, new this year **Wow, that was soooo calming** tell us that we are positively impacting the next generation of skiers and citizens.

We are always looking for new instructors and I, Jan, am looking to share some of the co-ordinating roles.

Jan Sedgewick
306-931-3305
skiatschool@saskatoonnordicski.ca

SUNDAY SPRING HIKES 2023

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

The ski season was great, and now it is time to get out hiking! We usually hike about 10 – 12 km, at a relaxed pace, with rest stops for water and lunch. We meet at 9:45 a.m., at various locations, according to which direction we are headed. The Saskatoon arrival time is about 5 – 6 p.m.

Hikers should also be Saskatoon Nordic Ski Club members. Newcomers may attend one “free” hike to check out the Club before signing up.

Please bring a lunch, lots of water, clothing layers, sunscreen, hat, a sit-upon..., and wear sturdy shoes. The weather and terrain can vary throughout the day. Up-to-date information is posted on the Saskatoon Nordic Ski Club website calendar, and the SNSCTouring@groups.io club group.

*When carpooling we pay the driver \$10.00 per person for gas.

*Members may also post additional hiking tour possibilities.

See you on the trails!

Sheryl Riis

Touring Co-ordinator



HIKING SCHEDULE

Sunday, April 30 – Douglas Park Sand Dunes

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

Leader: Sheryl – 306-382-9462

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

Sunday, May 7 – 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 14 – Mother’s Day – currently no hike planned

Sunday, May 21 – 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 28 – 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

Sunday, June 4 – Eb’s Trails

with After-Hike Wiener Roast Provided

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


Wiener roast at the end of the hike
wieners, buns, condiments, marshmallows,
oranges, treats... provided

*Please feel free to supplement the wiener roast.



HIGH PERFORMANCE UPDATE by Alison Meinert and Geoff Meinert

HIGH PERFORMANCE RACE TEAM

 Our Club's high performance (HiPer) skiers have been busy training and racing all season.

From training camps, local races to big national competitions the season has been packed full of events. HiPer participants competed in the provincial Sask Cup Race Series with great success. Our team was consistently on the podium at the races held in La Ronge, Humboldt and Saskatoon.

A big highlight of the season was the 2023 Saskatchewan Winter Games in Regina in February. The following athletes represented Saskatoon at the 2023 Saskatchewan Winter Games:

- | | | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Bryony Amos | Coco Shakotko | Isaak Burns | Jamie Farthing | Tyson Miller |
| Clara Broten | Ruby Shevkenek | Elliott Bourassa | River Kloeble | Jack Storey |
| Zoey Griffith | Emma Storey | Oliver Bourassa | Niko McCartney | Finn Tallon |
| Natalie Meinert | Abbey Zimmer | Colm English | Pano McCartney | |
- Milla Niefer (Prairie Central District)



The Saskatchewan Winter Games are held every 4 years and are the first multi-sport event for most athletes giving them the experience of staying in an athlete village and competing over multiple days. Saskatoon had a strong showing with multiple medals!

As highlighted in the last edition of the Kiviski one of the biggest events of the season for the older athletes was the Canada Winter Games (CWG) in Prince Edward Island. Our skiers had great results competing against the strongest U20 skiers in the country. Many of our skier's families travelled out to PEI to cheer on the athletes. We felt lucky to have a great cheering section so far from home. One last shoutout to the coaching staff who supported the athletes – all with connections to Saskatoon Nordic. Staff included Robin Butler, Alison Meinert, Lauren Miranda, Geoff Meinert and Andrew Brisbin.

Interested in joining HiPer??

For new members interested in high performance or young athletes transitioning from our youth programs, the SNSC high performance programs have 2 steps. The Youth HiPer program is an introduction to racing program with a focus on developing ski skills, physical literacy (agility, balance, coordination), speed and approaches to racing. It introduces 9 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.



As skiers progress they can graduate to the HiPer program. Athletes are typically 15+ years of age, have strong fundamental ski skills, good physical conditioning and are motivated to improve their personal skiing performance. The emphasis at this stage is on developing physical conditioning and ski technique in a training and racing environment. Athletes are encouraged to train year round, with multi-sport activities in the off-season. Participants will be encouraged to race in the Saskatoon Grapefruit Cup race series, attend Sask Cup level races, and attend out-of-province races including Westerns and Nationals.

Continued on next page

If you are interested in finding out more about the program please contact us, our contact info is below.

To check out photos from our season please visit <https://nordicphotosk.weebly.com/2022-23.html>. Thanks to Cory Farthing for capturing our athletes hard at work.

For more details about the programs please visit the ski club website.

Alison Meinert

saskatoonyouthhiper@gmail.com



YOUTH PROGRAMMES by Dan Fuller

We had a fantastic youth program this year including lots of skiing and a fantastic Loppetapalooza event. The youth program included a total of 190 athletes participating in Bunnies, Jackrabbits, and Learn to Ski programs. This was the first year since 2020 that the Club was back with hot chocolate and cookies post ski practices. The athletes can confirm that it was great to have a treat after a ski practice. We had a fantastic group of coaches this year. Thank you to Dan, Kish, Adrien, Jason, Nancy, Rob, Samantha, Tyson, Peter, Graham, Malin, Colin, Ryan, Luke, Jack, Leisha, Chera, Genevieve, Josie, and Ellen. You rock! We are looking forward to having a great season again next year. If any parents or former high performance athletes are interested please contact youth@saskatoonnordicski.ca to get information on coaching. Parents said they liked the following about our programs:

“Enthusiasm of the coaches and organizer”



...Like
Kathy Rae

“Focus on skills but also developing love of the sport”



“Kids having fun!”



The Loppetapalooza was a super fun family ski event in February that the Club co-hosted with Wildernook. Over 200 people participated in the different event distances including everything from the 20km to the 1.2km. We are looking forward to hosting another great Loppetapalooza event next year with more fun, more event distances, and more skiing!

Eb's Day 2023

The Saskatoon Nordic Ski Club hosted the 19th edition of Eb's Day, on Feb. 19, 2023. The last Eb's Day was in February 2020. The event was cancelled for two years during the Covid pandemic.

Eb's Day is a skiing and social event at Eb's Trails, our trail system in the Nisbet Provincial Forest about an hour north of Saskatoon. The system provides 52 km of classic track, ranging from gently rolling to challenging hills. All trails were freshly groomed the day before the event.



A fire, hot dogs and hot drinks were provided at the South Hut.

This year the weather was cold, with temperatures of -24°C in the morning and -15°C in the afternoon. The weather, and possibly the gap since the last event, resulted in lower attendance than in previous years. The guestbook showed 72 people. In addition to Nordic Ski Club members, some people from the general public attended, including people from surrounding communities.

Despite the weather and lower attendance, the event was a success, with lots of skiing on great trails, and lots of socializing around the fire. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped to make it happen:

- Organizers: Val Young, Bob Katarynych, Jeff Thorpe
- Trail groomers: Jelmer Wiersma, Brian Anderson
- Helpers: Brian Suderman, Daniel Schott, Gail Motsi, Rosanne Beaulieu, Sheryl Riis, Wendy White, Grant Cheston

SNSC INTRODUCES CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING TO NEWCOMERS



Global Gathering Place, a settlement agency in Saskatoon, brought about 30 newcomers for an introductory lesson provided by Saskatoon Nordic Ski Club on March 4, 2023. The participants included adults and children who had never skied before.

The newcomers were fully equipped with skis, boots and poles provided by the ski club and used for our Ski At

School Program. They received a brief introduction on how to ski and then hit the training grid and hills at Gordie Howe Sports Complex for several hours of practice. The day finished with hot drinks and snacks in the K&S Facility and lots of questions about ski equipment, ski trails and ski lessons.

Thanks to the instructors – Gail Motsi, Wendy White and Erin Baril - who donated their time and enthusiasm to give newcomers this novel experience.



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

A successful season with 6/7 courses sold out. The weather was better than some seasons for snow availability and temps, so class postponements were kept to a reasonable number. As a first, a few classes utilized space at the sports multiplex for indoor meetings. This year we offered three courses in beginner, beginner skate, intermediate skate, intermediate classic and downhill skills. Good trails and warmer weather seem to encourage more skate skiing. Each course has a max of eight students to facilitate individual attention. All SNSC adult instructors, Cliff Speers, Rob Howse and Bruce Simms, are CANSI certified and also offer private lessons.

We strive to adapt our programming to meet the needs of our diverse membership. Cross country skiing is a big tent sport. Please get in touch if you have ideas on improving our programming. A big thank you to the groomers who make our trails and teaching grid possible.

Taking Your Skiing to a New Level

As instruction was mostly over and a long season was winding down, I decided to try some different ski activities for fun and ski improvement. This is not an endorsement or recommendation for any of these, and you're strictly on your own if you try.

- Ski down Optimist Hill on skate skis. An adult ticket is only \$18.00 which is a far cry from the Rockies.
- If you're confident on your skis and know how to do hockey stops and skid turns, you can put these skills together and parallel ski on gentler slopes like an alpine skier from the time when downhill skis were

long and straight like our Xcountry skis. A big warning, our skis will never turn and carve like modern parabolic shaped alpine skis, so gnarly mountain terrain is out of the question. A helmet is recommended. Use older skis if you have them as the magic carpet ride up has potential for scratches.

- I must learn to telemark ski. While beefier telemark gear is ideal, telemarking on cross country skis is often accomplished on gentler slopes.
- I'm an instructor, but I took some lessons from a more senior instructor in Canmore to improve my technique and teaching.
- Vince Martignetti and I headed out early on an Easter weekend morning to ski River Ridge at Langham. The trails were icy so we skied 20 km on the North Saskatchewan. You can work on your 1 and 2 skate technique and get into a skiing zone. It is quite wild along that stretch, with close by coyote howling, eagles, geese and moose tracks crossing the river. This is a strictly seasonal event with a tight window of opportunity. Caution and prudence are essential as you're on the river. While it was a delightful adventure, it is highly recommended you go with someone experienced and knowledgeable.
- Aside from our own SNSC trails, I've had wonderful day trips this season to ski at River Ridge, Little Red at PA and Blue Heron Provincial Park at Anglin Lake. These fun trails can improve your skiing.

Enjoy your summer activities.

BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED SKIERS REPORT by Stanley Windels



The Saskatoon Blind Skiers have had a somewhat quiet but pleasant year.

Thanks again to Jeff Whiting and Lorelei Ehman for our two training sessions. Our last ski outing was March 25th. Starting April 15 through May 13, we will be hiking on the Meewasin Trail. We meet outside the Broadway Roastery on the corner of 12th Street & Broadway Avenue at



skiers and guides



Lively Social

9:50 a.m. and walk at 10 a.m. Afterwards, we'll gather from 11 a.m. to 12 noon for coffee at the Roastery. After May 13, we break for the summer until our fall AGM at the end of September.

We had our Spring AGM on March 11, with most of our executive returning for next year. Thanks to the Saskatoon Co-op, we will be continuing our Co-op fundraiser in the fall. Thanks to the Saskatoon Nordic Ski Club for their continued support. Have a good summer.

You're at home here.



Sincerely, Stanley Windels



Unnamed skiers enjoying a beautiful winter day on well-groomed trails at Eb's
Photo courtesy of Cliff Speer

REMEMBERING...



ROBINSON, Kevin William

June 7, 1969 - February 24, 2023

Kevin was born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and grew up in Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon. Kevin loved being outdoors. He started cross-country skiing as a Jackrabbit and grew into racing and coaching. His favorite winter holidays were at Silver Star, trying to surpass his previous vacation's mileage. He made lifelong friends through marathon canoe racing. Summer vacations were spent canoe tripping on the Churchill River system.

He earned an MBA through the University of Saskatchewan with a goal of combining his business knowledge and his passion for outdoor sports. Owning Eb's Source for Adventure was a perfect fit. He wanted his customers to share his joy in playing outside, so made a point of providing tips to people buying their first set of outdoor equipment. Whether on the south shore of Lake Athabasca, on the train from Lillehammer after skiing the Birkenbeiner, or at a rest stop on the Dempster Highway in the Yukon, he would be greeted with, "Aren't you Kevin from Eb's?"

Kevin believed work and life should be fun; he laughed a lot. His distinctive laugh had an old friend searching the aisles of a grocery store in Whitehorse even though she didn't know he was in town. Kevin's love of the outdoors was equalled by his devotion to his family, including the 4-legged members, and to his friends. He was "blown away" by the support, kindness and generosity family and friends offered to him and Cathy during his illness. He was also very grateful for the care he received at Royal University Hospital.

A celebration of Kevin's life was held on Tuesday, March 7, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. at the Western Development Museum in Saskatoon. Lunch followed. Attendees were asked to wear Eb's gear if they owned any.

The service was livestreamed at www.schuler-lefebvrefuneralchapel.com. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Royal University Hospital Foundation (103 Hospital Drive, Saskatoon, SK, S7N 0W8), or New Hope Dog Rescue (8B-3110 8th St. E., Suite 530, Saskatoon, SK, S7H 0W2).

MEMORIES OF KEVIN by Nancy and Rob Howse

The skiing, paddling, and camping community in Saskatoon lost an enthusiastic supporter and dear friend when Kevin Robinson passed from our midst this February from a lifelong condition, at the young age of 53.

We keep expecting to see him, or hear his booming laugh, when we visit his place of business (Eb's Source for Adventure) which is being carried on by his good friends and colleagues. And we keep expecting to see him on the ski trails, or paddling on the river.

We remember him very fondly when we are reminded of the support Eb's Source for Adventure gives to the Jackrabbit and Ski at School programs. Kevin was out marshalling the "stride zone" at one of the Grapefruit Cup races in Holiday Park just this winter.

One memory Nancy has of Kevin is at a meeting of Jackrabbit coaches one snowless January evening in the shack at Kinsmen Park. We were bemoaning having no snow for ski lessons, and he said "Ha, Ha Ha! Try sitting on a million dollars' worth of inventory!"

Maybe it was the same winter when there was a skiff of snow on a frozen slough in Wildwood Park, and the edge of the slough had been skied smooth – by Kevin, doing multiple laps.

Much as we, his friends, miss Kevin, we must offer our deepest sympathy to Kevin's wife Cathy, his brother Trevor, his mother Vina, and all of Kevin's family.

And we pray there are rivers to paddle and ski trails (and good equipment!) in heaven, Kevin.

