

SKI TRACKER

End of a Fabulous Snowy Season!

From the President

Dan Purdon



Welcome to the Club's fourth and final newsletter for our 2024/25 Cross Country Ski Season. Having a return to a "real" winter this year certainly made our trails, programs and races so much more enjoyable to run. Hats off to everyone who did their snow dances this year, they worked in spades.

As the season winds down there are some notes in this newsletter for our members to pay special attention to.

First, we are running a contest to name our newest trail opened at the beginning of the season to go along with last year's Humpty Dumpty trail. Put on your "Naming Hat" and forward your suggestion to us. The winner is to be announced at the Annual General Meeting.

Second, our Annual General Meeting has been set for Wednesday April 16th at Heartwood Hall in Owen Sound. We are returning to a format of 6pm Potluck and 7pm formal AGM. We'll be making a special recognition of one of our dedicated volunteers as well as electing our Directors for the upcoming year. A financial report will be presented as well as an opportunity to ask any questions to the Directors. Plan to attend at 6pm and bring your favourite "goodies" to share for the Potluck hour.

As a "first year President" I do want to thank all of our Volunteer Directors, Executive, Coaches, Groomers and Race officials for making this season such a success. It's always heartwarming to see a full parking lot and skiers on the trails and none of this could have happened without these many willing hands.


See you at the AGM on the 16th. _____



Trail Naming Contest


Extended to April 6th!

Kelly Rogers

We hope everyone had a chance to ski the newest trail in between the deep powder conditions and the spring melt. Put your creativity to work and send your submissions to newtrail@bruceskiclub.ca by April 6th. You may even want to submit two linked names - one for the main loop and one for the little offshoot loop (example: Mama Bear and Baby Bear). The short list of finalists will be voted on at the AGM to determine the winning name. As an added bonus, Suntrail has donated a prize for the winner. _____ 

Special Olympics

Laura Howlett

Owen Sound Waxwings & Central Bruce Snow Gliders have both added new skiers this year and are making the most of all of this snow (when Hwy 21 is open!) we are working on new drills and getting over old fears. All athletes have done at least one time trial in preparation for our 2026 regional qualifying meet next year. Anne and Jon both enjoyed competing against other SO athletes from the KW region. Many of our athletes plan to attend the SO meet in Parry Sound on March 8. We have hopes to still be skiing for our end of year party. _____ 



Jackrabbits’ “Rabbit Report”

Erin Scheel

A wonderfully snowy Jackrabbits season wrapped up on March 1 with our year-end Carnival!

As is tradition, the 85 skiers were divided into five teams with our theme of “Canadiana” this year. Each team embodied their name (Beavers, Mounties, Hockey-skis, Reds, Lumberjacks) and competed for points in a series

of five challenge stations. The grand finale was an epic Tug-O-War in the stadium which is always a crowd favourite (pictured).

The 2025 program drew skiers from Oakville to Tobermory, and we’re so happy our trails in Hepworth could play host; thank you to groomers and volunteers who keep the club going!

Fun was had, skills were learned, and many KMs of nature were enjoyed on our group skis.

Enjoy the off-season... until the snow flows again!





Race Co-ordinator


Marilyn Suke

This year's Suntrail Champions are... Sam Weichel and Janna Wardell!

Each year the Suntrail Trophy is engraved with the names of the fastest male and female BSC skiers completing the longest course. The Trophy is proudly displayed in Gerry's place so you can recall past victories!

Sawmill Trails successfully hosted six races this past season. Two local school races, our Southern Ontario Classic and Freestyle races as well as providing a venue for the school district of WOSSAA to hold their two events.

Thanks to bountiful snow and excellent grooming as well as our enthusiastic, talented and experienced volunteers they were a complete success. We strive for Fair and Fun and that is what we delivered. Thank you everyone for answering the call. It is a wonderful thing to see our youngest (3 years old!) to oldest striving for excellence on the snow.

Next year, remember to check off **Will Assist at Races** on your registration form to ensure you do not miss out on the fun (and muffins). _____ 




Seeking New Jackrabbits Coaches!

Erin Sheel

Every season, the Bruce Ski club runs a Jackrabbits program to foster the development of young skiers; it's a wonderful program that has run since 1975. This program is volunteer run, and requires volunteer coaches to lead the youth (85 kiddos participated this season). What that means is, we need 7 lead coaches to run our 7 levels, along with enough assistant coaches to accommodate a ratio of 1:6 skiers per group. In 2025, our program operated with 7 lead coaches and 15 assistant coaches. Coaches are set up for success with virtual courses through the Coaching Association of Canada, along with a coaching workshop at Duntroon Highlands. All coaching courses to participate in this program are funded by the Bruce Ski Club.

Typically, we experience a mad dash in the fall to find enough coaches to ensure they have time to complete their courses. We'd love to move that timeline forward. That's where you come in!

Please consider putting your name in the ring to coach if you have young skiers who want access to this program in the coming years; email jackrabbits@bruceskiclub.ca _____ 



Get to Know our GBN Athletes

Caleb Hodgkinson

Age: 13

Favourite event or distance: 5 km (classic or skate)

Racing pet peeve: When people don't let you pass

Advice for a new nordic skier: Stay focused and keep it fun.

Name some tracks on your workout playlist: Varies


Most memorable race: Ontario Youth Champs 2022



Favourite waffle toppings: Maple Syrup and whipped cream

What brand of shades do you race in? Oakley

Pre-race snack: Granola Bar

Favourite trail and why? "New Trail", because it has nice short and steep hills. _____ 



Olivia Abbott



Age: 14
Favourite event or distance: 5 km skate or sprints
Racing pet peeve: Yelling “track” when passing someone and they stay in the middle or fall when moving over
Advice for a new nordic skier: Get the basics of skiing down pat and speed will come.
Name some tracks on your workout playlist: Thrift Shop, Tick Tok
Most memorable race:

Ontario Winter Games

Favourite waffle toppings: Maple syrup

What brand of shades do you race in? Blitz

Pre-race snack: Kirkland Granola Bars

Favourite trail and why? Grunt. It has lots of uphill



Olivier Lafleur



Age: 16
Favourite event or distance: 5 km sprint, classic or 7.5 km free
Racing pet peeve: Not being able to pre-ski the race course.
Advice for a new nordic skier: Practice makes you better at what you’re doing. If you practice skiing you’ll get better at skiing, but if you practice racing, you’ll get better at racing.

Name some tracks on your workout playlist: Doom 2016 OST, Enter the Gungeon OST, Soprano (“En feu”, “Le Coach”)

Most memorable race: Nakkertok, during Nationals of 2024. During my 7.5 km skate race, the temperature outside has risen to 15C. We were all racing with just shorts and the race bib as a top.

Favourite waffle toppings: An unhealthy amount of maple syrup, every single berry in existence, and a whole lot of whipped cream.

What brand of shades do you race in? Bliz

Pre-race snack: Anything with sugar and electrolytes (energy chews, maple syrup, fruit)

Favourite trail and why? Grunt, as there usually isn’t anyone there, so it’s nice and peaceful, plus it has Freefall!



Get to Know our GBN Coaches

Ken Clarke



How long have you coached Nordic skiing? I have been involved as a Jackrabbit leader or GBN coach for 18 of the last 20 years.

Did you ski as a child? I downhill skied from age 5... and XC skied from age 14.

What motivates you as a coach? I am drawn by the opportunity to be a part of a group with a shared passion for an activity I love. The positive energy

the parents, athletes, and coaching team bring to GBN makes it hugely rewarding!

Advice for a new Nordic skier: Ski as often as you can. Don’t wait for perfect weather or perfect snow. Get out and build memories of the moments of perfect balance or glide that come with each time on skis. Celebrate Winter!

Coaching pet peeve: When I see people (especially children) skiing in the parking lot. It is dangerous! On skis it is harder to avoid cars that are trying to maneuver in slippery conditions. It is also bad for your skis, and it brings dirt onto the trails.

Can you share an inspiring athlete story? As a coach, I’ve had the privilege of being a witness to many athletes journeys. They all inspire, but it is the courage and positive spirit they all bring to training that I find most inspiring. They train in the Spring when the rain grieves the last crust skiing. They train in the heat of Summer when fresh corduroy is just a mirage. They train in the gloom of Fall when it is too dark to see the starting line. All so they can challenge themselves to be their best in all that Winter can muster!

Favourite waffle toppings: I know wax techs who would recommend a layer of green base binder under any topping as a way to make it last... I prefer to just use extra maple syrup.

How long can you wax on about wax? Fortunately, there are others who know far more than I do. I am better to follow the KISS approach when it comes to waxing... so I would rather listen than wax on.

Favourite après-ski beverage: hot honey and lemon

Favourite trail and why? I have always enjoyed the Grunt/Freefall loop in its many conjugations. It is challenging, scenic and rewarding. Our ‘New Trail’ is a close second. And the Salt Lake city loop at Hardwood Hills is a great adventure.



Georgian Bay Nordic

Michelle Lafleur

January was a busy month for racing! All the snow certainly made for good skiing, but not always good driving. GBN athletes raced at three SOD races, bringing home hardware at each one! At the Mono Nordic skate race, Ari Lothstein-Dobbin came home with a huge basket of treats. She really took coach Matt's words to heart when he asked the team to work on their door-prize game!

The Midland Loppet was also well attended despite some tricky driving conditions. Unlike the previous year, nobody had to be towed out of a drift by a nearby farmer's tractor!

Our hometown race, the Suntrail Special, featured some younger siblings of GBN athletes as well as our very own coach Jack proving that GBN truly is a family affair!

The biggest race of the month was Easterns (OCup #4) held at Mont Ste-Anne. Our graduating skier, Aleida Nelson, had a fantastic weekend racing in the 10 km classic, the 4 x 5 km mixed relay, and clocking the fastest course time for the U18 F sprints!


Looking ahead to our big finish at the Ontario Youth Championships and the wild and crazy Midland Ski Cross to round out the season.

GBN skiers finished February with back-to-back races starting with Georgian Nordic Sprints where ALL of our skiers took home GOLD in their respective divisions. Our athletes were all paired up with skiers from other clubs. Once rivals, now teammates, it was great fun to see the camaraderie between clubs.

Next up was a picture-perfect day for the Bruce Ski Club's own Community Classic race. GBN athletes enjoyed home-court advantage speeding up the steeper climbs that surprised some of the other team's young racers. Having family and friends around to cheer our skiers to the finish also helped! One grandparent who also participated stated he was in the U100 category, proving once again that Nordic is for life!

Ontario Youth Championships hosted by Arrowhead Nordic was bittersweet for some skiers who bid a fond farewell to the event as they age out. The OYC weekend is always a highlight of the season and a celebration of sport. Some race highlights include: gold and silver medals for both Aidan Hodgkinson and Liam Law and double gold for Santiago Guzman.

Finally, GBN ended the SOD series with a bang at the Midland Ski Cross Sprint race. Skiers had to climb up and race down braving jumps, banked turns, and rollers. Any race that comes with a warning and encourages helmets is not for the faint of heart! One of our skiers did suffer a thumb injury after taking a jump, but still managed to get up and win the race!

At press time, our graduating skier, Aleida Nelson, is still racing at Nationals in Canmore. Go Aleida, go! Allez, allez, allez! 

Julian Smith Update

Heidi Tones

Thank you to everyone who had a ski lesson or came out to support Julian at our fundraiser, Soup For Julian. It was a great success. We served 120 people! It was truly a delight to see our ski community together in the Groomer Shed chatting and eating. (Plan to attend the AGM and see all the same great people again!!)

Julian is very proud to have represented Canada, the Bruce Ski Club and Georgian Bay Nordic as he raced in Engadin, Les Rousse, Cogne and Falun! He appreciates the support our club has given him in the past and is already gearing up for the Olympic Trial Selection in December, which will be in St George, BC. Below is a photo of Julian racing in the Italian Alps!!



Meet the Groomers

Kari



This is my 3rd year grooming. I got started by asking Ron & Fred if I could learn to groom. I've been cycling and hiking with Fred's group for a lot of years. I do like to classic ski but I don't go very often. I only groom on Saturdays as I am not yet retired.

Dawson Dejeu



I started grooming the ski trails 3 seasons ago. My involvement on the grooming team started after having equipment available to help regrade trails after logging was done during the off season. My favourite part about skiing is bringing new comers to the trails sharing the

Robin Peg



Robin is a new groomer to Colpoys Bay. He lived in Colpoys and Oliphant as a youngster then lived in Whistler for 25 years. He has skied and sledged all of his life and worked as a guide part time, out west. He enjoys the backcountry touring here. He is a sled, snowcat and diesel mechanic and has worked on grooming equipment for Whistler/Blackcomb,

beautiful fun! Nothing beats being the first person to the trails after a fresh snowfall. See you out there!

Whistler Olympic Park, Calaghan Valley and Canadian adventures.

"Glad you are enjoying the trails. Colpoys is a great area!"



Congratulations!

Laura Robinson, founding member of the Bruce Ski Club has been awarded the King's Coronation medal for helping Afghan Women Flee the Taliban in 2021. Amazing work! For the full article see <https://www.bayshorebroadcasting.ca/2025/03/12/kings-coronation-medal-for-southampton-woman-who-helped-afghan-women-flee-taliban/>

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March 2025



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Bruce Ski Club Executive, 2024-25

President - Dan Purdon	519-477-5330	president@bruceskiclub.ca
Web/Facebook - Jill Graham	519-379-9821	jillgraham.outdoor@gmail.com
Secretary - Deborah Downie	519-339-0762	deborahdownie62@gmail.com
Treasurer - Andrew Howlett	519-376-2203	treasurer@bruceskiclub.ca
Registrar - Heidi Tones	519-477-8870	smith.tones@gmail.com
Colpoys Trail Capt - Benito Guzman	647-982-4704	benitoguzmanibarguen@gmail.com
Sawmill Nordic Centre:		
Facilities Manager - Fred Schlenker	226-668-9403	schlenkerfred@gmail.com
Sawmill Trail Captain - Rick Graham	519-378-3355	rajkdgraham@gmail.com
Jackrabbits Coordinator- Erin Scheel	416-371-1484	jackrabbits@bruceskiclub.ca
GBN Liaison - Nora Scott	416-558-4847	noramargaretscott@gmail.com
Race Coordinator - Marilyn Suke	519-374-4227	mpsuke@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor - Paula Wilcox	519-494-6512	piwilcox@icloud.com

A Big Thank You!

Thanks to all of you who contributed to the newsletter by writing reports, writing and sending in your profiles, creating maps and images, emailing photos, providing advice, answering questions, and proofreading.

I couldn't have done it without you!

Paula
Newsletter Editor

The Bruce Ski Club would like to thank



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