

# SKI TRACKER

## Excellent December Skiing!

### From the President

Dan Purdon



A brief update from my position as President of the Bruce Ski Club. Just returned from a warmer trip south and after following remotely the Club's trail reports and my nephew's Ontario Hydro line person pictures from Gravenhurst, I was glad we put our snow tires on before leaving the province. It's exciting to return to our first blast of winter and the Sawmill Trail being open. While

things have warmed up, trust the lower temperatures in the forecast will allow for Colpoys to open and the building of the base and trails at Sawmill. (Fingers crossed)

Thanks to our Directors and Executive who have worked in the off season to prepare for this year and our Trail Chiefs and Groomers who were keen and ready to go for this first snow. More "snow dances" required by the members however a good start to the season. If you haven't registered yet for this year's membership I encourage you to do so. It's our members and their support that allow us to continue the development of our trail system and facilities which together are an exceptional experience for our area.

A special welcome to two new members of our Executive; Jill Graham who has taken on the Facebook/Media role for the Club and Benito Guzman who is taking on the Colpoys Trail Captain role. Jill is likely well known to many members who frequent Suntrail Source for Adventure or perhaps at the end of the day if she was closing up Gerry's Place. Her media experience there certainly was evident as she picked up the membership

email blasts and updates. As Trail Chief at Colpoys, Benito has taken on not only the challenge of maintaining a trail system but one that includes snow and temperatures much below his experience guiding in Mexico. If you cross paths with either Jill and/or Benito please say hello.

Finally, the Executive is looking for an interested individual to take on investigating the potential expansion to our current Jackrabbit lit trail loop. Preliminary work has been started on upgrading our main electrical feed and panels, however we do need a person or persons to take the next step forward on this, including a draft work plan on implementation should that be the final direction. It would be helpful if that person has prior electrical, construction and/or project management experience. If you are interested or would like more information on the project please contact me directly at [president@bruceskiclub.ca](mailto:president@bruceskiclub.ca) or 519-477-5330.

Best of the holiday season and see you on the trails.



## Upcoming Events

**January 14, 2025** - Great Wolf High School Race

*Interclub, Southern Ontario District Races*

**February 9, 2025** - Suntrail Special

**February 23, 2025** - Community Classic

### *Ski Club Exchange*

**Jan 5-11, 2025** - Sauble Ski Club

**Jan 12-18, 2025** - Glenelg Ski Club

**Jan 19-25, 2025** - Owen Sound Ski Club

**Feb 9-15, 2025** - Beaver Valley Ski Club



# Sawmill Nordic Centre Facilities Manager

*Fred Schlenker*

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the many club members who helped with the trail clean-up and preparation on Saturday, October 26th and Saturday, November 2nd. On the first Saturday, our efforts were focused on the new trail section created this summer on the Georgian Bluffs Old Landfill Site. Many roots were removed along with some tenacious stumps that I missed when the bulldozer was through in early September. On the second Saturday, the entire trail system had a good going over. This included removing many saplings that would eventually encroach on the trail as well as extracting the larger pieces of residual garbage found in a few locations on the new trail section. After that work, all the trails were ready for grooming.


I would like to thank Leo Verschuren for his efforts to organize and manage our signage and Thom Hakala for his graphic design. We were well ahead of schedule to get our signage in place for the upcoming season. The new trail created last year will be signed as "Humpty Dumpty". The new trail created this year will be temporarily signed "New Trail" since it is yet to be named. This new trail (see map) has a short but strenuous loop attached to it which will be temporarily named "Short Strenuous Loop". This loop will be perfect for anyone who is seeking serious muscle fatigue! The loop has a decent hill and no time to recover should you choose to be stuck in the loop!

The "New Trail" has been designated as a "Black" trail which is considered difficult. This is largely due to the

sharp left hand turn at the bottom of the second hill. The "Short Strenuous Loop" also offers fairly steep hills. The remainder of the trail is moderate to easy with some pleasant flat sections through mature hardwood and some larger White Pine. Be ready for the sharp left!

Another item of note: The Equipment Shed had an upgrade to its electrical service and now has a 100 amp panel. What this means for those hosting races is that there is now enough power to run wax irons and crockpots at the same time without the circuit breakers going off.

This is a reminder that there is an A.E.D. available on-site in Gerry's Place (The Cabin). The location of our A.E.D. has been shifted to the right along the back wall. It will be more accessible from the door and less likely to contact anyone's head when getting up from the corner bench.

See you on the trails! \_\_\_\_\_ 



**Fred setting the plan for the Sawmill trails**



**Benito instructing the Colpoys crew**





## Grooming Report


*Clare Matthews*

Grooming has started given the wonderful December snow! We groom daily unless the weather is wrong for the snow. Rain and temperatures above 0C do stop grooming as we only make a mess of any snow under these conditions.

With the New Trail being completed in the old dump area this adds 2 km of trail to groom (excellent!). Adding in the 1.1 km of Humpty Dumpty last season, this extra 3.1 km of trail can lead to an additional hour of grooming time. Depending on snow fall and conditions it can easily take 4+ hours to groom all the trails. We typically schedule two groomers in order to shorten the time to get around all the trails and get the machines out of the way.

If you are a morning skier, the typical grooming approach is as follows: Jack Rabbit, Two Way, Paperclip, Easy Street, Sidewinder, Hairpin, Kiwanis, Christmas Tree, Humpty Dumpty, New Trail, Grunt, Yo Yo, Bypass, Sheldon's. The Stadium gets started after Jackrabbit on our way to Two Way and typically gets finished at the end of grooming. The connections are periodically groomed.

After a major snow dump it takes a lot of work to get the trails ready as we first have to pack the snow using the snowmobiles before letting the grooming machines do their thing. So on those days you may see anywhere from 2 - 4 machines out.

Thank you to all the members who wave to the groomers or stop to give them feedback. Our goal is to give you the best snow to have a great ski. 

## Georgian Bay Nordic

*Michelle Lafleur*

### GBN finds early snow!

GBN athletes enjoyed a beautiful first day of skiing thanks to the efforts of Mother Nature and our dedicated groomers at Sawmill Trails! Traditionally, our athletes travel north the first weekend of December to get in some early training, but this year, we didn't have to go very far to find snow. The athletes were all smiles as gear was dusted off and wax was tested under sunny skies. Seven athletes and two coaches spent the morning working on skate technique and the afternoon on classic skis. There were some sore muscles the next morning, but we're unsure if it was from all the skiing or the snow dances performed to bring on the early white stuff! Either way, it was all worth it. Looking forward to an excellent snowy winter season.

If this looks like fun, it's not too late to join! Georgian Bay Nordic is a racing team for young athletes between the ages of 10-18 including U12 and U14 development teams and U16 and U18 open teams. Our athletes race at the regional, provincial, and national levels, with some alumni even representing our club on the international stage! We pride ourselves on building character, resolve, and skills, and we strive to be "a fellowship of skiers in pursuit of excellence."


Please contact [gbnpres@gmail.com](mailto:gbnpres@gmail.com) for more information. 



## Jackrabbits' "Rabbit Report"

*Erin Scheel*

The Jackrabbit season is set to start on January 4, 2025. We will hit the trails for our 9-week program working on the FUNdamentals of Nordic Skiing. Our first 5 levels focus on classic skills, while our upper 2 groups start to learn, and master skate skiing. We are looking forward to consistent snow (👍), over 80 skiers, a tribe of awesome volunteer coaches, and some visits from GBN skiers through our sessions.

If you see our Jackrabbits out on the trails Saturday mornings (10AM-12PM) give them a kind word of encouragement and share the love of the sport. 

# Registrar

Heidi Tones

Well, isn't the snow lovely! Hopefully you are getting out on the trails. If you are a teacher or community group leader and want to bring your group to the trails, please contact me for the proper paperwork.

If you have friends visiting you can access day passes at both Sawmill and Colpoys Bay trails, where you can pay cash or eTransfer: [etransfer@bruceskiclub.ca](mailto:etransfer@bruceskiclub.ca). You can also purchase day passes at Suntrail Source for Adventure, where they have an additional \$2 processing fee.

If you have any questions, please reach out to [smith.tones@gmail.com](mailto:smith.tones@gmail.com) or 519-477-8870. \_\_\_\_\_



# Ski Lessons

Heidi Tones

Do you know someone who would like to try classic or skate skiing this winter? I give lessons at Sawmill trails. Payment is by donation and all proceeds go towards our son, Julian Smith, who is an elite cross country skier training out of Thunder Bay at NTDC. Contact me at [smith.tones@gmail.com](mailto:smith.tones@gmail.com) or 519-477-8870. \_\_\_\_\_

# Race Co-ordinator

Marilyn Suke

## Coaching Development

There were no candidates for the Community Coach course offered this fall. You can still complete the excellent on-line Introduction to Community Coaching course available through [www.coach.ca](http://www.coach.ca). It is a great course for anyone interested in Nordic skiing, and it starts you on your journey to becoming a coach. If there is sufficient interest I could offer a course in the spring (prior to the disappearance of the snow). Please reach out if interested.

## Racing Season

Dates are set. Just need volunteers and snow! If you can help at any (or all) of these races please mark them on your calendar. I will be reaching out to our volunteers soon to determine availability.

**January 14** - Tuesday- *Great Wolf High School Race*

**February 9** - Sunday - *Suntrail Special* - all ages and abilities welcome

**February 23** - Sunday - *Community Classic* - Classic only mass start race - all ages and abilities welcome

Please put these dates on your calendar - either as a racer or a volunteer. \_\_\_\_\_



## Colpoys Ski Trail

Benito Guzman

At Colpoys Trails, we are working hard to provide a great cross-country skiing experience. Initial trail packing and grooming has begun, thanks to Eli's hard work.

We ask for a little patience as we need more snow to fully groom all the trails. Stay tuned for updates on trail conditions! We've also updated the trail map by integrating QR codes, allowing users to see their real-time location. This will be especially helpful for those unfamiliar with the trails.

We hope to have enough snow for a successful season and wish you happy holidays. \_\_\_\_\_



## Masters Skiing

This year the Canadian Masters Championships are being hosted by the Whitehorse Nordic Ski Club from February 19 - 23, 2025. Whitehorse is an amazing place to visit any time of the year but for avid cross-country skiers it has much to offer. In fact, they have been on snow for almost three weeks now! Whitehorse Nordic has a great event planned. Registration for these championships is available through Zone4 as of Friday, November 15.

The Ontario Masters Championships will be hosted by North Bay Nordic Ski Club February 07-09, 2025. The races for this event will be Friday 02/07 10 km MST C; Saturday 02/08 am 20 km MST C; Saturday 02/08 pm 10 km MST F, and ; Sunday 02/09 am 20 km MST F. Of course there will be a Friday evening social and a

Saturday evening banquet too. Interested racers in either of these championships need to be members of the Canadian Masters Ski Association. All they need to do is register (\$25) for Ontario Masters Crosscountry Ski Association and they automatically are part of the Canadian association. If they are super keen, they could still register for the World Masters Cup in Klosters Switzerland!

As there has been for many years, there is an Ontario Masters Point Series ( see <http://onmastersxcski.blogspot.com/> for all the latest info on Masters Skiing in Ontario). New this year though is an initiative between Canadian Masters and Nordiq Canada to create a Masters Points List, which is similar to the Canadian Points List for standard licence holders (FIS or Nordiq Canada).




## Canadian Ski Marathon

Are you looking for an adventure, a winter holiday, a challenge? Maybe all three? If so, consider taking part in the 59<sup>th</sup> edition of the legendary Canadian Ski Marathon on February 08-09, 2025. It is not a race against other skiers. It is a friendly ski tour, held over 2 days in the Montebello area of Quebec, about an hour from Ottawa.

It is divided into 5 sections each day and is well-supported, with check points, food, fluids, bus transportation, and first aid readily available. Each section is approximately 16 kms long. The CSM offers something for everyone. The event has multiple categories of participation. Some people want to experience a 'taste' of the event and do one section per day. Others will ski 2, 3, or 4 sections per day. Skiers in the Coureur des Bois category ski all 160 km over 2 days. The Gold CdB participants carry a pack with their equipment and food to camp outside on the Saturday night.

The event is held in the Laurentians, on the north shore of the Ottawa River. The trail runs mostly through rolling, forested, hills and across small lakes in beautiful rural Quebec. Many of the well groomed trails are skied on only once a year.

For more information check out the Canadian Ski Marathon web site <https://skimarathon.ca> or contact Don Eby at [d.eby@sympatico.ca](mailto:d.eby@sympatico.ca) or 519 373-2535. 


**New  
Trail!**



### Did you know....?

The Sawmill Trail was declared an official Canadian Ski Marathon training trail 3 years ago and is included in the CSM trail listing.


# Meet the Groomers

The Bruce Ski Club has two grooming teams. The **Sawmill** team consists of 7 people: Fred, Ron, Mark, Clare, Kari, Dawson and most recently Rick. At **Colpoys** there are Eli and Benito. Following are the first of the introductions. Here is a chance to learn a little about the people who make our skiing experience so incredible. Give them a wave, a thumbs up or a thank you when you get the chance! \_\_\_\_\_ 

## Ron Downie (Trail Captain)

Ron met Fred Scheel when he and his wife moved to Owen Sound from Petrolia. He had experience with a chainsaw and heavy machinery so was recruited to help at Sawmill. Ron and Fred rode to Sawmill together for 4 yrs before he took over as trail Captain for Fred. They trained 3 people to share the duties that Fred had done solo for many years. Ron does not ski but understands sports and driving the equipment.



"I love the sunrise on the trails. Be sure to say hi when you see us!" \_\_\_\_\_ 

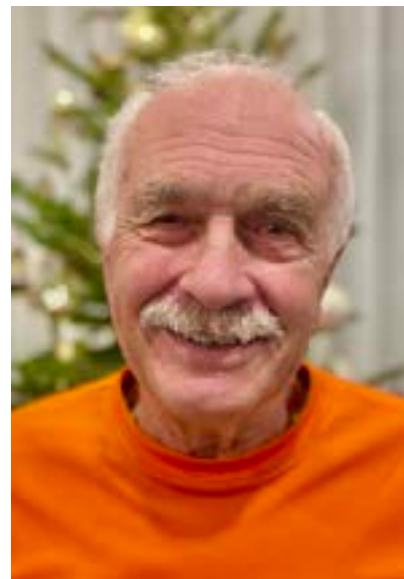
## Mark Powell

Mark started grooming in the late season of 2022. He had volunteered to put up signs in the fall and was recruited from there. He used to groom ski hills in the Hockley Valley "many decades ago" and also has experience with tractors, small engines, mechanics, snowmobiles and ATVs. He lives in Hepworth so Sawmill is easy access for him to groom trails or get out for a ski himself.



## Fred Scheel, aka "Cupcake"

Fred has been grooming the trails with the Bruce Ski Club since 1985; before the Sawmill Nordic trails were established. He picked up Nordic skiing in the 70's with wife Ruth and friends Pam & Reg Martin. He coached high school skiers at the old OSCVI, competed on the Master's circuit for years, and is now a Jackrabbits grandad (thus his Cupcake namesake). Over the years, he's groomed with snowmobiles, quads, PistonBully's and one amphibious track machine with a name that escapes him. If you want to know the total number of days groomed anytime over the last 40 years, he's your guy!




## Eli Heyden Thomas

Eli resides in Oliphant where he operates his own Tree Service business. He and his wife Tori are expecting their first Jackrabbit late January! He began grooming at the Red Bay trails in 2010 and when they



closed, he assisted at Sauble ski trails. He has been grooming full time at Colpoys for the past 2 years. Eli grew up in the area skiing with family and with Georgian Bay Nordic. He joined the Big Thunder Nordic Ski team after high school in Thunder Bay. He has been grooming with snowmobiles since he started and is an avid outdoorsman.

"Maintaining the local trails is a great way for me to give back to the community. See you on the trails!" \_\_\_\_\_ 



# Thank you to the following

December 2024



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The Bruce Trail Conservancy  
Georgian Bluffs



## Bruce Ski Club Executive, 2024-25

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## Volunteer for your club!

### Lighting Additional Trails:

[president@bruceskiclub.ca](mailto:president@bruceskiclub.ca)

**Jackrabbits:** [jackrabbits@bruceskiclub.ca](mailto:jackrabbits@bruceskiclub.ca)

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### Gerry's Place Upkeep:

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The Bruce Ski Club would like to thank



for the printing of this newsletter.