



"KICK AND GLIDE"

A HISTORY OF
THE NORTH BAY NORDIC SKI CLUB

1975 - 2002

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Table of Contents

| | | |
|--------------|---|-----|
| Introduction | | 5 |
| We Remember | | 6 |
| Chapter 1 | To 1974 The Early Years | 7 |
| Chapter 2 | 1974-75 Laurentian Touring meets Nordic Ski Club | 17 |
| Chapter 3 | 1975-78 The Conewango Years | 22 |
| | (i) 1975-76 A Season Of Firsts | 22 |
| | (ii) 1976-77 Ontario Winter Games & Official Incorporation | 29 |
| | (iii) 1977-78 Looking for a Permanent Home | 35 |
| Chapter 4 | 1978-79 A New Home on Northshore Road | 42 |
| Chapter 5 | 1979-80 First Loppet | 48 |
| Chapter 6 | 1980-81 Rumours of a Pipeline | 56 |
| Chapter 7 | 1978-81 The Rise and Fall of the Cross Country Ski Agency | 62 |
| Chapter 8 | 1981-82 The Pipeline Cometh | 65 |
| Chapter 9 | 1982-83 Jackrabbit Starts | 72 |
| Chapter 10 | 1983-84 First Ski Show at Northgate | 78 |
| Chapter 11 | 1984-85 Hot Dogs For Sale! | 85 |
| Chapter 12 | 1985-86 Jackrabbit Starts Again – 1 st Skating races | 92 |
| Chapter 13 | 1986-87 The Legend of the Blue Machine | 101 |
| Chapter 14 | 1987-88 Plans For Expansion | 108 |
| Chapter 15 | 1988-89 Expansion and Ontario Winter Games | 115 |
| Chapter 16 | 1989-90 Dave Rees Wins Dave Rees Award | 123 |
| Chapter 17 | 1990-91 New Garage and Waxing Room | 128 |
| Chapter 18 | 1991-92 We Host the Canadian Masters | 135 |
| Chapter 19 | 1992-93 The Year of the Button | 145 |
| Chapter 20 | 1993-94 The Long Blue Downhill | 157 |
| Chapter 21 | 1994-95 Searching for the "BIG MACHINE" | 164 |
| Chapter 22 | 1995-96 The Pisten Bulley Arrives For OFSAA '96 | 172 |
| Chapter 23 | 1996-97 OFSAA '97 and the O.U. Championships | 186 |
| Chapter 24 | 1997-98 Phase 1 Clubhouse Expansion & El Nino Ice | 198 |
| Chapter 25 | 1998-99 Phase 2 Clubhouse Expansion | 206 |
| Chapter 26 | 1999-00 The Canadian Masters Meltdown | 214 |
| Chapter 27 | 2000-01 A Season Of Changes and Light | 228 |
| Chapter 28 | 2001-02 Bert Marsden's 76 | 241 |
| Chapter 29 | 2002-03 A Work In Progress | 254 |

The cover photos were taken by Andrew Rees.

The back cover shows detail from Jeanine Fallon's 1997 painting, "The Lookout." The anonymous winner of a silent auction for the painting donated it to the Club.

Other photos reproduced within the book were taken by Tex Mitchell, Hans Frenssen, Jackie Goulet, Tom Cook, and Andrew Rees.

Introduction

Twenty-seven years have passed since the official incorporation of the North Bay Nordic Ski Club in 1975. Much has changed - the appearance of the trails, the snow grooming equipment we employ, the clothing we wear, the ski equipment we use, and the clubhouse facilities we enjoy.

Trails that once accommodated a single snowmobile and tracksetter are now designed up to a 6-metre width to allow both classic and skating techniques and the passage of a large sophisticated snow-grooming machine. Clothing has evolved from long woolen socks and knickers with cotton and wool tops to micro-fibre and Lycra, designed to keep skiers drier and warmer. And while some traditionalists still choose to ski on wooden skis (beautiful works of art that they are), most skiers have moved to light weight fiberglass and carbon graphite composites for lighter, more efficient skis and poles. Ski boots and bindings have also changed in many leaps and bounds with present day equipment providing a far more secure attachment to one's skis and superior control. Our clubhouse, Jackrabbit Lodge, and equipment garage have all been improved steadily over the years.

But with all of these changes, many things remain constant at the North Bay Nordic Ski Club. The rugged hills of the escarpment north of Trout Lake remain as challenging and daunting as ever; the downhill runs are just as fast. And the great strength of the Club, its spirit of volunteerism, continues to drive the Club in all of its pursuits.

This book is dedicated to all of the builders and the volunteers.

A few acknowledgements –

Thank you to all those Club members who, for some obsessive reasons, have saved photos, old newsletters, race results, and Club memorabilia; and to Dave Rees, Shirley Bass, Jackie Goulet, Tex Mitchell, Hans Frenssen, Tom Cook, and Charlie Olmsted for their detailed personal recollections.

And thank you to two conscientious advisors and editors, Jane Minden and Gail Rees.

Add your own history –

As you read through these years of Nordic history, you will recall your own skiing highlights, pursuits, and endeavours. At the end of every chapter you will find a page titled ***“Recollections”*** where you can write in your own significant events for that year. Perhaps you entered a race or volunteered your help at some event. Perhaps it was the year you first skied the Green Trail, travelled to some other ski destination, or first skied with a child on the Yellow. Whatever – it's your page!

We remember

Ormeus (Red) Bedard

Glen Parfitt

Lynda Scott

Ron Campbell

Harvey Charters

Don Honeyborne

Fred Gunter

Pat Mackan

Al (Mitch) Mitchell

Carly Statham

Claire Meloche

It was the winter of 1956, at the age of 12, when I bought my first pair of skis in Hamilton Ontario. At that time, there was just one major sporting goods store in the city, Sam Manson's on King Street West - downtown, before malls and shopping centres. My first skis were heavy wooden things, equipped with cable bindings and little metal clips on the sides. If I wanted to be able to lift my heel off the ski as I moved along the flats, I would leave the cable over the clips. Before a downhill section, I would stop and first release the cable, then pass it under the clips and re-secure the binding, which would then hold my heel flat to my ski. It was the original "combi-ski."

Chedoke Golf Course was a few short blocks away from our home, and its moderately hilly terrain under The Mountain (Hamilton's exaggeration of "the Niagara Escarpment") was a popular spot for tobogganing, sledding, and skiing; and after school, I would rush over for several hours of skiing, returning home in the dusk or darkness of a winter's evening.

One early evening, it was snowing quite heavily, as it used to do on occasion in Hamilton, and as I skied through the swirling snow in the general direction of home, I saw another figure, much older than I, maybe in his twenties and a far better skier than I, also heading for the lights of the neighbouring streets. His body angled forward, skiing in a graceful rhythmic stride, he disappeared into the gloom. I did not know him then, but I would meet Charlie Olmsted in North Bay 25 years later.

* * * * *

Chapter 1 To 1974 - The Early Years

The North Bay Nordic Ski Club was formed in 1975 and officially incorporated in 1976. While some might assume that before that there was a great void, in fact skiing had been alive and well in the North Bay area for many years. From the 1930s when Red Bedard first became involved with the Laurentian Ski Club, through to the 1970s, both recreational skiing and ski racing (at the high school, provincial, and national levels) were well entrenched.

In the first half of the last century, skiing was skiing - although there was a slowly growing differentiation between "cross-country" and "downhill" (or "alpine") skiing. Wide wooden skis, with cable bindings and heavy leather boots, were used for all techniques, and skiers learned how to go up and across, as well as down. Starting in the 1940s, mechanized equipment designed to transport skiers up hills (from primitive rope tows to T-bars, pommel lifts, chair lifts, and gondola cars) made skiing attractive to those who wanted to restrict their skiing to schussing down hills. Over several decades, cross-country skiing declined in popularity, and only a few hardy skiers maintained the traditions of pine tar and grip wax and ski tours through back woods trails. But those who were involved in ski racing still maintained the Nordic skiing techniques in both cross-country and jumping.

Jack Wootton

Jack Wootton, now 82 years old, a long-time Nordic member as well as a Board member in the 1980s, started skiing in 1928. From 1934 to 1939, Jack

was a member of a ski team at North Bay Collegiate Institute and Vocational School (now Algonquin), and they would race at Laurentian and other areas such as Peterborough and Huntsville. Racing included all ski disciplines, and on one pair of skis, Jack, and others at the time, would race the downhill, slalom, cross-country, and would also compete in jumping competitions.

Among the race organizers at the Laurentian Ski Club at that time was Gord Rees, father of Dave Rees. In those days, organizers of cross-country races had to pack the course by snowshoe, for this was before the era of snowmachines. Races were 4 to 5 miles (about 8 km) in length and were held on trails near Laurentian. And before even the most rudimentary rope tows appeared in the 1940s, all downhill skiers had to walk up the hill to the start area. After a heavy snowfall, grooming was done by organizing many skiers to side-step up and down the hill.

Jack recalls the influence of some Norwegians who came down for some races in 1936 from mining camps in the Timmins area. They had light and narrow birch skis with light boots and a toe harness. And could they pole! This was the first time that North Bay skiers had seen double poling and "real" cross-country skis, and the local skiers were amazed by the speed that these Norwegian skiers had. It was in sharp contrast to the wide and heavy skis with cable bindings that Jack and his cohorts used for every manner of skiing. Jack's skis had metal "lugs" on the side for the cable to pass under. When released, it allowed the heel of the foot to lift off the ski for moving along the flats.

At another race in 1937, two French Canadians from St. Saver, Quebec, professional skiers who had competed in Europe, raced at Laurentian. Following that eye-opener, Jack proceeded to buy, for \$20, a pair of top quality Johanssen-Nielsen skis.

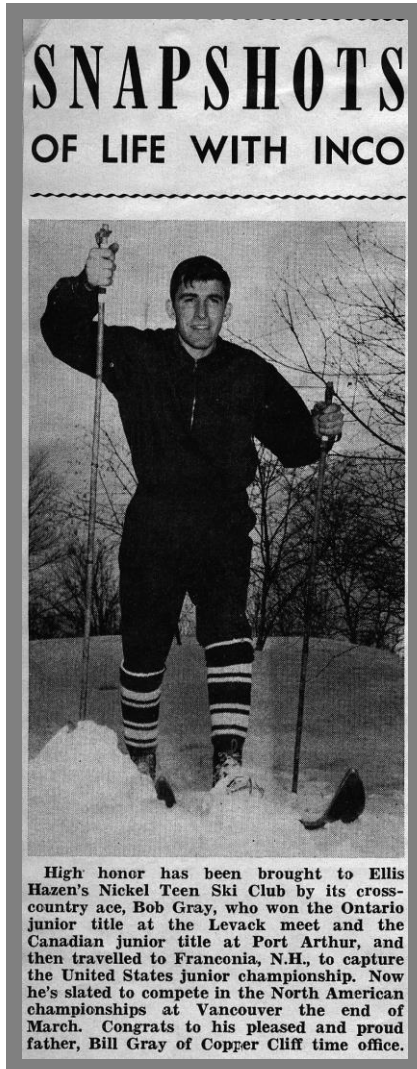
Although primarily a downhiller, Jack was influenced by Dave Rees, and in the late 1970's shifted to cross-country and to the Nordic scene.

Bob Gray and the Nickel Teen Team

In the early 1950s, new lightweight and specialized cross-country equipment was starting to appear more commonly from Scandinavian countries, and any racing team with a Scandinavian connection had an edge on the competition. Such was the case in Sudbury, Ontario, where Ellis Hazen had started the "Nickel Teen Team" in 1948. With their secret Finnish waxes and faster racing skis and boots, this team produced many fine ski racers, such as Brian Burnett and Bob Gray. Bob would later move to the North Bay area and would become Reeve of Chisholm Township (south of North Bay) and, in the 1990s, head of the Ontario Government's "Lands for Life" process. But from 1952 to 1956 in high school in Sudbury and from 1956 to 1960 on a sports scholarship at Denver University, he skied to many victories and a place on the Canadian National Team.

According to Bob Gray, it was Ellis Hazen's vision in the 1950s that produced the structure and organization of high school and club skiers competing together in the four ski disciplines. Hazen created a system that encouraged all skiers to become competent in both Nordic skiing (jumping and cross-country) and Alpine skiing (downhill and slalom). These were still the days, of course, before the complete separation of alpine and cross-country skiing and before concerns about insurance and liability. At ski races, both high school and provincial level or club skiers would compete against each other, and the fastest

times would prevail for the division for which the skier was racing. Thus a skier who was just skiing for his or her school could win the high school championship but not the provincial title, and vice versa. If the skier declared that he or she was competing at both levels, that skier could win dual championships as Bob Gray did on numerous occasions.



Bob Gray, skiing in 1956

Bob recounts an interesting tale involving Alex Stevenson of the Skiers' Shop. Alex Stevenson was an extremely generous supporter of skiing in the North Bay area and equipped the local skiers with equipment. Today we would say that they were "sponsored" by the Skiers' Shop. At one NOSSA race in Timmins, where Bob was competing against North Bay schools, he had the misfortune of breaking a ski in a downhill training run, and as the top skier at the meet, it was a race he was highly favoured to win. Seeing his despair, Alex took the young skier aside and offered him a pair of skis for the race. "Is that OK? You helping me out," asked Bob. "Screw 'em - you're the best skier here, and they should know that," Alex replied. Bob Gray went on to win that race, and Alex Stevenson later took a lot of heat from the North Bay coaches when they heard that "their" sponsor had helped a competitor.

Tom Cook

Another fine skier competing just a few years later was Tom Cook, now a veteran North Bay Nordic skier. From 1957 to 1962, Tom was skiing for Kirkland Lake Collegiate and Vocational Institute, competing against skiers such as North Bay's Dave Rees, who skied for Algonquin Composite and Chippewa, and Bob Horner who raced for Temiskaming High School.

Tom recalls, partly tongue in cheek, some of those early skiing experiences: "the pungent smell of pine tar when skis were being prepared and waxed for racing; the deathly fear on the downhill courses; the horror when flying off the jumps; and the painful cross-country races. We were not well prepared." But the Cook family was a skiing family in Kirkland Lake, and although not quite as important as being on the football team, skiing for the school ski team and being carded at the provincial level was definitely very prestigious for Tom.

"And our equipment," reflects Tom, "was poor; we were copying what we saw at the races, like the newer boot designs, modifying low cut shoes we had at home with a three-holed platform to fit the (then) new three pin bindings."

A highly competitive group of teams (North Bay, Kirkland Lake, Sudbury, Timmins) met on weekends for their races. Saturday's events started with downhill racing in the morning, followed by the grueling cross-country race in the afternoon; then on Sunday, the jumping competitions were held in the morning, finishing with slalom in the afternoon. Slalom was placed last in the sequence as many racers would ski outside a gate and be disqualified, and a racer had to ski successfully in three of the four events to be officially scored for the team. This forced all skiers to compete in all disciplines, including cross-country.

Today, skiers compete separately in Ontario divisional or high school races; but during the 1950s and 60s all skiers competed at the same events for such prizes as the Munroe and Collingwood Cups.

Dave Rees

In the same era of the late 1950s and early 1960s, and then continuing for several decades, Dave Rees established himself as a dominant force in Canadian skiing both in high school and elite level racing and in the top echelons of Cross Country Canada and the National Team organization.

Born in England in 1943, Dave was introduced to skiing in North Bay by his father, Gordon, a competent and competitive skier himself. In the 1950s, the quest for skiable trails took Dave and friends to a variety of locations, such as the Laurentian Ski Club, Stuffle's Hill, the Sissy Trail, and the Reservoir Trail. One trail that was used for night skiing enabled Dave to ski from near his home on Aubrey Street, through where the Ontario Hydro building was located, across Trout Lake Road and up to the Laurentian Ski Club trails at the base of the hill.

Dave started his illustrious competitive career in 1950 at the age of 7 and competed as a member of the Laurentian Ski Club. Later, when Laurentian did not want to support a racing team, Dave formed the North Bay Ski Racers and he was the first president in 1958-59. In high school Dave raced for North Bay Collegiate and Vocational, and later for Chippewa.

Dave's main coach through his high school years was "The Skiers' Shop's" Alex Stevenson, who was the team's manager, driver, and organizer. Focusing mainly on the technical aspects of downhill skiing, Alex left it up to his skiers to train for the cross-country events, and Dave and his teammates basically trained on their own. Dave even made up his own grip wax, a concoction of pine tar, bee's wax, and paraffin. Ski races were held in Kirkland

Lake, Fort William / Port Arthur, Sudbury (with five teams competing), Levac, Onaping, the Sault, Collingwood, Osler Bluffs, and Ottawa. Competing in the four ski disciplines, the team would have four pairs of skis and three pairs of boots per skier, and Alex Stevenson's vehicle would often have up to 25 pairs of skis on the roof.



Dave Rees at left (#31); Bob Gray at right (#10) at a ski meet at Temiskaming, 1956

Most racers of the day were primarily downhill specialists and few trained seriously for the cross-country events. Dave Rees stood out among this group as one who devoted himself to cross-country training with a passion. In fact, while in grade 11, Dave constructed a pair of roller skis for off snow training. They were the first pair of roller skis made in Canada, possibly in North America.

Over his lengthy skiing career, Dave Rees amassed an enviable record and collection of medal finishes.

HIGH SCHOOL COMPETITIVE SUMMARY - NOSSA & OFSAA

29 medals (13 gold, 5 silver, 11 bronze)

JUNIOR COMPETITIVE SUMMARY

Regional Championships (Northern Ontario, Gatineau Zone - Quebec)

12 gold, 8 silver, 6 bronze

Provincial Championships (Ontario, Quebec)

20 gold, 6 silver, 4 bronze

Canadian Championships

4 gold, 3 silver, 1 bronze

Junior International Championships

1 bronze; 1 - 4th place finish

In 1962, at the age of 19, Dave was selected to Canada's National Cross Country Ski Team and started competing in the senior ranks. At one of his first training sessions at Val Cartier, Dave met and received advice from many, including senior skier Bob Gray. Bob recalls that this rookie skier was a "sponge for information," soaking up everything there was to know about waxing techniques and the technical aspects of skiing. In 1963 at Carlton University, Dave skied at the university level, winning every competition entered and was named Athlete of the Year. Dave's competitive skiing culminated at the Grenoble Winter Olympics in 1968.

SENIOR COMPETITIVE SUMMARY

Regional Championships

17 gold, 6 silver, 2 bronze

Provincial Championships

9 gold, 6 silver, 2 bronze

Canadian Championships

3 gold, 5 silver, 7 bronze

North American Championships

1 gold, 1 silver, 3 - 4th place finishes

1964 Olympics, named as "spare"

International Competitions

Sweden, 1968

Grenoble Winter Olympics - 1968, 39th in 10 km relay

Competed in Norway (1984), Germany (1985), Sweden (1989)

Through the 1960s and 70s, Dave trained and skied many kilometres in the Redbridge area with Erik Salkeld who was a couple of years older than Dave and a fellow skier on the National Team. Salkeld's primary mentor was Elmer Ypya who arrived in North Bay in 1955 from Estonia and later moved to the Redbridge area where he met Erik. The trails in the Songis and fish hatchery area were ideal for cross-country skiing, and Dave and Erik spent much training time on them.

Dave Rees' contribution to skiing did not stop on the ski trails. From the mid-70s through to the mid-90s, a span of twenty years, Dave filled almost every position available in instruction, coaching, race organization, and administration. He was a founding member and the first president of the Canadian Association of Nordic Ski Instructors (CANSI) in 1974-75. In the umbrella organizations of Ski Canada, the Canadian Ski Association, and Cross Country Canada, Dave served as Northern Ontario Chairman, National Team Committee member and Chairman, Technical Committee and Technical Services Chairman, Coaching Certification Committee member; and for three years was President of Cross Country Canada. Dave also served as a club coach at the local level (at Ottawa and with our own North Bay Nordic team) and coached or assisted with coaching at numerous international competitions including the Winter Olympics at Innsbruck (1976), Sarajevo (1984), and Albertville (1992). More recently, in 2002-2003, Dave has rejoined Cross Country Canada as Events Chairperson.

In the officiating end of cross-country ski racing, Dave is ranked as a National and International Technical Delegate; and his experience and knowledge of the technical aspects of racing have been called upon extensively. Locally, Dave has been a fountain of information as North Bay Nordic has hosted

such events as the Ontario Winter Games (1978-79) when Dave designed the course and the chalet at the Canadore Trails. In more recent years, Dave was the Chief of the Course at the Calgary Olympics (1988). And at North Bay Nordic, Dave Rees was our Race Committee's primary mentor as we hosted in addition to our annual Invitational and North Bay Nordic Ski Races, the Canadian Masters Championships (1992 and 2000), the OFSAA high school championships (1996 and 1997) and Ontario University Championships (1997 and 1998).

At North Bay Nordic, my personal involvement as Chief of the Course for those events would have been extremely difficult without the advice from Dave Rees. There were many telephone conversations and strategic discussions on the fine points of tracksetting, snow type, weather forecasting, course signage, and many other details. Dave's assistance and advice were invaluable and contributed greatly to the success of our races and to North Bay Nordic's high reputation in hosting successful ski events.

Another contribution from Dave Rees was his book Cross Country Skiing - Touring and Competition (Copp Clark, Toronto, 1975 and revised 1977, 1982). While the photos are now dated and the equipment referred to is now obsolete (pine tar and lignostone edges), much of the instructional and waxing discussions are as relevant as ever and are still used by skiers lucky enough to have a copy.

Dave Rees' personal history and his skiing career are intertwined with the development of the North Bay Nordic Ski Club. Following university and a brief high school teaching stint at Almaguin Highlands Secondary School (Dave taught Geography, Gail taught English and Phys.Ed.), the Reeses moved to North Bay where Dave had secured a teaching position at Nipissing University and continued to work on his Ph.D. in Geography at Carlton. Living for a few years in North Bay, Dave and Gail together began to build a house on Northshore Road and moved there in the spring of 1975. Stephanie was born in July 1976. During this time, Dave ran on an existing trail that led from Northshore Road up to High Lake, a trail he had known since his childhood when his parents had a cottage on Trout Lake. A hay field that was used (but not owned) by a local farmer called Joe Larande was situated at the turn of the road on Northshore. (Larande's old log house was located near where the Knights of Columbus building is now.) The hay field looked promising as a possible site for a parking lot and ski chalet. A trail (now our "Main Trail out") led off from this hay field into the bush connecting with other tote roads that were used by farmers to access fields up near Daley's Road. The terrain was rugged, perfect for a cross-country ski trail network, and Dave decided to research the land ownership. Analyzing a map that showed crown and patent (private) land, he was more than pleasantly surprised to see that most of the land was Crown. The few areas that were patent land were in adjacent blocks so setting out trails would be made easier.

In the closely-knit community of North Bay's cross-country skiers, Dave was aware of and involved peripherally with a group of cross-country skiers developing trails at Camp Conewango out in the Lake Talon area. It was, therefore, no surprise that, in the summer of 1977, fellow skier Hans Frenssen dropped in for a visit to discuss the need for a ski trail complex closer to North Bay than the distant Conewango Trails. Dave had a plan, and so the two of them sat on a plank of wood on Dave's unfinished deck, maps stretched out in front of them, planning the future Nordic trails.

But I am getting ahead of myself and many things led up to this.



Dave Rees in classic form. (Photo by Tex Mitchell)

* * * * *

Across Canada during the early 1970s there were widespread changes in many areas that led to a growth in the sport of cross-country skiing. First, following the post-war economic boom of the 1950s and 1960s there was a continuing expansion in the amount of leisure time that could be devoted to recreational pursuits. Second, there was a growing realization that many Canadians were out of shape physically, and that there was a need for fun, fitness related activities, not to mention a more basic alternative to the much higher priced downhill skiing option.

The Canadian government's role in sport can be traced to the mid-1950s. Government action was prompted by poor showings at the 1954 World Hockey Championships and in the 1956 Olympics, when Canada was defeated at its "own game" by the Soviets, followed by a disappointing performance at the 1960 Olympics in Rome. At the same time, Canada's perceived poor level of physical fitness created headlines in 1959 when the then Prince of Wales, on a

visit to Canada, delivered a speech to the Canadian Medical Association citing Canada's 'sub-health': "There is evidence that, despite everything, people in Canada are not as fit as they might be...Some scheme, therefore, which exists to encourage participation in all sports and recreations, for all ages and sections of the community, is absolutely essential to any modern community with a high standard of living."

As a result, the Fitness and Amateur Sport Act was passed in 1961 to encourage this development. Ten years later, in 1971, the Government of Canada, still seeing a need to have more involvement in encouraging a more healthy lifestyle, established "*Participation*" under Health Canada to support government health priorities - "particularly the promotion of healthy, active living". In 1973, some unknown bureaucrat created a statistically correct but very fictitious "60 year old Swede" who could out-run, out-ski, and out-perform any 30 year old Canadian. We were insulted. We rose to the challenge.

Recollections – to 1974

Chapter 2 1974-75 Laurentian Touring meets Nordic Ski Club

Thus it was in the context of a growing interest in physical fitness, that in North Bay in 1974, a small but devoted band of cross-country skiers formed the Laurentian Touring Club. The Laurentian Touring Club was not an officially incorporated organization; rather, it was an offshoot (financially and legally) of the downhill oriented Laurentian Ski Club (now Jack Pine Hill). Laurentian S.C. had a small rope tow in the 1940s; a T-Bar was installed in the early 1960s. But while Laurentian focused exclusively on downhill skiing and on finding a more challenging location for itself (which they did later at Mount Antoine in Mattawa), there remained a small devoted group of skiers that clung to the traditional method of getting up a hill - that is, you ski up!

Shirley Bass and Jackie Goulet had for several years been skiing with a group of like-minded skiers on some short trails that extended from the top of Laurentian S.C. But the trails were short, and the area was limited, so the focus soon turned to travelling to other locations where a day of trail skiing could be had.

The Laurentian Touring Club had as its prime leader the well-known North Bay skier and naturalist Ormeus "Red" Bedard. Red delighted in leading groups of skiers through back woods trails, the trails that he had not seen since the 1930s. But retiring from the ONR in 1974, he was able to get back to skiing. He especially enjoyed instructing new skiers and pointing out many of the interesting winter sights: birds, animal tracks, trees, and other forest lore. The groups of skiers with him explored a variety of areas on trails off the gas pipeline, in the Tower Drive area, off Highway 11 North, at nearby Provincial Parks, such as Champlain and Arrowhead, and the trails at L'Auberge des Pionniers near Mattawa. Sometimes they skied from Hwy. 11 to a camp owned by Larry Cosgrove on Bassey Lake, south of Tilden Lake. Larry was a local trapper as well as the equipment manager at the Laurentian S.C., and his long black hair and wild looks made quite an impression on these visiting skiers - including Betty Allard, now one of North Bay Nordic's senior skiers!

The highlight of a day of skiing on some old forgotten bush trail was always a roaring fire, a pot of tea, and lunch. But the stop for a snack, even with the hot fire, had its down side. As Jackie Goulet explains, "You cooled off very quickly after the morning ski, and standing around the fire did not get you dried off and warmed up, so it was often a cold ski back."

And as enjoyable as this more remote type of trail skiing experience was, much preparatory work was required. There was, of course, the obligatory advertising, phoning, and organizing of vehicles. Adequate parking at the destination had to be assured, often requiring a request to have an area plowed out. Frequently, Shirley Bass and others would travel the day before the tour to pre-ski a trail to set ski tracks, and hopefully it would not snow over night. On some occasions, a trail was packed by snowshoe; and that could be definitely more exhausting than the skiing. This group of hardy skiers did not have snowmobiles and tracksetters, and most of them had never skied on a groomed and trackset trail.

But despite the difficulties behind the scenes, the numbers started to grow. In 1974, the membership of the Laurentian Touring Club was about 20 skiers, and an average of 8 would participate on a ski tour. One year later, in

1975, the membership had expanded to over 70, and the tours were attracting 20 plus. The boom in cross-country skiing was on!

Responding to this, the Laurentian Touring Club directors (Jackie Goulet, Maren Joles, Shirley Bass, and Red Bedard), a bit fatigued from all of their efforts, started to look for a home, a place with their own trails, where the demands of organizing tours would be eliminated.

* * * * *

(Meanwhile, in 1974, Jane and I bought our first pair of cross-country skis at Collegiate Sports in Toronto. Motivated by watching the start of the Muskoka Loppet a few years earlier and having a young Finnish lad in my class at school in Scarborough, and his urging to ski the "real way", we headed off with our brand new skis to the Keith Horton tree farm and conservation area north of Toronto. On that first day, we skied for hours, and I can remember the agony I experienced as I literally seized up and could barely operate the clutch on our car. A few weeks later we were at Seneca College trying again in very poor icy conditions as it had snowed, rained, and frozen up. We skied back and forth past a group taking a lesson, keeping our eyes and ears open; in the ensuing weeks we "practised" on the living room floor of our Scarberia apartment, "How to Ski" book in hand, diagonal striding across the floor (without the grip wax of course!)

* * * * *

At the same time, another group of cross-country skiers was forging out a place in the wilderness. The unofficial, loosely formed "Nordic Ski Club", headed by Tex Mitchell, was starting to establish some programmes and to carve out some trails in the Camp Conewango area on the north shore of Talon Lake.

John A. (Tex) Mitchell arrived in North Bay in June of 1974, a Lieutenant Colonel in the Canadian Armed Forces, appointed to the command of CFB North Bay. With his military bearing and organizational skills, he brought also a wealth of experience in kayaking and skiing.

At the West Rouge Canoe Club, Tex had attained national prominence winning, among other titles, the Canadian Junior Championship in 1964 (K1 - single kayak); and at the North American Championship in 1965, gold in K4 and silver in K2. At that time, the best paddlers in the world were the Swedes, and Tex learned from them the value of cross-country skiing as a superb winter cross training activity. Previously posted to a radar installation site at Armstrong, Ontario, Tex, an experienced downhill skier and instructor, got into cross-country skiing at the suggestion of his dentist, and he was soon coaching biathlon in the early 1970s.

When he was transferred to North Bay in 1974, Tex was re-united with long time friend and paddler Terry Evans at the North Bay Canoe Club, and Tex immediately became involved in the coaching programme there.

"Terry and I were out there in kayaks - it was before they had any motorboats - and Terry had every paddler in boats paddling by as Terry and I watched, inspecting and observing strengths and weaknesses in the athletes."

'What do you think?' asked Terry Evans.

'I can make a racer out of that one,' Tex stated flatly.

Tex would become the personal coach of "that one," Barb Olmsted, from 1974 to 1988, with Barb (and her sister Nancy) winning bronze at the Los Angeles Olympics in 1980.

Over the ensuing months and two years to 1976 when he was promoted to full Colonel and transferred to Goose Bay, Tex commandeered his crews of kayakers to become heavily involved in cross-country skiing, not only as skiers, but also as trail makers. He planted many of the strong roots of the North Bay Nordic Ski Club. For with Barb and Nancy Olmsted's involvement in kayaking and thus cross-country skiing, their father, Charlie Olmsted (ex-Hamiltonian and professional engineer), would also become highly involved in both canoeing and kayaking (later as President of Canoe Ontario) and in the development of the North Bay Nordic Ski Club as one of its primary builders.

While looking for places to ski, Tex had met another interested party, Bill Kiedyk, in the summer of 1974. Kiedyk owned a tourist camp, Camp Conewango, on the north shore of Talon Lake, and with an interest in cross-country skiing, he saw the business potential in having a system of ski trails centred at his camp. Tex Mitchell became interested in the location and even flew over the area in a military aircraft to inspect the area. The rugged hills were a perfect location for a cross-country ski centre and trail building soon began.

Under the direction of Tex and aided by national level skier Erik Salkeld, who lived nearby in the Songis Road area, Barb Olmsted and the rest of the paddlers spent their weekends in the bush cutting trails, developing the Conewango cross-country ski area.

So in the fall of 1974, the first version of the North Bay Nordic Ski Club executive was formed, a loose organization of seven airmen with Tex Mitchell as president. The membership fee was \$5 per skier. Tex's vision was a ski club open to all, from bushwhacker and tourist to elite level racer, modeled after the Finnish (multi-) sports clubs. At the time, his emphasis was on creating a good trail system at Conewango, and in having it groomed and trackset for a good cross training activity for his crew of competitive paddlers.

In the relatively small North Bay community of skiers and paddlers, a new cross-country ski trail system would not stay a secret for very long, and it was not long before the word spread among skiers in the area, many of whom skied (downhill) at Nipissing Ridge west of Powassan.

One such skier was Hans Frenssen who had learned to ski in his hometown of Erfurt, Germany, "where it only snowed enough to ski from mid-January to mid-February." Like those of his generation, learning to ski meant learning to ski both cross-country and downhill. Hans immigrated to Canada, and from 1972 to 1974, he was coaching Nancy Greene League skiers at Nipissing Ridge. But it was then that he "started to get bored" with downhill skiing. When friend and fellow skier, Helmut Vierich, mentioned that there was a cross-country ski club forming and that Tex Mitchell had asked him to come out and take a look, Hans was ready to make the move to cross-country and to North Bay Nordic.

In that winter of 1974-75, cross-country skiing started to expand in popularity throughout the area, and the retail community felt this expansion. Ski stores such as Alex Stevenson's "Skiers' Shop", "Canadian Can-Tex", T & N Sports, Bill White's "The Camping Store", the Favas' "Hub's Sports" (which would later become The Sport's Connection), and "Richardson's Sporting Goods" all capitalized on the demand.

With the first racing bibs supplied by Canadian Can-Tex (those old brown canvas ones that are still used on occasion), Tex Mitchell organized the first races at Conewango. He built a homemade tracksetter, a simple flat-bottomed sled pulled behind a snowmobile. Tex recalls that many complained about the distance between the two tracks. Normally about 15 cm (6") Tex designed his at 20 cm (8"), and smaller women and youngsters found the widespread stance uncomfortable to say the least.

In the late winter of 1974-75, Tex became aware of the Laurentian Touring Club's ventures and its need for new areas to ski, and he contacted Shirley Bass. "How would you like to come down and ski on some groomed and trackset trails?" he asked. The die was cast. Skiing on snowmobile-groomed and trackset trails for the first time, Shirley and Jackie Goulet got a taste of the future, and they saw the potential of joining ranks with Tex Mitchell's fledgling Nordic Ski Club and establishing Conewango as their home base. Thus several actions were taken.

First, an appeal was made to all skiers in the *Laurentian Touring Club*, now numbering close to 100, to merge and join forces with Tex Mitchell's *Nordic Ski Club* so as to have a larger political voice. Second, an appeal was made jointly by the Laurentian Touring Club and the Nordic Ski Club to the MNR locally, to Leo Bernier, the Minister of Natural Resources, and to local M.P.P. Dick Smith to have the area north of Lake Talon designated exclusively for cross-country skiing to avoid conflict with (i.e. incursions by) snowmobiles. Third, permits were applied for and approved to cut more trails in the Camp Conewango area, and specifically, one to provide skiing from the Songis Farm to Conewango, eliminating about 8 km of difficult driving.

Many were in favour of this move, but it must be noted that some were not. The group closely allied with Red Bedard disliked the element of ski racing and the influence of elite skiers, and they opted to remain doing what they had been doing, travelling to a variety of trails for a day of ski touring. Shirley and Jackie opted for the prospect of a more permanent home, with groomed and trackset trails and some sort of cabin to warm up in, and at that time, Conewango was it. Thus, in April of 1975, the *Laurentian Touring Club* merged with the *Nordic Ski Club* and became more officially known as *The North Bay Nordic Ski Club*.

Recollections 1974-75

Chapter 3 1975-78 The Conewango Years



The main lodge at Camp Conewango, c. 1976

For three seasons, North Bay Nordic enjoyed a somewhat nomadic existence. Much time and energy was spent striving to find its place in the sun, or rather its place in the snow, where cross-country skiing could be enjoyed far from the madding crowds and roaring snowmobiles. In one venture, in conjunction with the College Education Centre and in preparation for the Ontario Winter Games in 1977, a trail was cut behind the CEC, but this was too limiting a facility. Across the road were the trails at Laroque's Sugar Shack, but space was again a limiting factor for a large trail complex, and this was privately owned land. Camp Conewango on Lake Talon, with Bill Kiedyk's interest in cross country skiing and with the expansive land area which was very suitable for a network of cross country ski trails, was for a time a very promising home for North Bay Nordic. But two major factors, the distance from North Bay and the difficult drive to Conewango (even with a slightly shorter drive to the Songis Farm) pushed North Bay Nordic skiers to keep looking for a good location closer to home. Patience would be rewarded.

(i) 1975-76 North Bay Nordic's First Official Season

Board of Directors

**Tex Mitchell
Chuck Nowak
George Hendrickson
Bob Krasche
Shirley Bass
Jackie Goulet
Bob Horner
Jim Parks
Matt Robillard**

**President
Vice President
Treasurer
Secretary**

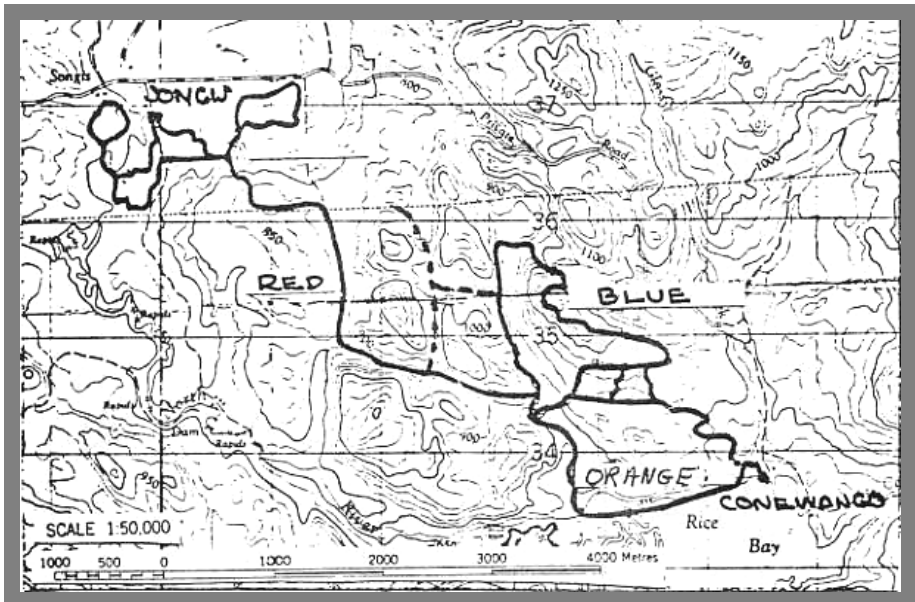
Membership: 430



Laurentian Touring + Nordic Ski Club = North Bay Nordic Ski Club
 From left: Tex Mitchell (President), Chuck Nowak (Vice President), Bob Krasche (Secretary)
 George Hendrickson (Treasurer), Jackie Goulet, Jim Parks, Bob Horner, Shirley Bass.
 Missing from photo: Matt Robillard (*Nugget Staff Photo*)

Trails

The Songis Farm and Conewango Trails



Conewango Trail Map from February 1976 Newsletter

Anyone who has driven the Songis Road to Camp Conewango on Talon Lake is fully aware of the length of time it takes and the unpredictable road conditions due to the very hilly terrain. Tex Mitchell argued that skiers, if they wanted to ski, would make the journey regardless; others felt that a more easily

accessed location would attract more skiers, simply because the drive would be shorter. Establishing a base on the Songis Road with a trail leading into the Conewango Trails would solve this problem. Thus the "Songis Farm", located about 6 km along the Songis Road and about halfway to Conewango, became the focus of the early North Bay Nordic Ski Club, and many activities were held there. A trail, called the Red Trail, was cut from the Songis Farm to access the Camp Conewango Trails and measured 8.6 km. The trails at Conewango cut in the fall of 1975 were 8.7 km (Blue), and 5 km (Orange), complimenting the trails cut in the previous year (2.5 km, 5 km, and 6 km). There was also a loop cut at the Songis Farm measuring 7.5 km. The club rented one of Bill Kiedyk's cabins, and this became known as the Nordic Ski Hut. Equipped with a wood stove it became the apres-ski respite for weary skiers.

.....And Other Things

Newsletters

In the first years of Nordic's existence, communication by newsletter was extremely important. Monthly publications were distributed to inform members of the planned events, and there were frequent public meetings. The newsletter of November 1975, for example, scheduled many days of trail clearing at Conewango, as well as at Laroque's Sugar Shack (across from Nipissing University and Canadore). There were equipment and waxing clinics at Canadore College and dryland training camps. Trail clearing and brushing work were under the direction of board members Jim Parks, Matt Robillard, and Leo Meloche (father of future elite skier and bi-athlete, Lise Meloche). The schedule for the winter included a diverse range of activities: CSA Instructor courses, ski instruction at the Songis Farm, ski tours at such locations as Laroque's Sugar Shack and the Fish Hatchery area, and races.

Conflict with snowmobiles

The conflict between skiers and snowmobiles dates back only to when snowmobiles became popular in the 1960s. Their noise, air pollution, dangerous high speed, and destruction of both the set tracks and the ski trail itself became more than a just a nuisance, and led to a need to have snowmobiling kept separate from ski areas. It is interesting to note that, in 1975, both groups, the Nipissing Snowmachine Club and the Nordic Ski Club, together sought MNR assistance in keeping snowmobiles off ski trails, as well as the need for grooming on all trails. The MNR was very supportive of this. One of the prime methods to keep snowmobiles off ski trails was then, and continues to be, good signage, for that will effectively control the vast majority of snowmobilers. The signs created by Helmut Vierich were very effective, and a few of his skier direction signs (red background with white script lettering - "Be On Your Toes!") have survived and continue to add colour to the North Bay Nordic Trails on Northshore Road.

Night Skiing

In addition to skiing at Thompson Park, Pinewood Park Motel established ski trails on its golf course. Tex Mitchell and other club members surveyed and laid out the trails, avoiding greens, and also assisted with the first tracksetting attempts. Before it was phased out in the late 1980s, night skiing was complemented by ski instruction by Stefan Board, another ex-Hamiltonian and Nipissing Ridge downhill ski instructor.

Ski Instruction

As cross-country skiing was booming, there was a great need for instruction to novice skiers and hence a need for instructors. While today we might get a dozen skiers out for a weekend ski clinic, in November 1975 the Club encouraged 18 skiers to take the CSA Level 1 Instructors' Clinic. The Club's first instructors were Marilyn Aston, Shirley Bass, Red Bedard, Aileen Chirico, Don Clisch, Hans Frenssen, Jackie Goulet, Cathy Hanley, Barb Hendrickson, George Hendrickson, Bob Horner, Greg Lutick, Tex Mitchell, Peter Olmsted, Matt Robillard, Otto Strazds, Brian Wooding, and Maks Zupan.

Through the winter, there were many heavily attended basic ski instruction clinics led by those tireless workers Shirley Bass and Jackie Goulet. For example, on December 21, 1975, 48 skiers attended a learn-to-ski day at Eloy's Farm despite very little snow. Matt Robillard hosted a ski waxing session at Canadore, attracting 50 Club members. Then, on January 20, 1976, 175 beginner skiers showed up on a mild evening to learn to cross-country ski at Thompson Park. According to Tex Mitchell, it was quite a feat just to organize them all; he had the skiers march through the gate in military fashion to be summarily assigned to their instructor. Before the lessons began, Chuck Nowak had been able to set series of parallel tracks on the Thompson Park field, and it must have been quite a sight to see close to 200 skiers and their instructors skiing back and forth practising the basic diagonal stride and double poling techniques.

One of Shirley Bass' and Jackie Goulet's many accomplishments was in the instruction of blind skiers, and several of these skiers continued to ski the challenging Nordic trails in the 1980s.

Tours

Meanwhile, the "touring" nature of the Club continued. There were expeditions to Larocque's Maple Sugar Shack, Champlain Park, Noble Lake, the Fish Hatchery, Conewango, the Little Jocko River area and, always a favourite, a visit to Larry Cosgrove's camp at Bassy Lake. Red Bedard continued to be the leader of many of these ventures, and both his knowledge of the woods and his ski skills were acknowledged by many.

Rod and Gloria Kelusky wrote this note after a tour to Bassy Lake on January 18, 1976. Fifty skiers made the trip.

"About 15 carloads of people braved the extreme cold and drove 17 miles north to the Bell Micro-wave Tower. From here we started on our tour about 10:30 a.m. The picturesque scenery helped us to forget about the cold, along with the bright sun peeking through the trees. A few people managed to ski right to the lake, but this family was proud of the fact that we managed to ski the 2 1/2 miles to the fire and "Tea Break." The return trip along the trail passed all too quickly. All four of us were quick to say we were glad we had decided to go on the tour; even though Tanya suffered a little frostbite to a couple of toes, and Kirk keeps hoping for a few more hills on each tour. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the instructors who are so patient and helpful with us beginners and those of the Nordic Ski Club who have organized the tours so well in order to please beginners, intermediates, and advanced skiers. We express a special thank-you to those responsible for grooming the trail to Bassy Lake. It

was an extremely early and cold venture for you. Rod, Gloria, Tanya and Kirk Kelusky"

Races

While tourers were touring, the racers were racing, and a viable racing component to the Club was establishing itself. Heading off to places such as Midland, Sudbury (Voima), and the "Skoki Loppet" in Muskoka some of the names of that year's Nordic Racers are very recognizable to today's Club's senior members. Racing activities were under the leadership of Tex Mitchell, and elite skiers Erik Salkeld, Maks Zupan, and Bob Horner. Besides coaching and racing locally, Dave Rees was coaching the Canadian Ski Team for the Winter Olympics at Innsbruck, Austria.

Nordic Racers of 1975-76

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Midgets and Mini-midgets | Andrew Kiedyk, Heather Kiedyk, Lara Kiedyk, Paula Nowak, Nancy Olmsted, Alison Wooding |
| Juvenile Boys | Paul Olmsted, Chris Wooding |
| Junior Boys | Hugh Tafel, Brian Wall |
| Junior Ladies | Marilyn Aston, Francoise Meloche |
| Junior Men | Tim Evans, Peter McKenney, Peter Olmsted, Bernie Vierich |
| Senior Men | Dave Rees, Bob Horner, Greg Lutick (coaches) |
| Veteran (35-44) | Chuck Oja, Matt Robillard, Maks Zupan |
| Veterans (45+) | Leo Meloche, Tex Mitchell, Otto Strazds |

The very first North Bay Nordic Ski Race was held at Laroque's Sugar Shack on February 1, 1976, on the 5 km trail that Club members had cut there. Results of that race have not survived.

Bill Koch

An event occurred at the Innsbruck Olympics that had repercussions in the U.S. ski world and may have also influenced cross-country skiing in Canada. Bill Koch became the only American and the first North American to win a cross-country medal when he won the silver in the 30 km race. All races at that time were in the classical style; and it was Bill Koch himself who revolutionized skiing when he brought skating into prominence in the early 1980s. Koch's achievement in 1976 gave Americans, and, no doubt, Canadians as well, the promise that cross-country skiing was not just something that the Europeans could master.

Future Plans

The final report to the AGM at Scollard Hall in April 1976 by President Tex Mitchell was illuminating in its references to what the Club would need in the future. The first priority, according to Tex Mitchell, was simply the "need for good trails," and he envisioned a threefold expansion of trails in the Talon Lake area

with the cooperation of snowmobilers, the MNR, and private landowners. For trail grooming, the Club could purchase its own snowmobile or continue to use those owned by Club members or the ones owned by Bill Kiedyk at Conewango, or it could rent one with an operator "at \$12 per hour." Club members expressed the need for a clubhouse, and some thought was given to building a cabin and parking lot at the Songis Farm.

While the Club had developed a variety of committees, it was not an officially incorporated non-profit organization, and this was recommended for protection from liability and recognition for government grants. The decision to incorporate was made at this meeting. One year later, after the 1975-76 season, and with the assistance of local lawyer Dick Tafel, the Club's first by-laws were written, official papers were drawn up, and the Club was officially incorporated as a non-profit organization in October, 1976 as *The North Bay Nordic Ski Club*. The official Letters Patent were issued in February 1977.

Tex Mitchell had been promoted to full Colonel and named Commander of CFB Goose Bay, and as a result, Tex resigned from the Nordic Ski Club after serving *two* very fruitful years as president - two years, because the Nordic Ski Club unofficially started in 1974, but then merged with the Laurentian Touring Club in 1975. Tex was, above all else, a great motivator, for he encouraged everyone to get involved in cross-country skiing, be it at the recreational or elite racing levels, in instructing and in coaching.

Recollections 1975-76

(ii) 1976-77 Ontario Winter Games Races at Canadore Trails & Official Incorporation

Board of Directors

Hans Frenssen *
(Fr.) Patrick Mackan
George Hendrickson
Kay Wroe
Jackie Goulet
Bob Horner
Shirley Bass
Matt Robillard

President
Vice President
Treasurer
Secretary

* Brian Wooding, another elected director who was to be the Club's second president, was transferred to National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa and thus had to leave the North Bay Nordic Club executive. Hans Frenssen stepped in to become president.

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Membership: | 238 by January 24 |
| Trail usage based on register: | 965 skiers to Jan 20 (approx. 40% signed) |
| Revenue for the year: | \$4424 including MNR grant of \$1050 |
| Expenses: | \$3670 |

During these initial years there was no charge to ski on the trails as the Club had no tenure on the Crown Land that the trails were on, and the MNR had not yet started issuing Land Use Permits. Skiers from the general public skied for free. Revenues were mainly from membership fees, small grants, and the sale of such items as the Nordic crests.

Official Incorporation



The official signing of incorporation papers (*Nugget Staff Photo*)
From left: Shirley Bass, Kay Wroe, Matt Robillard, Hans Frenssen (President), Dick Tafel,
Jackie Goulet, George Hendrickson, Les Brekstad

On February 1, 1977, following the legal work done by Dick Tafel in the previous year, the Government of Ontario issued the official Letters Patent, which officially recognized the North Bay Nordic Ski Club as a not for profit corporation without share capital. The first directors of the corporation were Leslie Blair Brekstad, Jackie Goulet, Hans Frenssen, Matt Robillard, Kay Wroe, Shirley Bass, George Hendrickson, Jim Parks, and (Fr.) Pat Mackan.

Trails

With an established home base at Conewango, work could now be devoted to maintaining and modifying the trails already cut, as well as developing new ones. Thus began the annual ritual of fall trail brushing that continues to this day. In 1976, organized work parties were not formed; rather, the call went out by newsletter and word of mouth for volunteers to show up at appointed dates and times whenever they could, and a volunteer leader would direct the action at a specific site.

In the fall of 1976, work on the Conewango Trails included modifying the existing Red and Blue Trails (bypassing two difficult areas) and brushing out the existing trails. Bill Kiedyk also cut a new 5 km trail at Conewango; and the Club was able to maintain a total of about 30 km of trails in the Songis and Conewango areas. The Ontario Winter Games were to be hosted by North Bay in the spring of 1977, and in preparation for the cross-country ski events, North Bay Nordic volunteered to cut some trails west of the College Education Centre and to organize the races. So in October, the call went out for volunteers to cut this new trail.

* * * * *

(I saw the ad in the Nugget: " Saturday October 30 - Help wanted to cut ski trail - bring equipment and lunch..." It was my first year in North Bay; we had moved here in the summer of 1976, I to a new teaching position, and Jane was busy setting up the North Bay Consumer Centre. We were both eager to ski. Armed with my trusty and powerful Mighty Mite 12" chain saw, I set out to find out what cutting a ski trail was all about. After Hans Frenssen sharpened my chain saw - I found out! This was a lot of hard work. But everyone there whom I met (including Hans, Don and Sue Priebe, Jim Miller, Shirley Bass, Jackie Goulet, and many more) all seemed to be having a rather good time Okay then, this trail work stuff was a good time!)

Coincidentally and independently two other moves occurred in the summer of 1976. Tom Cook moved to North Bay to assume a teaching position at Widdifield. We had met through mutual friends in Huntsville where he had been teaching for several years. And Marianne (originally from New Liskeard and North Bay) and Ed Rogers moved to North Bay to purchase a Worthington Street property that would soon become Bigwood Sporting Goods, modeled after the Eddie Bauer store that Ed had managed in Toronto.

* * * * *

.....And Other Things

Club Socials

The first of many social events was held at the Germania Club in October, 1976. No simple wine and cheese gathering, this was a dinner-dance affair.

Ski Exchange

The Club held its first ski exchange in November at Scollard Hall. Every seller was charged a fee of \$2. There was a great demand for equipment, and what little there was sold very quickly.

Instruction

Shirley Bass and Jackie Goulet organized many instruction based activities, and there was much interest in North Bay about ski equipment, how to wax, and how to ski.

There were dryland training sessions for instructors in November. In December, Matt Robillard gave an on-snow waxing and equipment demonstration at Scollard Hall; and Dave Rees gave a waxing and equipment clinic at CFB North Bay. Throughout the winter, there were many free basic ski instruction sessions held at the College Education Centre, where upwards of 50 skiers would come out on any given day. North Bay Parks and Recreation also organized some ski instruction sessions with our instructors at Pinewood Park, and over 70 skiers came out for two evening sessions. In January, instruction was given to six blind skiers at Thompson Park.

Ecumenical Skiing

Father Pat Mackan set up a system that would allow the devout to come to church in their "ski togs" in order to get out early on Sunday mornings for a full day of skiing. Through the winter he arranged early morning ecumenical church services, led by a variety of North Bay priests and ministers at Scollard Hall. Participating with Fr. Mackan were Rev. Zander Dunn and Rev. P.S. Pace.

Ontario Trails Council

In September, 1975, North Bay Nordic submitted a brief to the Ontario Trails Council which was set up by the MNR to address trail use issues. Shirley Bass and Leslie Brekstad did the leg work and research to put the brief together. North Bay Nordic expressed views on the need for single use of cross-country ski trails (i.e. separate from snowmobiles), the need for financial assistance, education of trail users, and the future need to buy a parcel of Crown Land (in the Songis Farm area) to erect a building and maintain a parking lot.

Tours

It is interesting to note that as soon as the Nordic Ski Club began to establish a home base at Conewango, the interest in "touring," that is, driving off in organized groups to some ski destination, began to wane. It is true that these tours did continue for some years, but Hans Frenssen noted the change when he wrote in his annual report:

"Over the winter months, we again offered tours for all members, but it seems that as we all become more proficient on skis and get to know the different trails and areas, most skiers like to strike out on their own or in small groups. This is, after all, what cross-country skiing is all about. It is a highly individual sport and should be enjoyed as such. In future we plan to arrange tours more as special events, but we will always have people on the trails at pre-arranged times to lead a tour at Songis Farm or Camp Conewango."



Lunch break on a Conewango ski tour

Extreme left: Wilf Brown; sitting at right: Janice Miller; standing, second from right: Terry Schisler

Skiers did go on tours to such diverse places as Powassan (Whispering Forest), the Sugar Shack, and the College Education Centre trail, but with all of the work that had been extended in clearing and cutting the Conewango Trails, most of the tours were held at Songis and Camp Conewango, and the emphasis turned to attracting new skiers to ski there and to join the North Bay Nordic Ski Club. To make it easier for skiers, buses were arranged by Camp Conewango to leave the Songis Farm parking lot for the drive in to Conewango. The cost was \$1 per skier. One of these tours, "The Nordic Grand Tour," was a 25 km ski of most of the Conewango and Songis Trails - a forerunner of the "All Trails Club" which we later established at the North Bay Nordic Trails.

Races

National Ski Team

The North Bay Nordic Ski Club's trails at Camp Conewango received national prominence, as they became the July training site for the men's National Cross Country Ski team under coach Anders Lenes.

Club Races

The racing schedule for the '76 - '77 season included Quebec (Viking Relays), Gravenhurst (The Joselin Cup race), the Muskoka Loppet, NOSD Championships at the Sault, races at Onaping Falls, Deep River (the 5th annual Silver Spoon) and races at the College Education Centre and at Conewango. It was a big year for loppets. Sundridge hosted its first as part of its winter carnival, and North Bay Nordic hosted the Conewango Loppet on March 20. (One advantage of the Conewango area was the early and late snow.)

While Camp Conewango hosted the NOSSA high school races at Conewango on Saturday February 5, North Bay Nordic hosted its own 2nd annual cross-country ski races at the College Education Centre. This was held there to try out the course that would be used for the Ontario Winter Games races, which were scheduled for the next weekend (February 12, 13, 1977).

The Race Committee of Dave Rees (Chief of Race), Charlie Olmsted (Chief of Course), Hans Frenssen (Chief of Timing), and Jackie Goulet (Race Secretary) plus a cast of more than 20 Club volunteers were praised for the well organized and smoothly run event. That was not the last time that Nordic race committees would be praised for their efforts.

Future Plans

An application was made to Wintario for funding to acquire tools and machinery to develop and maintain ski trails.

Hans Frenssen summed up in his annual report, referring to the Songis - Conewango Trails: "If there is a better cross-country trail network within 80 miles (130 km), I would surely like to here about it." But many recognized and started to express that a ski facility closer to North Bay would have definite advantages. Thus a capital fund was set up to eventually acquire a property and building within the immediate vicinity of North Bay, a property that would become the **permanent home** for the North Bay Nordic Ski Club.

Recollections 1976-77

(iii) 1977 - 1978 Looking For A New Home

Board of Directors

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Hans Frenssen | President |
| Charlie Olmsted | Vice President - Races |
| Kay Wroe | Secretary - Treasurer |
| John Ellis | Newsletter |
| Terry Schisler | Property |
| Jim Parks | Ways and Means |
| Bill Kiedyk | Trails |
| Jackie Goulet | Publicity |
| Jim Miller | Touring |

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Membership: | 180+ by December 22; no other records |
| Membership Revenue: | \$1985 |
| Membership Fees: | Single \$15 Family \$30 Student \$10 |
| Total revenues: | \$11 663 (including Wintario \$8250 and MNR \$2 300) |
| Total Expenses: | \$11 013 |

Trails

The Northshore Road Trails

While the fledgling Nordic Ski Club was developing the trails at Conewango and at the same time trying to find a suitable location closer to North Bay, Dave Rees was actively engaged in racing both nationally and locally. Having recently moved to Northshore Road, he ran and explored the existing trails on the escarpment north of Trout Lake's Four Mile Bay in the High Lake area, an area unrestricted by roads, and ruggedly perfect for a cross-country ski trail network (and conveniently in the Reeses' backyard).

Dave was aware of the Nordic Ski Club's ambitions to develop a ski area closer to North Bay, and in the summer of 1977, he invited Hans Frenssen over to talk about these ideas. For he had a plan. With his maps stretched out in front of them, they sat on a plank of wood on Dave's unfinished deck, and there they sketched and planned the future Nordic trails.

Dave mapped out possible trail locations on topographic maps, and the wheels were put in motion with applications to the MNR and local politicians to establish the High Lake Nordic Ski Trails as the home of the North Bay Nordic Ski Club.

Proposal to the MNR

The initial letter was sent to Mr. Bert Edmundson at the MNR on September 8, 1977. In that letter, Club President Hans Frenssen outlined the growing interest in amateur sport and cross-country skiing, the Club's recent activities at Songis and Conewango, and the need for an excellent trail system closer to North Bay within the city limits. Also at that time the concept existed to link up to the Songis and Conewango Trails.

The proposal was well accepted at the MNR, and during the winter, the MNR issued a permit to clear an area that would become a parking lot and site for a chalet and to start cutting trails. A Canada Works Program grant totally financed the initial trail work into the summer of 1978. The February newsletter

reported that a first trail of about 4 km (later lengthened to be our 5 km Red Trail) had been cut, and a second (now the Blue Trail) to go around High Lake had been started. The first actual tour around the new trails took place Saturday, March 11, 1978 led by Jim Miller.



Future Site for Nordic Ski Club Chalet, March 1978



As seen in March 1978, this snow covered hay field would become the parking lot

From the beginning, there existed a very close and valued relationship with the MNR. Two MNR staff persons and founding North Bay Nordic Club members, Jim Miller and Ron Campbell, were influential as liaisons between the Club and the MNR, and they also served for several years on the Nordic Board of Directors. Their expertise, coupled with Dave Rees' extensive skiing knowledge, laid the groundwork for the excellent trail facility that we have.

Meanwhile at Conewango

But in the fall of that 1977/78 season, while the search for another site was intensifying, the Club still concentrated on improving the trails at Songis and Conewango, for that is where the skiing would be that season. For example, more improvements were made to the Songis to Conewango "Red" Trail, where a bypass was cut around a swampy area to extend the use of the trail. LIP grants had become defunct, but Nordic skiers benefited from the work of some Katimavik volunteers who constructed a footbridge across Balsam Creek.

It must have been difficult for the Club's volunteers to spend time and energy on a trail system that might be (and would be) eventually disbanded.

Equipment

During the 1977-78 season and with the assistance of a Wintario grant, the Club purchased various trail brushing equipment such as axes, hard hats, gas cans, scythes and chainsaws; a snowmobile trailer and a Bombardier snowmobile - and the "Raidtrak." The Raidtrak All Terrain Vehicle was the Club's first venture into snow grooming with equipment other than a snowmobile for pulling some sort of wooden or metal apparatus to smooth out the trail surface.

The problem with relying solely on snowmobiles for cross-country ski trail grooming, even the higher powered and sturdier Alpine double-track machines, is that they were simply not designed for that purpose. In deep snow, the Alpines are difficult to steer, and in heavy snow they bog down when the drag being pulled quickly fills with a heavy load of snow. It is all too easy to drive a wayward Alpine off the trail and into the bush, necessitating sometimes hours of work to get it out. The Alpine does a superb job in setting a "best line" track and can do a good job in smoothing out the trail (grooming) under normal conditions, but overall, a tracked vehicle designed for heavy pulling is more suitable.

The Raidtrak was a small and inexpensive alternative to the large snow grooming machines, which were starting to be used at Alpine ski resorts. The Raidtrak was first put to use at the NOD Championships, which North Bay Nordic hosted at the Canadore Trails, and it was used at the Conewango Trails for the balance of the season. A few years after the Club moved to Northshore Road and the High Lake Trails, the steep hills proved to be too much for the Raidtrak, and it was sold.

.....And Other Things

Ski Exchange

Dr. McDougall School was chosen for the first time as the site of the annual ski exchange and that tradition would last for many years. The ski exchange raised \$446 that year.

Instruction and Clinic

Numerous instructional activities were held during the year as interest in cross-country skiing continued to grow. One hundred skiers attended Dave Rees' waxing clinic at the Norman Weaver Auditorium at the College Education Centre, and this was followed up by a "social" across the road at Laroque's Sugar Shack. Jackie Goulet and Shirley Bass continued to teach ski skills, and one session was held at the College Education Centre. While the trail system at the College Education Centre was not that extensive, the one trail barely measuring 5 km, we

all envied the ski chalet that was erected there. It was moved when Nipissing University and Canadore later expanded and needed more parking lot area in.

Tours

Most things occur at North Bay Nordic when someone feels there is need for something and steps forward to get it done. Jim Miller must have sensed that if touring was still of interest to some skiers, it wasn't going to happen on its own. So he revitalized the touring tradition at North Bay Nordic with a full slate of weekend tours (one per weekend through the winter) to a variety of destinations. These included Bassy Lake, Jerome Tremblay's L'Auberge des Pionniers near Samuel Champlain Park at Mattawa, the Talon Lake trails, Thorne, Red Bedard's Camp on Noble Lake, Pickerel Lake Lodge, and Turtle Lake. Leading the various tours, usually in pairs were Jim Miller, Shirley Bass, Rod Kelusky, John Ellis, Hans Frenssen, Janice Gaynor (later Mrs. Jim Miller), Jackie Goulet, and Ron Campbell.

One skier who went on the Bassy Lake tour was Marilyn Parker. She wrote:

"About thirty people from 7 to 70 enjoyed perfect weather, softly falling snow and beautiful scenery. Trapper Larry Cosgrove did a great job grooming the trails, and many enjoyed a cup of tea in his log cabin by the lake. Here we had an opportunity to view beaver and marten pelts. Around the fire, Janice Gaynor's Friendship Tea and lunches we brought fueled us for the four mile trek back - - a SUPER TRIP!"

And on March 11, 1978, a tour was organized to ski the two brand new trails at High Lake. Since the trails had just been cut during the winter, it must have been very rough going indeed.

* * * * *

Through our interest in dogs we had met Sandra and Terry Schisler who were involved with the Nipissing Kennel Club. On one weekend, Jane and I decided to try out the skiing at Camp Conewango that we had read about in the Nugget. Surprised we were when we skied up to the "Nordic Ski Hut" and Sandra and Terry Schisler emerged and invited us in. That was our first contact with the North Bay Nordic Ski Club at Conewango, probably in February 1978.

* * * * *

Races

Charlie Olmsted headed up the Race Committee, ably assisted by coaches Otto Strazds, Bob Horner, and Maks Zupan. Races at other sites included the Silver Spoon at Deep River, and the first Almaguin Loppet. Local races included the Conewango Cup Invitational in early winter (December 31 - January 1), the NOD Championships on January 21 - 22, and the Nordic Invitational on February 4 both at the Canadore Trails. In the ensuing years, race committees learned to "piggyback" or combine events so that the volunteers would not be over worked (translated: over stressed).

Volunteers have always been and will always be the mainstay of any cross-country ski race. Having been involved in them for many years, I know that it is easy to take for granted the complexity of the event and how it looks to the first time volunteer. Here is (then Secretary - Treasurer) Kay Wroe's account of her first time ever volunteering at a cross-country ski race – the NOD Championships at the Canadore Trails:

"January 21 and 22, 1978. To the uninitiated, the fact that North Bay Nordic hosted the Northern Ontario Championships (at the College Education Centre) probably doesn't mean a darn thing - - - HOWEVER - - - let me tell you about some of it from behind the scenes.

First of all, there is the appointment of Chief of Race. This plum falls to Charlie Olmsted. Charlie, being a smart man, immediately decides that Gail Rees would make an excellent Race Secretary. There is a general sort of meeting in which Charlie twists various arms and says, 'You'll be happy to help at timing, or checking, or starting - or whatever.'

Race notices are sent out, and entry forms start coming in. Cross-country people being the disorganized type that they are, always leave everything until the last minute, so entries can't be closed until about two days before the race. At that time, a few of the all-knowing get together and draw for start place. I'm not too clear on this procedure, but it is all perfectly legal. So we end up with Joe Blow being assigned bib number so and so, which means he starts at such and such time. It's really very simple; if the race starts at 1:00 p.m. and you have bib number 25, you start at 1:25. (If the interval is 1 minute between racers; if it is a 30 second interval, number 25 would start at 1:12:30 or 12 1/2 minutes after the first skier)

It doesn't matter your age, sex, or how far you are going - you start at 1:25. Meanwhile back at the ranch, our President Hans Frenssen is having fits all over the place because the waxing tent which he had ordered last October is somewhere between Winnipeg and Toronto. A waxing tent is a nylon structure in which participating racers can wax their skis. It is heated and has a bar across the middle to rest the skis on - and it certainly takes the pressure off the chalet. There's nothing more upsetting if you are the registrar than bending over to pick up a bib off the floor and have some jockey with a torch getting a bit off base in your vicinity. To further complicate matters, the grooming machine which the Club has ordered with the help of a few bucks from Wintario is somewhere between Drummondville and North Bay. There's a story about stopwatches too, but I won't go into that.

Anyhow - like all good fairy tales - all turns out well. Hans and Terry (Schisler) got the machine, which will no doubt be their bane and joy in the days to come and did a fantastic job of putting the Canadore Trails in shape. The waxing tent arrived, as well as the stopwatches.

Both days of races dawned clear and cold with everyone on deck bright and early. Then starts a great ordered confusion. Charlie briefs his starters, checkers, ski markers, timers, etc.; Gail designates various office type jobs; the Browns and helpers set up a snack bar; Sandra (Schisler) posts up the race result sheets; yours truly takes post registrations, hands out bibs, and dodges errant torches.

Finally, START TIME arrives: Charlie calls out the number and the name and then counts down 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 - GO. Then a minute later does the same

thing all over again for another racer; whilst the hand that holds the stopwatch turns blue. Before everyone is started, the first racers are logging laps. There's a lot of hollering 'TRACK'. Dick Tafel with a loud hailer notifies the officials that number so and so is coming through. The timers note the time, mark down the bib number, and the time on a slip of paper. This slip of paper is conveyed by runners, Butch or Mike, to the office, where the lap times are calculated by Gail (Rees) and Jackie (Goulet), and the results are posted by Sandra (Schisler) on the board. Those runners! They must have worn 6" off their legs running up and down that rotten hill.

All of a sudden, everybody is in - the 15 km people, the 10 km people and the 5 km people. Then comes the task of calculating and placing the racers. Gail and Jackie are busy figuring times, Joan (Olmsted) and Shirley (Bass) check, and Kay types. Then Gail and Hans hand out the awards, everybody sighs a big sigh of relief and says, 'Let's go ski!'

The purpose of this treatise, other than relating the facts and foul-ups of organizing and running a fairly important race, is to convey to the general membership the fact - Look folks, we're involved, and having a ball. I'm not a race enthusiast by a long shot, but somehow there's a great thrill in seeing the whole thing take shape. Not to mention the excitement you feel when Charlie counts down and another racer takes off to make his or her mark on the cross-country records. So don't think that the races are just for the racers. There's a lot of fun and satisfaction in being behind the scenes and helping make the whole thing run smoothly." (Kay Wroe, 1978)

Over the years literally hundreds of North Bay Nordic volunteers have helped out at our races and know what that sense of satisfaction is all about.

Also that season, Time Trials were also held on the Canadore 5 km trail. Under this CSA system skiers raced against the clock and against pre-established standards for the distance (2.5 km, 5 km, 10 km). bronze, silver, and gold CSA pins were awarded to skiers who skied within 50%, 75%, or 90% of the established goals.

North Bay Nordic volunteers were also busy assisting with other races in the areas. In February 1978, CFB North Bay hosted an Ontario Regional Cross Country Ski Championships. Hans Frenssen, Terry Schisler and others assisted in the course preparation, using Nordic's equipment.

Future Plans

The focus had now shifted to Northshore Road and the establishment of a network of trails around the High Lake area. The plan was to have a 2 km, 5 km, and 10 km trail ready for the winter of 1978-79 and to use old bush roads to connect to the Songis - Conewango Trails. The open field at the bend in the road would become a parking lot - it was known then to be too wet an area on which to construct any buildings. The best site for that would be on the side of the hill on the north side of the property, and that would require some bulldozing and leveling before an equipment garage and some sort of clubhouse or ski chalet could be constructed. Hans Frenssen also noted in his annual report, "A junior racing team program will be initiated and a better ski school will start for intermediate and advanced instruction."

Recollections 1977-78

Chapter 4 1978 - 1979 A New Home: Northshore Road and the High Lake Trails

Board of Directors

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Hans Frenssen | President |
| Charlie Olmsted | Vice President - Racing |
| Kay Wroe | Secretary - Treasurer |
| Glen Parfitt | Trails |
| Elizabeth Poisson | Publicity |
| Terry Schisler | Property |
| Stephen Mitchell | Ways and Means |
| Ted Hampton | Newsletter |
| Jim Miller | Touring |

(Committee heads not Board members)

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Gail Rees | Membership |
| Shirley Bass | Instruction |

Membership: not known
Membership revenue: \$3011

We have had many momentous years at North Bay Nordic, but the foremost has to be the year of the establishment of the High Lake trail system and the installation of parking lot and clubhouse on Northshore Road. An easy 10-minute drive from North Bay, the location satisfied the need to have a facility close to where the skiers were. And being located on the north shore of Trout Lake's Four Mile Bay, the trails were developed on some of the most rugged terrain in Ontario as they climb and descend the escarpment that characterizes the North Bay physiography. In describing the North Bay Nordic trail system, we often echo Hans Frenssen's comments when he described the Conewango Trails: "We have the best trail system between the Rockies and Quebec."

Trails

With two trails already cut by five students on a Canada Works Grant, work turned to modifying the work that was done and continuing with more. The proposed 5 km trail turned out to be short by about 1 km (were those students getting 80% pay?), so it had to be lengthened. The goal was to have this "Red" Trail (The Flying Five) be the primary ski racing trail as well as one that could be used for cross-country running meets. They also finished the 8 km "Blue" Trail (The High Lake Express) around High Lake and the (incorrectly measured) 16 km "Green" Trail (The Nordic Challenge Loop) - which is now 18 km after the 2002 trail work. Rounding off the system for the inaugural year was the 2 km Yellow Trail.

Building and Property

Clubhouse Installation and Parking Lot

As winter approached in late October, energy switched from trail work to the quick development of a parking lot and construction of a clubhouse. Events unfolded very quickly thanks to the combined efforts of many. With the verbal

assurance that a Wintario grant was forthcoming, the need for cash was met by the generous loans and donations of many Club members. The decision was made by the membership to locate, purchase, and erect a portable building; and Vice-President Charlie Olmsted (Professional Engineer and owner of Sted's Construction) was well placed to direct the operations. A 24' x 20' portable building was located from John Farquhar's Port-A-Room (now managed by North Bay Nordic skier Don Farquhar) at a whopping price of \$4200 delivered and installed. Sted's Construction did the site preparation that included leveling and spreading loads of gravel, and the building was installed in place in the second week of November.



Charlie Olmsted, right, supervising installation of the first half of the building, November 1978

A deal was struck with Ontario Hydro. Hydro was already in place to the Knights of Columbus building from where it was routed cross-country following the shore of Trout Lake. If Club volunteers did the necessary work clearing the brush along Northshore Road from the Knights of Columbus, Hydro would install the poles and run the wires a distance of 2400 feet. The work was done in 1½ days.



Jim Miller, part of the right-of-way clearing crew; Shirley Bass in background.

More volunteers lined the clubhouse walls with insulation and rough pine. Coincidentally and unfortunately, Chippewa High School experienced a

devastating fire that fall, but within every cloud there is a silver lining, and North Bay Nordic became the recipient of some ex-Chippewa ceiling tiles, tables and chairs.

Official Opening January 21, 1979

With invited dignitaries and many skiers in attendance, the official opening took place on January 21, 1979. Jackie Goulet's report recapped the events that occurred:

"Thank you to everyone for helping to make the day a smashing success. A special thanks to the people who looked after the three advertised events, the Schislars for the coffee and donuts and parking lot organization, Ron Campbell and family for the bonfire, and Winson Morrison and Chris Christensen for the kids' races. All of these events were well done and really added to the success of the day. Also a special mention to those who were responsible for the excellent trail preparation.

The addition of music from the Skiers' Shop van added to the festivities. Thank you Stevensons and Terry. All in all a very special day Jackie Goulet

Bruce Goulet (past Mayor of North Bay and Nordic skier) was Master of Ceremonies for the event, which was attended by local Liberal M.P. and Solicitor General J.J. Blais, M.P.P. Mike Bolan, and founding Club president (Col.) Tex Mitchell. Jammed into the new facilities, close to 150 skiers signed the "Page of History," and instantly, the need for a bigger clubhouse was recognized!! A search for the "Page of History" has not been successful.



From left, Hans Frenssen, J.J. Blais, Bruce Goulet, Mike Bolan, Tex Mitchell
The official opening of the North Bay Nordic Clubhouse and Trails on Northshore Road

.....And Other Things

Instruction

Dave Rees conducted another popular and well-attended waxing clinic and information session at the Norman Weaver Auditorium at the CEC in November. The aroma of pine tar and waxes must have caused some comments from the next day's early morning students.

Through January, every Saturday was ski lesson day. Shirley Bass formulated a variety of instruction packages, which included technique improvement sessions, beginner and junior ski packages as well as private lessons. A blind skier programme was also initiated.

Ski Exchange

The ski exchange held at Dr. McDougall School was highly successful bringing in \$945, which was almost double the amount from the previous year.

Tours

Partly due to the fact that Jim Miller suffered an eye injury, but maybe also due to the increase in skiing at a home base, the quantity of tours to other destinations declined somewhat. There were two organized excursions to Sturgeon Falls' West Nipissing trails and to the Loring Deer Yard. A third organized tour was around the Yellow Trail at Nordic - by the light of the moon - organized by Rod Kelusky! Both Rod and Hans Frenssen were also the charter members of the "Lunatic Fringe" club, as they night-skied the 5 km Red Trail also by 'le clair de lune.'

Races

Club Racing

The Conewango Cup attracted Nordic's racers with good results. Top three finishers on Saturday January 6 were Bob Horner, Peter Olmsted, and Arthur Henry. Nancy Olmsted and Cathy Miner placed one, two. The next day, 1st, 2nd and 3rd went to Paul Olmsted, Bob Horner, and Ed Gratton. At the Ontario Championships at the Sault, competitors included Paul and Nancy Olmsted, Lise Meloche, Maks Zupan, and Otto Strazds.

The first North Bay Nordic Invitational races to be held at North Bay Nordic occurred on the first February weekend with our local skiers finishing as follows:

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------|---|
| <u>Senior Men</u> | 15 km | Bob Horner 10 th , Arthur Henry 12 th , Jeff Nowak, 13 th , Ted Parker 14 th |
| <u>Veteran Men</u> | 10 km | Erik Salkeld 1 st , Maks Zupan 6 th , Allan Tough 9 th |
| <u>Junior Men</u> | 10 km | Paul Olmsted 3 rd , Tim Pierce 5 th |
| <u>Old Boys</u> | 10 km | Elmer Ypya 1 st , Otto Strazds 2 nd |
| <u>Junior Boys</u> | 5 km | Scott Dunn 7 th , Ed Gratton 13 th , Mike Campbell 16 th |
| <u>Juvenile Boys</u> | 5 km | John Armstrong 7 th , Scott Brough 10 th , Peter Zeman 12 th , Allan Campbell 15 th |
| <u>Junior Girls</u> | 5 km | Cathy Miner 1 st |
| <u>Juvenile Girls</u> | 5 km | Nancy Olmsted 1 st |
| <u>Midget</u> | 2 km | Tina Salkeld 3 rd , Steven Miner 8 th , Brian Honeyborne 9 th |

Volunteers for this first big event at the new North Bay Nordic Trails included - in the office: Shirley Bass, Kay Wroe, Jackie Goulet, Gail Rees, Sandra Schisler; on timing: Don Honeyborne, Hans Frenssen, Bob Miner, Jim Miller, Jim Parks, and many more; on the trails: Helmut Vierich, Glen Huff, Leo Meloche. The race distances indicate that the 5 km Red Trail was the course, with the Yellow Trail for the Midgets.

School Racing

The Dave Rees League was established to develop the sport of cross country ski racing at the senior public school level, and from the outset gained much enthusiastic participation. The schools included were Phelps in Redbridge and the three North Bay senior public schools: Centennial, Fricker, and Silver Birches. Al Bangay was one of the prime forces behind the concept. In its inaugural year, Phelps took first place, winning the Kiwanis Trophy.

High school racing was also active, and our Club racers competed actively for their respective schools. Lise Meloche and Peter Olmsted both won gold at their NDA championships. Cathy Miner and Tim Pierce won silver. Widdifield won the team title with 7 skiers in the top 10. Paul Olmsted went on to ski to a 7th place finish at NOSSA and competed at OFSAA. Paul was also named to the NOD team and competed at the Canadian Juniors in Sudbury.

At the university level, Hugh Tafel and Barb Olmsted skied for Queen's, and both had 6th place finishes.

Future Plans

As the difference between the Yellow Trail and the Red and Blue Trails was found to be quite dramatic, there was an obvious need for an "easier" trail. Thus, plans were made to construct a trail situated between the Red and Yellow Trails, about 4 km in length, a trail that would be suitable for all levels.

Plans for summer work also included finishing the ceiling in the clubhouse, enlarging the parking lot to increase capacity from 40 cars to 60, and constructing an equipment storage building to house the Club's growing inventory. The Club now owned one Raidtrack ATV, 1 Bombardier Alpine, 2 chainsaws, 3 scythes, 3 Sandvik brush cutters, and one display booth.

Hans Frenssen stepped aside as president after three years on the Board of Directors. He had had direct involvement in establishing trails at Conewango and then in the new site on Northshore Road. We thank Hans for his efforts then and in the years that followed.

Recollections 1978-79

Chapter 5 1979 - 1980 Green Trail Lengthened & Our First Loppet

Board of Directors

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Charlie Olmsted | President |
| Jim Miller | Vice President - Touring |
| Kay Wroe | Secretary - Treasurer |
| Glen Parfitt | Trails |
| Alvar Randa | Building and Property |
| Hans Frenssen | Past President - Racing |
| Ted Hampton | Newsletter |
| Bruce Scott | |
| Jackie Goulet | |
| Al Bangay | |

| | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Sandra Schisler | Membership |
| Barb Mason | Publicity |
| Shirley Bass | Instruction |
| Gail Rees | Constitution |
| Claire Meloche | Telephone |
| Marg Randa | Social |

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Membership: | 460 (early bird discount was very effective) |
| Membership Revenue: | \$3602 |
| Wintario Grant: | \$7857 received of \$11 000 total for clubhouse and equipment shed |

One thing became very apparent in this, the second year at Northshore Road and the High Lake Trails - the growing complexity of the Club. Having a home base allowed the young club to start to accumulate equipment, and this needed storage space. Having a clubhouse necessitated having personnel to manage it and maintain it. The growing membership needed instruction and social events. To supplement the monthly newsletters, more timely communication with the membership was needed, and a telephone committee was established; also, advertising through the Nugget was increased with a weekly "Nordic News" article. And always, the trails needed improvement.

Charlie Olmsted wrote in his final report to the AGM, " The backbone of the Club is a relatively small group of individuals who, year after year, continue to contribute many hours of work on the Club's behalf. This effort is volunteered willingly, when and where needed. To these unnamed people, on behalf of the membership, my sincere thanks."

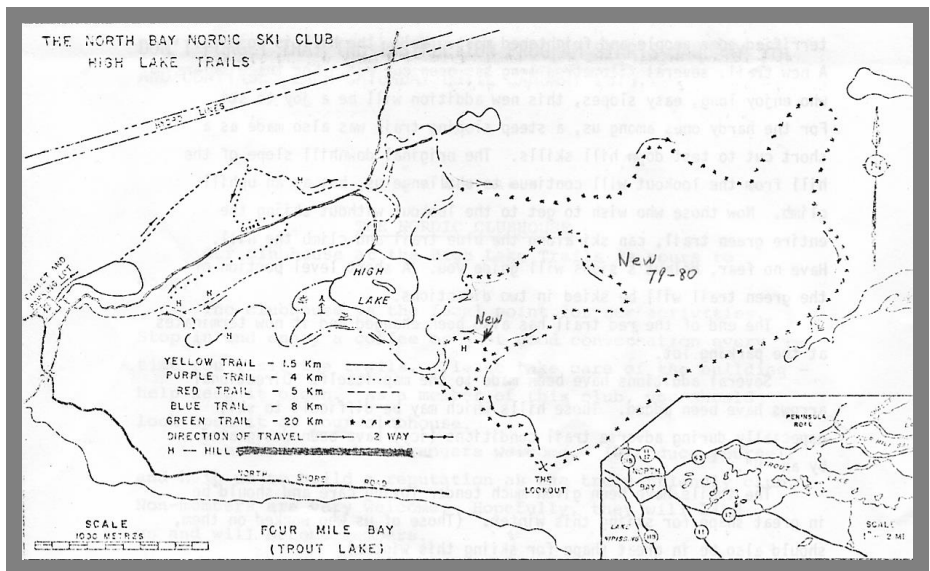
Trails

Measure a trail! It sounds easy but it's not. Errors creep in at every step, literally, and though we may imply that we know exactly how long every trail is, well, we really don't. Let's just say that the distances are good approximations. Our trails have been measured by walking with a pedometer, by snowmobile, by "chaining" with a 100-metre rope, on bicycle; more recently with infrared digital surveying equipment, and finally, GPS. All of these methods have their built in errors, either tendencies to exaggerate or decrease the actual distance. Over the years, trails are modified, and new sections of trail may increase or decrease the original length. Adding to the confusion is the fact that, initially, distances were

measured starting and ending at the clubhouse; but recently they have been more race specific and have started and ended on the field at the Start/Finish area. There is a difference. If you start at the clubhouse and ski the Purple Trail and return to the clubhouse, you ski about 200 m further than if you start and finish at the timing hut. For those who are obsessed with the trivial, those metres do add up to kilometres. For the rest of us, let's just go skiing!

As a result of different measuring methods and different start and end points, there are discrepancies on the various maps of the Nordic trails that have appeared over the years. For example, The Green Trail, in its first year, was claimed to be 16 km, and the wish was to extend it to 20 km. So in the second summer of North Bay Nordic's existence, the trail builders added a loop onto the Green Trail. But, in fact, it was only about 14.5 km to begin with and was increased by about 3 km to 17.6 km. (Dave Rees estimated it to be 17.6 km based on the time it took to ski the trail.)

The new loop started several hundred metres northeast from the Lookout. It went up the "Grunt Hill" and down the "twisting side hill" to where the pipeline is now located, then left or northwest (parallel to the present pipeline) on the edge of a wetland, then left again or southeast down what is now the Pipeline Access Road to meet up with the Blue. Of course in 1979, the pipeline and the Access Road did not exist.



The 1979-80 map showed the new Purple Trail (4 km) and new additions to the Green Trail. Absent are the pipeline, Pipeline Access Road, and the Brown and Gold Trails. The Blue Trail forked off from the Red after the creek.

This loop on the Green Trail crossed private property owned by Mr. and Mrs. James Murby of Aurora, Ontario, and a parcel owned by the City of North Bay. Permission was granted to the Club for the trail to be located on these properties. The 1979-80 trail map also indicates two trails that appear like a small circle about 750 m from the Lookout. The first trail is what we now call the

"shortcut," the steep trail we use to walk up and down with brushing equipment in the fall. The second trail, about 250 m further along, can be called Trail X, as its location is unknown, now hidden by new growth. Initially, only the shortcut was there, a two-way trail providing the only route back to the Blue and to allow skiers on the Blue an access to the Green Trail and the Lookout. But skiing back down this short trail "terrified some people and frightened most," so an alternative needed to be found. The short-lived solution was to ski up on the shortcut, and down Trail X (both one way). The section to and from the Lookout was two-way.

The new Purple Trail, estimated at 4 km, was cut during the summer by students under the direction of Hugh Tafel and funded by a Young Canada Works Grant. The end of the trail system was also modified. Now ending at the bridge near the parking lot, the original creek crossing had been a few hundred metres upstream.

Looking at the map more closely, we see a different configuration where the Blue leaves the Red at a point past the bridge on the Red, before the big climb. (The Red and Purple Trails now leave the Main Trail at the "Main Intersection" almost a kilometre sooner.) Also, the first sweeping S-turn on the Red Trail is more recent change. As you ski around the last turn (turning down to the left to the straight run-out), take a quick peek up to your right - that steep descent is where the original Red Trail came from.

Building and Property

This year, parking lot capacity was doubled to accommodate 60 cars. Since other cross-country locations were starting to charge for parking, it was decided to charge non-members a \$2 parking fee and to issue membership decals for car identification. The \$2 fee was paid for on an honour system in the clubhouse. The first "No Parking" signs were installed by the City on Northshore Road in the vicinity of the turn in the road. This was at the request of the Board to deter skiers from parking and skiing for free.

A committee was established under Shirley Bass and Jim Miller to look after the clubhouse on weekends. And a 14-year-old neighbor of the Reeses, Gary Neal, was hired at \$1 per day to open and close the clubhouse every day during the week. Janice Parfitt was engaged to look after the snack bar on weekends. By November, the new equipment building had been framed in. The inside of the clubhouse was also being completed. Ceiling tiles were acquired from Chippewa (at no cost).

.....And Other Things

Ski Exchange

The ski exchange, organized by Kay Wroe and Jackie Goulet, was again held at Dr. McDougall School. Many local ski retailers were involved: Bigwood Sporting Goods, Hub's, The Skiers' Shop, The Camping Store, and Richardson's. Twenty-nine volunteers worked on the ski sale, and the Club turned a profit of \$850.

Equipment

In December, Glen Parfitt located and purchased a used Alpine for the Club at a cost of \$550. It needed some bodywork but otherwise was in good working order.

Lack of Snow

The winter was not a good one for snow, and scores of volunteers spent many hours shoveling snow from the bush onto the trails, especially before races. Chief trail groomer Glen Parfitt and his helpers had a very frustrating year.

The Birds

Ron Campbell initiated a bird feeding station at Nordic, and in the first season a rare visitor, a boreal chickadee was sighted.

Social

The Social Committee organized two events during the season. Jackie Emond hosted a wine and cheese in December at her home on Northshore Road. The Germania Club was the venue for a Sadie Hawkins Moonlight "Leapski" (1980 was a leap year). Seventy attended, and 25 skied in -30 C under a full moon with good snow conditions. The Social Committee that put these activities together included Marg Randa, Jackie Goulet, Shirley Bass, Gloria Kelusky, and Jackie Emond.

Instruction

Many activities were planned for the fall: dryland training that included stretching, walking, ski walking and ski striding. These were followed up with a series of instruction packages through January, aimed at both beginner and intermediate skiers, young and old, not just racers and elite skiers. Sixty-one skiers, double last year's numbers, enrolled in ski instruction classes, led by Don Priebe, Bruce Scott, Marilyn Aston, Eugene Perabo, Jackie Goulet, and Shirley Bass, who was chief instructor. Two new programmes, "Tiny Tots" - for 3 to 5 year olds) and "Ladies Ski Week" were both well attended, the latter involving 19 ladies. The name "Jackrabbit" was attached to the Tiny Tot group although it was not officially part of the national Jackrabbit program. Just in its infancy, it would start in 1982-83.



Tiny Tot Jackrabbits 1980

**From left: Jonathon Rogers, Ian Harris, David Harris, Julie McMartin, John Redpath
Instructors: Jackie Goulet, Shirley Bass**

A shift was underway from CSA (Canadian Ski Association) certification for instructors to the new CANSI (Canadian Association of Nordic Ski Instructors). In its growing years, trying to iron out differences in skiing style and mechanics and instructional technique, CANSI wanted all ski instructors to be certified under their system. North Bay Nordic supported this and set up the process for new instructors to get Level I certification. Instructors for the season included Jackie Goulet, Hans Frenssen, Bob Horner, Eugene Perabo, and Shirley Bass.

Finn Arrow

Not to be confused with the Avro Arrow, Finn Arrow was a ski manufacturing company, which was established in North Bay at this time. Alvar Randa, North Bay Nordic Board member and production manager at Finn Arrow, invited the Club's instructors for a tour. They manufactured wood based skis (mainly laminated imported birch) that were light, quite strong, and durable, although not the high performance skis that are popular now. Several Club skiers, including Fred and Emmanuelle Gunter purchased them and were quite pleased.

Emmanuelle commented that they were "quite light for wood core skis and easy to wax," and she used them for several years including some early races. Finn Arrow did not survive the recession of the early 1980s due to poor marketing conditions and the gradual demise of wooden cross-country skis.

Publicity

The first versions of "Nordic News" appeared in the Nugget this season. First written by Jim Miller, supplemented by Shirley Bass; our early scribes publicized events and provided instructional tips to the growing numbers of cross country skiers. The tradition continues.

Tours



Jim Miller again planned a variety of destinations for ski outings. He also conducted several evening sessions where issues relevant to skiing in remote areas were addressed: clothing, food, equipment repair, map and compass. Destinations included, with numbers participating in parentheses, the Fish Hatchery area (26), Nobel Lake (20), Samuel de Champlain Park (25), Talon Chutes (15), and Arrowhead Provincial Park (14). Moonlight skiing was also slated for the several full moon nights on the Yellow Trail. The first lighting of the Yellow Trail occurred as Terry Schisler set out lanterns on the trail. On January 12, 12 skiers skied under the moonlight at The North Bay Golf Club. At left, Red (Ormeus) Bedard and Shirley Bass at Red's Camp at Nobel Lake.

Races

Junior Racing Team

A new coach, Rick Philips, was engaged to look after the needs of the Club's junior racers. Races away included the Conewango Cup, the Muskoka Loppet, the Porcupine Invitational at Timmins, and the Silver Spoon at Deep River.

The Junior Racing Team included Linda Bangay, Lori Burns, Nancy Olmsted, Allison Brown, Kim Burns, Cathy Miner, Paul Olmsted, Scott Brough, Ed Gratton, Richard Tass, John Armstrong, and Mark Stewart.

At the senior level, Dave Rees placed first in a string of division races; Otto Strazds also competed and placed well.

Club Races

Our own North Bay Nordic Invitational took place on February 2 and 3, attracting 72 competitors. A lack of snow necessitated work crews to shovel snow from the bush onto the trails (not the first time that would happen). Jackie Goulet (race secretary) wrote the following telling recommendations after the event. These comments are still valid over twenty years later.

- (i) *Have race personnel meet prior to the race so that they are aware of their job and its importance*
- (ii) *Get more of our members to enter the race*
- (iii) *Clarify the status of school racers for results*
- (iv) *Have a proper first aid kit on hand*
- (v) *Clear the storage building of machines so it can be used as a waxing area and change area*
- (vi) *"Always have Gail Rees available to consult and straighten out problems"*

The Club also hosted the first loppet - the Langlauf - on February 16, in conjunction with CFB North Bay and its ski club. To provide a wide-open start area that is needed for a loppet, the start area was formed on Trout Lake a few hundred metres from Northshore Road. Skiers raced to the shore, up the road and behind the clubhouse onto the trails.



February, 1980 – First Loppet

North Bay Nordic also hosted four Dave Rees League races, as well as the NOSSA championships. The Dave Rees League grew to five schools and Kiwanis again sponsored the prizes. Gord Rees Senior (Dave Rees' father) donated a trophy – the Gord Rees Cup - for Most Improved Team. Also, the

Board invited the top boy and girl in the Dave Rees League to take part in the North Bay Invitational at the Club's expense.



Preparing for NOSSA, 1980 with Glen Parfitt aboard an ancient Alpine
In background on right, Shirley Bass and Barb Mason

Future Plans

Ski exchange organizers were looking for a change in location that would attract more people.

Glen Parfitt recommended in his final report that bulldozing work on the trails would take out a lot of bumps and rocks; this would facilitate trail grooming and, of course, make skiing better. He also noted that during races, the one common trail beginning made it difficult for non-racers to access the trails; thus, some other independent trail would be beneficial.

Recollections 1979-80

Chapter 6 1980 - 1981 Rumours Of A Pipeline

Board of Directors

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Charlie Olmsted | President - Instruction |
| Jim Miller | Vice President - Touring |
| Kay Wroe | Secretary - Treasurer |
| Hans Frenssen | Trails |
| Bruce Scott | Coaching - Races |
| Al Bangay | Building and Property |
| Jackie Goulet | Publicity |
| Jack Wootton | |
| Fred Gunter | |

| | |
|-----------------|------------|
| Barb Mason | Newsletter |
| Lottie Frenssen | Social |
| Sandra Schisler | Membership |

Special Notes

Alvar Randa and Larry Gibbons, who were to serve on the Board this year, were transferred out of North Bay.

In a tragic accident at his home in the late summer of 1980, Glen Parfitt was killed while working on his car. Glen was on the first Board of Directors and this would have been his third year as Trails Director. Glen generously volunteered his time and his money to improve the Club in many ways and we are thankful for his efforts.

Jack Wootton and Fred Gunter agreed to serve on the Board.

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Membership: | 383+ |
| Membership Revenue: | \$3016 |
| Non-member donations: | \$325 |
| Wintario grant: | \$1937 |
| MNR Grant: | \$1840 |
| First Busy Beaver Award: | A. W. (Mitch) Mitchell |

The first several years of skiing in the North Bay area have blended together into mushy memories. Would that we had kept more accurate and detailed journals of our ski experiences. We skied at L'Auberge, on backwoods trails in Boulter Township, which is southeast of Astorville, and on trails north of North Bay. Gradually we moved into the North Bay Nordic sphere and joined at some time in the winter of 1979-80 or 1980-81. We recall the "money pot" for contributions to the club, hung on a chain and post near where the ski racks are now, and the registry book kept inside the clubhouse where skiers signed in, and out, recording the trails they had skied. During the fall, I had helped out with some trail brushing work. At some point the Nugget ran an article, maybe an editorial, about people working on various trails in the area. The comments about those involved with cross-country skiing were disparaging and insulting, and I fired off a letter to the editor describing the manpower and equipment needed to develop and maintain ski trails. Little did I know it, but my "writing career" with North Bay Nordic was beginning.

Trails

At the April 1980 meeting, the first for the new Board of Directors, Jim Miller reported that a proposed natural gas pipeline was to go through the trail system and felt that the Club should be represented at any public hearings. By September, 1980, it was discovered that no public hearings had been or were to be held; but already an 8 foot wide strip was cut crossing the Nordic trails in five places (two on the Green Trail, and three on the Blue). The final pipeline allowance would be 100 ft. (30 m) wide. Also a bridge was knocked out on the Blue Trail due to flooding from an upstream beaver dam. This resulted in some quick trail building work of a new piece of trail about 1.6 km in length on the back part of the Blue. There was concern that the Trans Canada Pipeline (TCP) construction crew had used dynamite and blown up that beaver dam which resulted in the flooding which destroyed part of our trail. Charlie Olmsted met with the land agent for TCP and reported in November that according to TCP, the dam was already destroyed when they started their work. As it would be hard to prove our case, the matter was dropped.

No mention was made of the pipeline during the winter newsletters, and so the effect of the initial cuts across the trails must not have had much impact; but that was before the actual construction and laying of the pipeline the next winter. It was suggested at the AGM that the Board maintain contact with TCP and, in a spirit of cooperation, request that damage to our trails be kept to a minimum.

In the spring of 1980, a plan was made to do some bulldozing work in the summer and to employ seven students for 10 weeks through a Young Canada Works Program. Work would be done on the Yellow, Purple, and Red Trails with Glen Parfitt using his own bulldozer at \$10 per hour. The programme did employ three students for 10 weeks. The Yellow Trail was bulldozed, as well as parts of the Red; but the need was recognized for much more bulldozing on the trails and more culverts to handle drainage of water. Some bridges were replaced, and drainage pipe installed. Two picnic tables were taken to the Lookout.

Eight weekends were designated for trail brushing and trail construction work, but as usual, more volunteers were needed to complete the work. A new brushcutter was purchased, and a large chain saw was sold as more work was being done to clear existing trails than to construct new ones.

Two major purchases were made during the winter of 1980-81. First, a new tracksetter was added to the Club's inventory. This was the older orange tracksetter that is used on occasion. (You can tell when it has been used as one of the two cutters hit a rock at some stage in its use and is on an angle - the bottom of the track seems to drop off to the side, and you feel that your right foot is angled incorrectly.) Second, during January 1981, it was decided that the two aging Alpines were not up to the task and costing more in repairs than was worthwhile. The options, as indicated by Hans Frenssen, were to purchase a new Alpine at about \$4000 or hire someone from the Nipissing Snowmachine Club at \$20 per hour and wait four days after a snowfall. Based on that sage advice, Fred Gunter moved that the president, treasurer, and trails director form a committee to buy a suitable machine. Within a few weeks, the new Alpine was in our stable at a cost of \$4253.

Not much has been said about the Raid-track snow-grooming machine. It was still used extensively in the early part of the season, but the Alpines were needed for work on the longer trails. They could handle the hills and heavy pulling much better. The days of the Raid-track were numbered.



The Raid Trak was barely more than a covered Alpine but had less pulling power.
Note the hand made tracksetter – and the familiar hills in the distance

Rod Kelusky, chief mapmaker, revised the trail map once again. It shows the Blue Trail continuing from the "main intersection" as we know it today. And the "shortcut" from the Blue up to the Green is shown as one way up only. So the intent was to ski the Blue, head up to the Green and turn right to check out the Lookout and on the return continue up the "Grunt Hill" on the new 2 km additional loop. That would make this early but different version of an "extended Blue" about 10 km.

Building and Property

The roof leaks! Ice dams at the eaves put Al Bangay and his crews to work shoveling and trying to figure out a plan to modify the roof structure to avoid this situation. They recommended that some spring repair work be done to extend the length of the overhang.

Gary Neal was hired at \$1.25 per day to open and close the clubhouse on weekdays. The snack bar, operated by Janice Parfitt, was open every weekend

Also a pay phone was installed for the season.

.....And Other Things

Continuing and New Traditions

Many traditions were beginning to be strengthened, as we see the continuing and the beginning of many annual events.

To advertise the Club's existence and programmes, Nordic took part again in "Ski-fest". This was the pre-cursor of the Ski Show, which ran for several years at Northgate.

Dave Rees conducted another waxing clinic, drawing 45 interested skiers. The ski exchange on November 7 and 8 brought in \$610, down a bit from last year. Jackie Emond hosted a wine and cheese on the evening of November 29 to start off the season; before the early registration discount ended on December 1st. Membership prices remained the same.

During the winter, Big Sisters asked the Club to donate a free membership as an auction prize, a tradition that continued for many years.

Social

On Friday, February 20, the Germania Club was again the venue for a mid-winter Nordic dance featuring a "music machine," a big pot of chili cooked up by Lottie Frenssen and her assistants, and homemade wine from the wine cellars of the Millers and Schislars. Tickets sold for \$3.50 (\$4.50 for non-members). Attendance at the event, which preceded the Invitational Races the next day (Saturday) and the Langlauf on Sunday, was described as "moderate."

New - The Busy Beaver Award

Early in the season, it was suggested that some award be created to recognize outstanding service to the Club in memory of the late Glen Parfitt. The idea sat for a while and was not acted on until late in the season when the concept resurfaced, and Fred Gunter and Charlie Olmsted moved that The Busy Beaver Award be established to honour some outstanding volunteer. Over the winter, the original purpose of the award might have been forgotten, but we can now see the Busy Beaver Award in a new light. Perhaps it should be re-named: The 'Glen Parfitt Busy Beaver Award.'

The North Bay Cross Country Ski Agency

At the October 23 Directors' meeting, news hit that the Cross Country Ski Agency, formed in 1978, was no longer being funded. It is interesting that over the two years of the Cross Country Ski Agency's existence, barely a word is mentioned about it in any Club documents. The next chapter is devoted to the rise and fall of this unusual organization. It is also interesting to note the comment in the minutes that "ski agency skiers may use our trails and will have the same privileges (no more, no less) than our members." At this time Nordic was still not charging fees for people to ski the trails.

Tours

A very cold January curtailed Jim Miller's touring activities somewhat, but in the latter stages of the winter, several outings were made to Marten River, Eau Claire Gorge (where Don Priebe led the crew by map and compass on a bushwhacking expedition), Arrowhead Park, and Nobel Lake to visit Red Bedard. Thirty skiers went on the tour of the Loring Deer Yard, actually spotting two deer and afterward skied on the groomed trails at Restoule Provincial Park. The planned trip to Camp Wanapetei for some winter camping and skiing did not materialize.

The interest in forming a Ski Patrol at Nordic was growing as it was at other cross-country centres. Whether it was just to copy the Ski Patrol network at downhill ski centres, or to deal with some sudden but now forgotten onslaught of serious ski injuries, is now unclear. (Fortunately, at North Bay Nordic, the frequency of serious injury has been very low.) In that regard, Jim Miller brought in Nelson Eddy, North Bay's premier St. John's Ambulance First Aid instructor, to conduct several first aid courses with a special emphasis on cold weather survival in remote areas. These sessions were primarily for the ski touring group who skied at times on remote wilderness trails, but they were also designed to groom a crew of ski patrollers for the Nordic trails.

Races

A novel bit of planning combined the Invitational Races (February 21) with the Langlauf the next day (February 22), and these were preceded by a dance and social on the Friday evening. The races went well, but the idea to combine them on the same weekend was thought to be not desirable. It was felt that the Invitational Races should be earlier, on the last weekend of January or the first weekend in February. Visitors from Hamilton, Kitchener, Ottawa, Timmins, and Sudbury had much praise for the Nordic event, mentioning the superb trails, scenery, and race organization. Chief of the Race, Bruce Scott, noted that very few North Bay Nordic members took part in the races.

The Dave Rees League expanded to six schools and the race season was extremely successful. The schools included Phelps, Fricker, Silver Birches, St. Hubert's, Mother St. Bride, and Paul Davoud School (CFB North Bay). The Dave Rees Cup went to Phelps. The Gord Rees Cup for the most improved team also went to Phelps.

Due to the increased use by school groups on our trails, Fred Gunter suggested that schools be offered a \$50 school membership fee. This would bring in some revenue to the Club and provide the schools with a very low cost arrangement; during school hours, students would be able to ski with their school groups.

Future Plans

Applications were made to Summer Works for five students to work on the trails. Also, an application was made to Wintario for funding to expand the facilities, as there was need for a larger kitchen, office, and storage areas.

Recollections 1980-81

Chapter 7 1978 - 1981 The Rise and Fall of the Cross Country Ski Agency

A study by a group of Canadore College marketing students and instructor John Milne in 1977 set the stage for an unusual bit of cross-country skiing history. The study showed that the area bounded by Highways 63, 533, and 17 contained hundreds of kilometres of actual and potential cross country ski trails and predicted that with the proper marketing strategies, thousands of cross country skiers could be brought to the area and would then leave untold thousands of tourist dollars in their wake - or in their ski tracks.

Milne developed a nine-member committee, which proposed the formation of the Cross Country Ski Agency (CCSA). The committee included Jerome Tremblay (of L'Auberge des Pionniers), Bill White (The Camping Store), Anne McCall, Judy Alford, Wayne Antler, Bill and Jane Kiedyk (Camp Conewango), Colin Bennett and Ian McKay. Also involved in advisory capacities were the Almaguin Nipissing Travel Association, the Chambers of Commerce from North Bay and Mattawa, the MNR and the Ministry of Industry and Tourism. Lacking from this list of players, it seems, is anyone really knowledgeable about cross-country skiing, other than the Kiedyks.

The purpose of the CCSA was to manage trail development and maintenance, to promote the region through aggressive marketing, and to promote cross-country ski events.

Starting in 1978-79, the CCSA went to ski shows and contacted thousands of skiers who belonged to Ottawa and Toronto area ski clubs whose members travelled in groups to various ski destinations. Ottawa was targeted for the Mattawa region; Toronto, for the North Bay region. The CCSA predicted huge numbers of skiers flocking to the area and actually feared bringing in too many skiers, cautioning that with the "potential of 5000 skiers on the trail at one time, 40 skiers to the mile" skiers would still be very well spread out. There would be no charge to ski the trails. The revenue pouring into the area would go directly to the hotels, motels, lodges, and resorts in the area. Participating businesses would pay a small fee to the CCSA to enable it to have funds for marketing and events.

It was called "The Golden Triangle", an area bounded by three major highways but essentially a wilderness from North Bay Nordic on the west, to Phelps and Songis, to Conewango, and east to Samuel de Champlain Park and L'Auberge des Pionniers on the Mattawa River. The early goal was to connect all of these points through the development of some new trails, such as a trail from Redbridge to the Songis Farm and the re-development of some others, such as the old Booth Road which connected Conewango and L'Auberge.

Enthusiasm was high in the local press and in tourism and city circles. In September 1978, the CCSA secured a \$107 000 grant from Canada Works to hire 21 persons to prepare 125 miles of trail. Canada Works representative John Caruso stated that this was a great investment as "better than one million dollars a year could be expected to come into the area."

Events planned for the winter included four family loppets, three Molstar events, the 62 km marathon from Songis to L'Auberge and the existing Conewango Cup races.

More cash was needed for the purchase of equipment for trail development and maintenance and the CCSA attempted to secure a \$40 000

grant from the Ministry of Northern Affairs. At the time, they had a 2:1 ratio requirement for funding. That is, to get a \$40 000 grant, the CCSA had to come up with \$20 000 of its own. Their solution was to get a loan from the bank. But the bank required someone or some organization to back the loan, so the CCSA went to North Bay City Council for that purpose.

This caused some debate at City Council. Opposing the scheme were Bob Wood and Dick Donnelly. As reported in the Nugget, Donnelly contended that it was wrong to pledge on a loan that was essentially for the "profit of business institutions" and that the city was being asked to "back something over which it had no control." Stan Lawlor countered that there was some precedence for this when North Bay supported the (now defunct) Winter Fur Carnival. The motion was carried, and the loan was backed by a vote of 8 - 2.

Now the CCSA could purchase tractors, snowmobiles, chain saws, and other equipment, and hire personnel for trail work.

Statistics from unnamed sources indicate that by February, 1979, 7000 skiers had used the trails to date (and that would include local skiers as well) and that 1500 room nights had been booked in area lodges and resorts. Tourist inquiries were at the rate of 100 per week.

It was reported in the Nugget, November 7, 1979, that the Canada Works programme had been scrapped, but the CCSA was able to secure a grant of \$50 000 from the Ministry of Northern Affairs. CCSA manager Jan Jackson stated that the budget would be tight and that membership fees and day passes would be sold to bring in revenue. Day passes "for use of the facilities at the access points including the chalets and parking areas" would be \$3 per person; memberships would be \$40 per family or \$20 for a single. How this was collected is anyone's guess.

Some cutbacks occurred on the trails. Due to conflicting use with snowmobiles in the Phelps area, the CCSA disbanded 13 km of trail in that region.

In its marketing, the CCSA changed the name "Golden Triangle" (What the heck was that, anyway) to a more apt "North Country Skiing" for its advertising. They contended that bookings were up 150%. The CCSA now represented thirteen business interests, with a loss of two but a gain of four member lodges and resorts. One of their events, the second 64 km marathon from Songis to L'Auberge, took place on February 24, 1979, and 300 skiers participated.

Two successive low snow years in 1980 and 1981 were the death knell of the CCSA. The February 18 Nugget reported that the CCSA was dead and had declared bankruptcy.

Why did the CCSA fail? The Nugget articles of the day indicated a variety of causes: poor weather, a shaky financial base, lack of a united front among the directors. Founding chairman, John Milne, stated that the goal of the CCSA became its major problem. Its goal had been to turn it over from those with an interest in cross-country skiing to the private sector - hotel owners and operators (who knew little about the fine points of skiing). "That is where the problem started," said Milne. "And the hotels didn't need the extra business and did not need the support of the CCSA." There were also contentions that VIA Rail promoted Huntsville over North Bay as a ski destination.

Jane Kiedyk argued that priorities were changed, and the quality of the trails suffered when grooming operations were curtailed mid-winter.

Dave Saad stated, "I don't think we were all pulling our weight." Joe Pelangio added that a cross-country ski base couldn't cover the whole year. Diversification and a four-season approach are needed.

I would argue that the CCSA failed for two main reasons. First, no one saw through the wildly exaggerated claims of the initial marketing study from Canadore. To base \$217 000 of government funding and a risky bank loan on that one study was foolish and planted the seeds for later financial trouble. Second, no one recognized that a specific sport enterprise, such as cross-country skiing, requires a fair amount of technical sport-related expertise and knowledge. That expertise and knowledge was sadly lacking in the CCSA. Hopefully, history will not repeat itself.

Chapter 8 1981-82 The Pipeline Cometh

Board of Directors

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Charlie Olmsted | President - Social |
| Jack Wootton | Vice President - Trails |
| Al Bangay | Building and Property |
| Ron Campbell | Touring |
| Fred Gunter | Schools Liaison |
| Dave Minden | Publicity |
| Don Priebe | Instruction |
| Bruce Scott | Coaching - Races - Newsletter |
| Rick Waggoner | Membership |

| | |
|----------|-----------------------|
| Kay Wroe | Secretary - Treasurer |
|----------|-----------------------|

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Membership: | 424 (88 family; 33 single; 5 teams) |
| Membership Rates: | \$50 (family); \$35 (single); \$20 (student) |
| Membership Revenue: | \$6012 |
| Busy Beaver Award: | Jim Miller |

NOSD ASSESSMENT

Over the preceding couple of years, some resentment had been growing regarding the high assessment the Northern Ontario Ski Division (NOSD) was levying on ski clubs in general and North Bay Nordic in particular. The function of NOSD was primarily race oriented and, therefore, impacted on those few of the Club's members who were actively involved in racing. Jim Miller had corresponded with NOSD outlining his concerns and hoping that NOSD would change the assessment calculation process and also devote more energy and resources to non-racing pursuits, such as touring, instruction, and so on - in other words to relate to the non-racing segment of the Club. In the 1980-81 season, North Bay Nordic paid over \$1000 to NOSD, not a small fraction of its operating budget.

During the summer, Dave Rees was appointed to head a committee to explore alternate methods of assessment for the division. The fall meeting of the NOSD was held in Sudbury on September 26, and Bruce Scott and Jim Miller attended as representatives of North Bay Nordic. After some tough negotiations during which they gained support from other member clubs, they brought back better news. The result was that assessment would be based on the number of declared racers, not on the total club membership, and, most significantly, the assessment for the year would be reduced.

To determine the Club's wishes regarding its involvement in NOSD, a Special General Meeting was called and held on November 14, 1981, at the Germania Club. Jim Miller reported that our assessment would be reduced to around \$600 (it ended up at \$644); also more interest was going to be devoted to recreational aspects of skiing; and that a coach would be available to all member clubs to assist with the racing teams. Another positive note was made regarding the number of up and coming skiers from the Dave Rees League in the senior schools. There was also encouragement from Fred Gunter for the Club to be involved with a larger ski organization and to be part of a bigger picture. The result of an official vote was that North Bay Nordic would remain within NOSD.

Trails

The Brown Trail

A new trail, the Brown Trail was added to the North Bay Nordic trail complex during the summer. Jim Miller spearheaded the endeavour with an application for a \$7790 Manpower grant to hire one foreman and three workers. Also, he set up the schedule for Board members to spend a week supervising the work.

The intention was that the new Brown Trail would be a shorter and easier alternative to the demanding 5 km Red Trail. Shorter it was (by 1 km), but easier it was not! When first cut, the Brown was very narrow. In places, it was difficult to spread your ski tips to herringbone up some of the steeper pitches without catching your ski tips in the trees. The long uphill sections were (and still are) quite demanding - although a bit shorter than on the Red. And on icy days, the downhills were downright scary. The Brown Trail was a bit of an anomaly in that it turned off to the left from the Main Trail out to the Blue and Green, so you skied the Brown Trail counter-clockwise; on all of our other trails the ski direction is clockwise.

The Brown Trail is unusual in another regard in that it crosses private property. (The Green Trail is the only other trail to do so.) Near where the Gold Trail now joins the Brown, a few hundred metres of trail cuts across a corner of the property owned by Mr. Ray St. Jean. Permission to put the trail in this location was granted, and this permission continues.

While used relatively infrequently for many years, the Brown Trail has steadily grown in popularity with extensive upgrading (widening, machine work and spreading of wood chips). It is now one of our prettiest trails - I call it the Ridge Trail - for it offers some very scenic views of valleys and rocky ridges. Thank you to Jim Miller and his work crew for adding this to our trail complex, and to Rod Kelusky who redrew the map - again!

The End of the Raid-Trak

The decision was made to dispose of the Raid-Trak snow-grooming machine. Repair expenses were starting to add up, and it was felt that our trails were too steep for it to be worthwhile. (Maybe, just maybe, there would be some other kind of big grooming machine that we could use!)

Trail Work

Jack Wootton organized the trail brushing parties for the weekends during the fall. Powered brush cutters were deemed to be the most efficient tool for cutting back new growth, and the Club started to make regular purchases of these implements. On snow, trail grooming chores were looked after by Hans Frenssen and Al (Mitch) Mitchell.

The Pipeline Is Coming - The Pipeline Is Coming

The Trans Canada Pipeline started to make an impact on our trail system. While efforts were made to make our presence known to them, there was little we could do to alter their intent. The fact was that there would be several places on the Blue Trail and two on the Green where the pipeline would cross. Work on this section of the pipeline - it was called the "North Bay Short Cut" - continued through the winter and gradually the heavy equipment, excavators, dirt moving trucks, and large flatbeds carrying sections of pipe, came closer and closer to the Nordic trails just as we were getting into the best mid-

winter ski conditions in many years, and just as we were getting set for the Langlauf in February. For the Blue Trail, the solution was to create a new 1 km section of trail parallel to the pipeline route, thus avoiding contact altogether. On the Green Trail, it was necessary to remove skis, scamper over the dirt, and resume skiing. The second crossing was a little trickier because sometimes you were carrying a bit of speed from the hill preceding that second pipeline crossing. Some skiers carried plastic bags to slip on over ski boots, thus avoiding getting their ski boots quite muddy. During the Langlauf, work was done to create snow-covered trails across the frozen mud, rocks, and debris. That meant some hard shoveling by a group of volunteers during the event.

Building and Property

Seeds of several major initiatives were planted this year. The first, suggested by Ron Campbell, was to investigate the possibility of purchasing the parking lot and clubhouse property, which was now being leased, from the MNR. The property would be available to purchase in 1983. The second, just at the discussion stage but referred to in Charlie Olmsted's final report, was to enlarge the clubhouse building, improve the sanitary conditions (a must), and find a way to keep ski equipment separate from skiers relaxing and eating in the clubhouse.

Meanwhile, Al Bangay's crew did some roof repairs. It was hoped that by extending the eaves and re-shingling the north side, the resulting water from ice melting would not drip down the insides of the walls and windows. The problem, though, was in the roof structure - not enough air ventilation space - and the problem would continue even after the roof was rebuilt many years later.

.....And Other Things

MNR Funding Ends

The MNR made a decision that would have a great impact on the Club's operations - to discontinue funding for trail grooming expenses through financial grants. Thus, all of the Club's trail grooming expenses would have to come from membership dues and whatever revenues could be generated from elsewhere including non-member skiing. Thus, membership fees were raised to \$50 (family), \$35 (single), and \$20 (student). The parking decal for members would cost \$1. On weekends and holidays, a paid parking lot attendant would collect \$5 per car per day from non-members; parking would be free for members with a decal.

In retrospect, this was probably a blessing in disguise. The loss of MNR funding forced the Club to become more independent and self-sufficient. Eventually, it would lead to the charging of day fees to non-member skiers.

Gary Neal continued to open and close the clubhouse on a daily basis, and also to collect money from the "money jar" that Jack Wootton had constructed at the access to the trails for non-members. Also through the organization by Fred Gunter, two students, Bob Bangay and Alan Campbell, were hired to man the parking lot shack (donated by Charlie Olmsted) and to collect parking fees from non-members.

Interestingly, the parking fee system generated \$1901 in revenue for the Club, and the membership jumped from 383 to 424, an increase of 10.7%.

Instruction

Chief Instructor Don Priebe, and committee members Dave Minden, Eugene Perabo, and Rick Wagg made some innovative changes to the instruction programme. As skiing ability at the Club was increasing, it was felt there was a need for an advanced ski instruction clinic, and who better than Dave Rees to be in charge. In its first season, the Advanced Skiers Clinic drew 12 appreciative skiers who spent a full six hours of technique improvement under the watchful eyes of the master skier.

Don had a well-organized schedule of lessons with a total of five instructors (Louise Elliot, Jackie Goulet, Liz McCulloch, Cathy Ryan, and Dave Rees). In addition to the advanced clinic, Don had a junior ski package, a ladies' ski week, general technique improvement, and a youth ski package. A total of 42 skier students took part, and when the snow settled, \$335 were added to the Club's funds.

Social

The North Bay Nordic social crew had a busy slate of events throughout the season. The first-ever Nordic garage sale held in May at the Mitch Mitchell's raised a few dollars for the Club. Coupled with the NOSD General Meeting at the Germania Club was the Club's annual wine and cheese. Jackie Goulet and Marie Campbell teamed up with Lottie Frenssen to make that a success. Lottie continued her efforts, assisted by Marie Campbell and Gloria Kelusky, with a bake sale to raise more funds for the Club. Millie Priolo headed up the ski exchange for another year, ably assisted by scores of volunteers who brought in \$855 net for the Club. On November 15, Jim Miller led a hike on the new Brown Trail that had been cleared in the summer and fall by Jim and his crew of summer students.

During the winter the Social Committee held the first evening event at Nordic - a (home-made) bean supper on February 27. With only a wood-stove for heating, and no running water, Lottie and her crew showed that this sort of evening social event could be done successfully.

Publicity

I remember that first year on the Board, writing the "Nordic News" article for the Nugget on my portable Remington typewriter. It was then a different technological world when I would drive at midnight on a cold winter's night up to North Bay to drop off my article to meet a deadline. I bought my first computer - a Commodore 64 - but still had to drive up to North Bay. Over the years, technology has changed from computer-to-computer modems, to sending by fax, and now simply by e-mail directly to the Nugget sport's desk. On that first year on the Board, looking over the minutes, I see that I contributed little other than making motions to adjourn meetings. But I was there and taking part in decision making, helping to make a great Club better, slowly trying to get a handle on how budgets worked, the "ins" and "outs" of race organization, and all of the many details that the Board was involved in, and that needed to be promoted and advertised.

Tours

The revised NOSD funding formula included more emphasis on non-racing activities and resulted in a 9-hour workshop on January 8 and 9 for tour leaders and skiers. The Friday evening session at Canadore included map and compass skills, winter outdoors first aid, clothing and emergency procedures, nutrition, and equipment and waxing. The next day, outdoor application of these skills was made on a tour at Champlain Park. Twenty-five people attended the Friday night sessions, and 12 braved some frigid temperatures on the Saturday tour.

Other winter ski tour destinations included Marten River, Sturgeon Falls West Nipissing Trails (20 skiers on both), our own moonlight ski (with 45 taking part), L'Auberge, the Almaguin Loppet, and the ever-popular Loring Deer Yard tour where 45 skiers searched for those elusive whitetails.

Tour director Ron Campbell (with committee members Jim Miller, Eugene Perabo, and Rod Kelusky) noted that several non-members took part on these tours and as a result joined the Club.

Races

While the MNR grant for trail grooming was disappearing, others became available. Within the NOSD division, a Wintario grant of \$8000 was provided to pay for a full time NOSD racing coach who would be responsible for the selection of the NOSD team and for conducting coaching clinics, coaching interested racers, and assisting school coaches.

Racing officially for the Club during the season were John Armstrong, Nancy Olmsted, Dave Rees, Otto Strazds, Keith Scott, John Ostendorf, Mark Sale and Tina Salkeld. Nancy Olmsted went on to compete at Flin Flon, Manitoba in the Canadian Juniors.

The Nordic Invitational was held on February 6 under ideal conditions. The Race Committee included Charlie Olmsted (chief of the race), Hans Frenssen (chief of the course), Bruce Scott (chief of timing), and Jackie Goulet (race secretary and office).

The Langlauf was held despite the pipeline construction, but no results are available. Maybe everyone fell into the ditch! The TCP people did show some concern for our situation and the trouble they were causing. They chipped in for a few boxes of doughnuts.

In the Dave Rees League, six teams - Phelps, Fricker, Silver Birches, Centennial, and two from Dr. Carruthers competed. Phelps won the season's three races easily but was upset by Fricker by four seconds in the final, thus Fricker taking the Dave Rees trophy. The hope was expressed to involve the separate schools again next year, and also Paul Davoud School at the base. NDA and NOSSA races were held in January and February on the Red and Purple Trails.

Future Plans

Increased membership was starting to put a strain on the facilities, and the need was recognized for expansion of the clubhouse with running water and cooking and washroom facilities, and some area where skis could be waxed. Meanwhile, the plan to purchase the leased property was being readied.

Charlie Olmsted noted that this was the most successful season to date for the North Bay Nordic Ski Club. NOSD representatives who skied our trails called our Red Trail "the most technically perfect course in Ontario".

Charlie also stated in his AGM final report that the work of all the volunteers had made him "proud to be a member of the Club". The North Bay Nordic Ski Club is indeed, proud and thankful to have had Charlie Olmsted as one of its primary leaders in its formative years.

Recollections 1981-82

Chapter 9 1982-83 Shell Jackrabbit League Starts

The 1982-83 season was a poor season for snow but a good season for Club development. Some events like the Langlauf and planned tours were cancelled. Others like instruction programmes were curtailed. But the new MNR policy of issuing Trail Use Permits would give the North Bay Nordic Ski Club control and tenure on the trails; and the beginning of the process to purchase the clubhouse and parking lot property that would enable Nordic to, hmmm, pay property taxes to the City of North Bay? And the Jackrabbit Ski League made its first brief appearance at Nordic.

Board of Directors

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Ron Campbell | President - Touring |
| Dave Minden | Vice President - Publicity |
| Al Bangay | Building and Property |
| Fred Gunter | School Liaison |
| Don Priebe | Instruction |
| Barb Mason | Newsletter |
| Gail Rees | Races - Coaching |
| Rick Wagg | Membership |
| Jack Wootton | Trails |
| Charlie Olmsted | Immediate Past President - NOSD |
| ***** | |
| Lottie Frenssen | Social |
| Kay Wroe | Secretary – Treasurer - Social |
| Membership: | 425 |
| Busy Beaver Award: | Jim Miller |

Trails

A \$5950 grant from Canada Employment and Immigration enabled the Club to hire a group of students to make several improvements during the summer to the Red and Brown Trails. On the Red Trail, work was done on the final S turn. Also, although details are sketchy, this was probably the year that the first big downhill (about 1.5 km out on the trail) was re-designed. The very steep straight run was replaced by a wide sweeping S turn, still technically demanding, but not the terror that the original downhill was to many. On the Brown Trail, a long side-hill was realigned.

During the fall, trail boss Jack Wootton organized the fall brushing parties and had his crews also cut firewood out on the Red Trail.

Rod (the map maker) Kelusky was back to the drawing board revising the Nordic trail map to show the slightly shifted Blue Trail and the two TCP crossings on the Green Trail. Sign maker Helmut Vierich created new signs to attempt to keep snowmachines from entering the trails at these points.

A major step was made towards North Bay Nordic assuming control and tenure on the trail system and clubhouse property. The MNR decided to cease giving monetary grants to ski clubs for trail grooming expenses. Instead, ski clubs could purchase a Land Use Permit for trail use and then charge users to ski the trails. Since North Bay Nordic members were already doing that through their membership dues, this meant that the focus would shift to charging individual non-members a day rate for skiing. MNR staff and Nordic skiers Jim Miller and

(President) Ron Campbell were very active in representing Nordic in these ventures which eventually changed the nature of the Club's operation.

For the first year, the Land Use Permit would be \$1. In the second year it would rise to \$25. After that there would be a charge of so many dollars per hectare of trails that we actually had. With a trail system encompassing about 27 km (27 000 m) by about 5 m wide, our trail system is about 135 000 square metres or roughly 13.5 hectares.

The 1982-83 season was a very poor season for snow, and early ski activities were held elsewhere. In mid-December, a Level I Coaches' Clinic was held on the field at Paul Davoud School at CFB North Bay. Racers trained on local golf courses. Even by the January 13 Board meeting, there had been no trail grooming expenses. By February 10, most of the trails were finally open; but the very rough Brown Trail was closed, and the Green was groomed but not trackset.

Building and Property

During the summer, work was also done to insulate and panel the parking lot gatehouse. Despite their poor working conditions of the previous year, Alan Campbell and Bob Bangay agreed to man the parking lot shack on weekends. There, they collected parking fees from non-members and checked memberships.

With Janice Parfitt not returning to work the snack bar, the Club embarked on a quest to hire new personnel. Ms. Avis Brown (from the Peninsula Variety Store, then at the corner of Peninsula and Hwy. 63) was hired to manage the snack bar from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on weekends. Improvements to the snack bar facilities included lockable cupboards to keep the mice out, a sink and drain (although there was no running water or septic system yet), large containers to hold fresh water, and a small stove. The Club took a more proactive stance in managing the snack bar, setting some standards for operation and not being so *laissez-faire* as in the past few years. The snack bar was still located in the southeast corner of the clubhouse, sharing space with a tiny office area.

Efforts were made to sell the Raid Trak grooming machine. Al Mitchell and Hans Frenssen gave it a good overhaul and then attempts were made to sell it for \$3500. It was taken to Carlson Sports to have it on view there, but with no prospects of a sale, it was offered at \$2500 to local ski resorts.

The major news of the season was the initiative taken to purchase the clubhouse property. The Club accepted the MNR's price of \$3500, and in motions made on December 9, 1982 and March 10, 1983, the Board of Directors committed to purchase the property, and sent the proposal to the AGM where the motion to purchase was ratified on May 12, 1983.

After the legal work was done in early 1984, the Club became the owner of the 3-acre parcel of land that includes the parking lot and building sites.

During the winter, the Club used a system of volunteers to open and close the clubhouse and look after routine chores during the week. Angus Bourgeau had a large crew of volunteers to do this, and they included: X. Turcotte, Don Gadd, Ted Louste, Matti Saari, Harvey Charters, Stan Priolo, Dave Leslie, Angus Bourgeau, Rod Kelusky, and Marcel Poisson.

Tours

Rod Kelusky had plans for a good variety of tour locations, but the snow drought put a crimp into his plans. When winter finally established itself in February, an excellent tour was experienced at Champlain Provincial Park - skiing on well-groomed smooth roads. Another trip was taken to the Redbridge area.

.....And Other Things

Instruction

Don Priebe, the Club's chief instructor for the season, planned an extensive ski instruction programme. His committee included veteran instructors Shirley Bass, Jackie Goulet, and Eugene Perabo, and also Bruce Hofferd from CFB North Bay.

The first instruction clinic of the season was a Level I Coaches' Clinic directed by Tony Schier in mid-December. Due to poor snow conditions at Nordic, the weekend session was held on the wind swept playing field at Paul Davoud School at CFB North Bay. There was just enough snow to glide on. A total of 11 skiers took part, and successful local skiers included Al Bangay, Tom Cook, Al Garrett, Emmanuelle Gunter, Fred Gunter, Dave Minden, Sue Priebe, and Rick Wagg

The rest of the schedule included ski courses and clinics for beginners; two levels of technique improvement with instructors Louise Elliot and Eugene Perabo; lessons for youths aged 11 to 14, and juniors from 6 to 10; a women's ski week; Dave Rees' advanced ski clinic; a telemark turn clinic at Laurentian with instructor Mike Exall; a Tour Leader Level I course; and two beginner adult sessions at CFB North Bay They were called Jackrabbit A and B Courses, but not to be confused with the later Jackrabbit programme for youths.

Jackrabbit Ski League Starts

The first mention of the Cross Country Canada sponsored "Shell Jackrabbit Ski League" did appear in the January newsletter of that year. The Jackrabbit Ski League was advertised as a fun, learn to ski programme for children aged 8 to 13, and plans were being made for a divisional Jackrabbit coordinator to visit North Bay Nordic to initiate the programme. Rick Wagg, who doubled as programme coordinator at the YMCA, led the Jackrabbit programme, but no records are available.

The low snow conditions played havoc with scheduling and, no doubt, interest, but the instruction clinics brought in a gross of \$587 over the month of January, netting the Club \$106 after instructors were paid, and other expenses met.

Reddy the Fox on the prowl

One early February evening, I got a call from Shirley Bass. She sounded distressed and anxious as she described an incident on the Nordic trails, how a very aggressive and bold red fox had followed her around the entire Red Trail. It had not attacked, and it had not seemed diseased or distressed in any way, but Shirley was concerned, not only for herself but also for other skiers especially children.

I contacted Roger Wolfe, Nordic skier and MNR wildlife expert. He explained that there had been no cases of rabies in the area, and that this was not unusual behaviour for certain foxes at that time of year. Indeed, male foxes were responding to sexual urges and were on the prowl for sprightly vixens. They, simply, sometimes got confused about what they were following.

I relayed this interesting detail about wildlife behaviour to Shirley who was both relieved that the fox was probably not rabid and a bit embarrassed. That fox was a bit of a fixture on the Nordic trails for some time before it moved on – or found what it was looking for!

Ski Patrol

With no connection to foxes, Don Priebe and Jim Miller felt that our trails needed to be safer and to be patrolled by a regular Ski Patrol system. Their plan was to have a crew of skiers, well versed in emergency procedures such as first aid and equipment repair, patrolling the trails on a regular basis and during races. The Ski Patrol would be independent of the Club and the skiers involved would be volunteering their time.

A small crew of skiers did become involved, and some patrolling of the trails was in evidence on weekends and during the Invitational.

But with the high demand on time of the volunteer ski patrollers and the relatively low frequency of emergencies (compared to Alpine ski hills), the need for a ski patrol was never clearly established.

Summer Use of Facilities

During the summer for 10 weeks, the YMCA made use of the clubhouse, property and trails as a summer day camp setting. This benefited the children who took part and also benefited the Club. The YMCA paid \$40 per week plus rental of portable outhouses, so the Club gained \$400 in revenue.

Social

Lottie Frenssen kicked off the season with a bean supper in late October (following one of the brushing days on the trails). This modest affair brought in a net profit of \$53 to add to the Club's revenues.

The ski exchange was again organized by Millie Priolo, now in her third year at this, ably assisted by Claire Meloche and Barb Mason, and the usual horde of volunteers. The breakdown of net receipts (20% of sales) is interesting: Hubs - \$88; Richardson's - \$153.40; Skiers Shop - \$199.20; Individuals - \$198.90; Bake Sale - \$112.90 - for a total of \$752.40 net profit.

Probably due to the very poor snow conditions, the Social Committee was very quiet during this short season.

Membership

No change was made to membership fees. Rick Wagg did devise a system whereby members would hang a membership tag from the rearview mirror of their cars. This would be visible to the "gate keeper" on duty. Despite the low snow (no memberships were sold after January 12), the membership hung in at 425, roughly the same as the previous year.

With more outside groups using the Club's facilities (a practice that the Club encouraged and endorsed), it was felt that these groups should be charged some fee as expenses were being incurred. For example, special trail grooming

was required before school races. To that end, it was decided to charge outside groups \$35 per day for trail grooming of the Yellow, Purple, and Red Trails - the typical school race trails. With our trail groomers being paid \$6 per hour, this would cover wages and machine expenses. During the season, this idea was modified when high schools were offered a school membership of \$75 for the season; if they purchased that membership, then the special trail usage fee would be waived.

Ways and Means

A committee was formed with Leo Meloche, Ron Campbell, Charlie Olmsted, and Kay Wroe to investigate ways and means to raise funds for Club expenses, such as trail grooming, paying NOSD fees, purchasing of the property, as well as expanding of the clubhouse.

Races

Gail Rees' Race Committee included Dave Rees, Shirley Bass (Junior 6 to 10 year old coach), Jackie Goulet (Langlauf), Fred Gunter (school liaison), and Charlie Olmsted (NOSD rep and racer liaison). Bruce Scott again served as coach for Nordic's junior racers who included Tina Salkeld, Nancy Olmsted, Keith Scott, and Brian Wallace-Tarry.

The Invitational, headed up by Kay Wroe and Charlie Olmsted and a great crew of volunteers, was held on icy fast trails on February 12 with 90 competitors. The event netted \$285.

But the best-laid plans made by Jane Minden and Shirley Bass for the Langlauf went for naught, as the event had to be cancelled due to extremely icy and dangerous conditions on the Green Trail. There were 60 pre-entries – the most we had ever had! The spaghetti dinner at The Portage went ahead as planned, and it was a success.

Future Plans

President Ron Campbell informed the Board of the Canada Ontario Employment Development (COED) programme, which would provide employment for those whose UIC benefits had been exhausted. Looking ahead to the next summer and the need for more machine work on the trails to enable us to ski earlier in the season or with less snow, we hoped that a COED grant would enable the Club to hire a crew and foreman to continue with trail upgrading. Of great importance was the Club's involvement with other groups such as the YMCA and local schools, for the COED managers required documentation that supported our claims of community involvement.

There was also a need to modify the small equipment garage. With only one door, it was a bit of a struggle to get the snowmachines in and out. An exit door on the opposite side from the entrance would help.

Recollections 1982-83

Chapter 10 1983-84 The First Ski Show at Northgate

The 1983-84 season was a good one as plentiful snow gave us three and a half months of good skiing, a definite contrast to the past season. But interest in the ski exchange, skiing instruction, and touring all waned considerably. This may have been due to a simple increase in just wanting to ski on our own trails; perhaps we were happy with the equipment and skill level that we had acquired. Or was the economic recession of the early 1980s affecting the demand for the "extras"? One area of growth, under the direction of Tom Cook, was the strengthening relationship between high school teams and North Bay Nordic.

Board of Directors

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Hans Frenssen | President - Trails |
| Dave Minden | Vice President - Publicity |
| Don Priebe | Instruction - Ski Patrol |
| Tom Cook | High School Liaison |
| Angus Bourgeau | Building and Property |
| Barb Mason | Newsletter - Membership |
| Eugene Perabo | Touring |
| Gail Rees | Races - NOSD |
| Lottie Frenssen* | Social - Ways and Means |
| ***** | |
| Kay Wroe* | Secretary - Treasurer |

*Jackie Goulet had been elected to the Board but was forced to resign as she and Bruce moved to Toronto. Lottie Frenssen stepped in to fill the vacancy. Kay Wroe, serving as Secretary and Treasurer, was not a voting member on the Board. During the season, Kay indicated that she would be stepping down from her position after serving as Secretary/Treasurer since the 1976-77 season, a total of seven consecutive years.

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Membership: | 481 (110 families; 38 single; 5 student teams) |
| Busy Beaver Award: | Kay Wroe |
| \$2200: | Amount received from the sale of the Raid Trak, finally |
| \$1200: | Cost of one ultra deluxe two door spiffy biffy outhouse |

Trails

Past President Ron Campbell had set up the application for the COED grant, and in the summer, work was done on the inner trails. Charles Hassard, who in the ski season was one of the paid trail groomers, was the foreman of the work crew. This continued the efforts to make the trails skiable with less than 12" (30 cm) of snow. Unfortunately, financial records for the work done, as well as specific references to trails actually worked on and to what extent, have disappeared. The work probably involved continued bulldozing, widening and levelling of the Yellow, Purple, and Red Trails. A map from this year possibly indicates work sites on the Red Trail at the first big downhill just before the 2 km point, and at the final S turn.

Trails chief Hans Frenssen set up the trail-brushing programme, which again was in need of more volunteers. There was definitely a need for an

overhaul of the present system of simply advertising dates for work on the trails and hoping some workers would show up.

During the winter, machine operators and trail groomers were Al (Mitch Mitchell), Charles Hassard, and Hans Frenssen.

Building and Property

Survey of Property

Following the positive motion to purchase the property at the last AGM, the Board continued with the legal purchasing details. This included a survey of the property.

New Biffy

The biggest item for conversation at the Club this year was centred on a new addition to the Club buildings: the new spiffy biffy outhouse, built by Sted's Construction elves and carpenters. This was no rustic outhouse; indeed, this was a state of the art 2-hole and 2-door affair (His and Hers). It was first located near where the present woodshed is; then later, it was moved to the west end of the parking lot near the road. (What a welcoming sight!) The outhouse remained there, often the recipient of garbage bags, recycling containers, and other refuse, until the year 2000 when some anonymous Board member, with the good sense to break tradition, summarily moved the grand structure 50 m down the Main Trail! Its new location is very handy for racers lining up at the start area and for race officials.

Clubhouse and Garage Details

The opening and closing of the clubhouse was adjusted to include the changing operation of the clubhouse. Mrs. Avis Brown, the snack bar and building manager, generally opened up in the mornings on weekends while the last ski patroller looked after closing up. The Neals looked after opening and closing on weekdays when the snack bar was not open. The parking lot attendants opened up on weekends if Mrs. Brown had not yet arrived, and they were also responsible for turning up the heat and lighting the wood stove.

The clubhouse received a much needed new set of side doors which were a little rough and needed some finishing work the next season. There were concerns voiced about the doors on the small equipment garage, which was bursting at the seams. Trying to navigate a balky Alpine through a narrow garage door was a harrowing experience - for the driver, for the Alpine, and for the doors. The doors were taking a beating, and the request was for a sturdy metal door.

Additional Revenues

The parking lot continued to be a source of revenue for the Club, earning a net \$1536.20 over 28 days (14 weekends) of operation. The weekend statistics that were kept during the season indicate that 2183 members skied on those weekends plus 1228 non-members; a total of 1418 cars were issued parking permits (these were cars driven by non-members; Club members showed a membership card). The parking fees for non-members were \$5 per car and \$2 per person in vans and buses. This reflected a very significant and quiet change

in policy, for it was the first time in the Club's history that some non-members were charged a fee to use the trail.

Another boost to the Club's revenue for the season was the successful conclusion to the Raid Trak's history at Nordic as it was finally sold for \$2200. Now with a fleet of older and not so old Alpines, it was decided to sell the oldest and purchase a new Alpine for the 1984-85 season, thus continuing the wise system of having two newer machines for the bulk of the work, and one veteran snowmachine as backup.

No Skis Allowed

A change was made in policy regarding skis in the clubhouse. Up to this point skiers would traditionally bring their skis into the clubhouse for waxing in a warmer environment. But in February 1984, the Board decided to ban "dangerous practices in the clubhouse such as using torches and cleaning solvents". Thus the Board voted to prohibit skis in the clubhouse.

Tours

There were plans made to travel to and ski in the Birchhaven and pipeline areas, at Ravenscroft Lodge in Temagami, the Loring Deer Yards, and the trails in Boulter Township abutting Algonquin Park. But there was no mention of "touring" at the 1984 spring AGM, and there is little in the records about these planned tours. I recall that the trip that I was going to lead on the Boulter Township trails was cancelled due to lack of interest. The trip to Ravenscroft did take place and was judged to be "excellent", but there was "some problem with people overestimating their abilities."

There are probably three reasons why the Club's touring component started to wane. First, the growing popularity of snowmachines and their frequent high-speed presence on Crown land trails was turning any "wilderness ski experience" into a noisy and unsafe experience. Second, the available places to travel to within two hours had been visited many times, and perhaps the interest was wearing thin. And third, our own trails were being improved steadily, and it was being recognized increasingly that our trail system was incredibly diverse, unique, and beautiful. Over the years, many of our Club members have travelled independently or in small groups to cross-country ski centres as far afield as the Rockies, New Brunswick, Quebec, and in Ontario, places such as Hardwood Hills and Timiskaming Nordic. There's no place like home!

Instruction

Don Priebe, chief instructor for the season, set up a diverse ski instruction programme similar to the past season. But there was little interest shown in more advanced instruction and almost no interest in upgrading skills. Perhaps due to the bountiful snow compared to last year, everyone just wanted to ski. Perhaps also, interest in technique improvement ebbs and flows over the years as does interest in many pursuits.

There is no mention of the Jackrabbit Ski League in Club records for the 1983-84 season.

Ski Patrol

Jim Miller, with Don Priebe assisting, put together an extensive Canadian Ski Patrol System for the Nordic trails. First, both Jim and Don attended a CSPS course in September to train and to learn how to put together a workable system. In addition, Jim took a 65-hour First Aid course in November and was in charge of the First Aid training of new patrollers. Included in the group of Nordic's ski patrollers were Jim, Don, Louise Elliot, Sue Priebe, and Ed Bowen. In December, Kiwanis sponsored the rental of three portable radios. Later in the year, an application was made to Wintario to purchase radios. Also an arrangement was made with Nipissing Ridge to take possession of a no longer needed patrol hut. It never did arrive in the 1983-84 season, but it did make a brief appearance in the winter of 84-85.

Jim Miller and Don Priebe spent hundreds of hours organizing and developing the Ski Patrol system, and patrollers were frequently in evidence on the trails through the mid 1980s. However, the low frequency of accidents or problems on the trails did not keep the patrollers busy enough to justify continuing their volunteer work, and the need for the ski patrol system waned.

The statistics that Don did compile over the season showed a strong relationship between injuries and lack of ski skill instruction: it was reported nationally that all of the Nordic recreational skiers treated by C.S.P.S. had never taken a lesson.

Races

Gail Rees' Race Committee staged the Langlauf on February 5, and it attracted 78 entrants. Added to the "20 km" (Green) distance this year, in an attempt to lure more participants, were a 5 km distance for skiers under 13 and a 10 km distance (on the Blue Trail). A new look was given to the Langlauf: a prize to the skier who best predicted his or her time on the Green or Blue Trails. And prizes took on a different look as well. Seeing a need to find some unique substitution for the bland ribbons and medals, Gail initiated the Nordic Mug awards. These were handcrafted pottery mugs with a Nordic crest in relief, and for many years were the goal of racers on the Nordic trails. The Invitational, on the February 11 and 12 weekend, attracted mostly out of town racers, and the concern was that there were not enough local competitors.

Coach Bruce Scott had four top skiers under his wing: Keith Scott, Tina Salkeld, Brian Wallace-Tarry, and Karen Garrett. Keith and Tina were named to the Northern Ontario Team and competed at Kamloops in the Canadian Juniors, with Keith being ranked in the top 10 in Canada. Assisting Bruce occasionally in pre-race training as coaches and pacers were Barb Olmsted, Lise Meloche, and Dave Rees.

School races included one junior school race, three Dave Rees League races, and at the high school level, Pre-NDA and NDA. Team memberships were purchased by Chippewa, Widdifield, West Ferris, Scollard (Boys) & St. Joseph's (Girls); and members of the teams practised regularly during January and February.

The Club donated two trophies to the school competitions for the junior teams (won by Chippewa Junior Girls and Widdifield Junior Boys), and the existing trophies were designated for senior teams won by Chippewa Sr. Girls

and Widdifield Sr. Boys. Al Garrett and Tom Cook were among the coaches instrumental in their teams' successes.

.....And Other Things

The Ski Show at Northgate and Other Publicity

To boost Nordic's profile it was decided to have a major ski show in the high traffic area of Northgate Square. Organized by Don Priebe and Gail Rees, the ski show on November 4 and 5 included a North Bay Nordic information booth plus other booths and displays. These included several lodges and ski resorts, North Bay Parks and Recreation, Ministry of Tourism, and The Sport Connection, which put on a ski fashion show. Revenue gained from the rental of booth space netted the Club \$595. But more importantly, many North Bay residents became aware of North Bay Nordic's existence. The list of volunteers who manned the Nordic booth and helped out with the organization included Donna Spencer, Anne Garrett, Claire Meloche, Shirley Bass, John Ducharme, Marilyn Parker, Mrs. McGinn, Emmanuelle Gunter, the Honeybournes, the Symingtons, the Mindens, Tom Cook, Barb Mason, Jim Miller, and Marie Campbell.

Publicity for the Club continued with the weekly North Bay "Nordic News" in the Nugget. Also the Skiers' Shop sponsored radio ski reports on local radio and TV. At the beginning of the season, Richardson's, The Skiers' Shop, and Bigwood Sporting Goods jointly sponsored a membership advertisement in the Nugget and were given "family memberships" for their contribution.

Some annual free publicity continued with the donation of a free membership to the Big Sisters' Association auction.

The Ski Exchange

Millie Priolo again organized the ski exchange, which was held on November 13 and for the last time at Dr. McDougall School. With net revenues down significantly to \$320, it was recommended that a change in venue might add to the sales. With the success of the ski show at Northgate, it was decided to merge the two events and conduct the sale of used ski equipment at next year's ski show.

External Fund Raising

An unusual source of some revenue for the Club appeared when a group of young area men approached the Nordic Board of Directors asking us to "sponsor" their organization of a fund raising dance at a local nightclub. The nightclub establishment required these fellows to have a sponsor to give some legitimacy to their organization of the event. The Board agreed and the result was that Peter Hendrickson, Steve Harman, and Steve Blane sent the Club a cheque for \$300.

Rotary Skiarama

The Easter Seals Snowarama started as a snowmobilers' event in 1982, but in 1984, with Rotary's involvement in the project, efforts were made to cross over to cross-country skiing. Dick Tafel and Gerry Strachan were the principal organizers of the event in the North Bay area, with Dick being the liaison with Nordic. The idea has always been a simple one. Fill out a pledge form, and ski a

distance to raise funds for Easter Seals. But the problem that cross-country skiing presented was that not many novice skiers were capable of skiing a set distance, such as 20 km on the Green Trail (even though it was actually 17.6 km); so the Board thought that skiing around the Red Trail four times would be a better alternative - it would keep the skiers closer to the clubhouse, and the skiers could stop for breaks. For obvious reasons, the Skiarama concept gradually evolved into one of skiing a distance that is comfortable to the skier, with no set distance or trail required.

Future Plans

The process to purchase the property was underway. Refurbishing the clubhouse (water and indoor facilities) was still in the talking stage, but as yet no firm plans were made. The Ways and Means Committee had some work to do!

At the January 12 Board meeting, a motion from Dave Minden, seconded by Gail Rees, to have the chalet designated a non-smoking area, was "tabled". (We were just ahead of the times!)

Another plan decided at the March Board meeting was to create a position to be called "programme coordinator". This person would plan various events such as time trials, fun races, novelty days, and moonlight ski nights. Also at the April Board meeting, Ron Campbell suggested the Club have an operations manager to look after the property and parking lot on a regular basis. And with Avis Brown not returning next year, the search began for a replacement or pop/juice machine alternatives. The need for a weekday gate attendant at the parking lot during the peak part of the season was also discussed, so as to gain revenue from non-members skiing the trails.

Recollections 1983-84

Chapter 11 1984-85 First Green Trail Club

Board of Directors

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Tex Mitchell | President |
| Jim Miller | Vice President - Touring |
| John Munro | Treasurer |
| Hans Frenssen | Trails |
| Angus Bourgeau | Building and Property |
| Anne Garrett | Membership |
| Brian Malcolm | Secretary |
| Joe Lynch | Newsletter - Publicity |
| Tom Cook | Races – Coaching - School Liaison |

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Dave Minden | Social |
| Bruce Scott | Racing Team Coach |

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Membership: | 700+ (159 families; 33 single; 5 student; 6 school teams) |
| Membership Revenues: | \$8779 |
| Day fees: | Weekends - Adults \$4 Children under 12, \$1 |
| | Weekdays - Adults \$2 Children \$.50 |
| Membership Fees: | Adults \$50 (\$55) Single \$35 (\$40) Student \$20 (\$25) |
| | (The first figures indicate the “early bird rates.”) |

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Cost of new Alpine: | \$6221.52 |
| Cost of Property: | \$3500 |
| Wintario Grant: | \$3000 |
| First Clubhouse Managers: | Gilles Gervais and Linda LeMay |
| Busy Beaver(s) Award: | Jane and Dave Minden |

At the first Board meeting, there was an election for President with both Tex Mitchell and Jim Miller contested the position. Speeches were made to the Board members, and a vote was held. (Dave Minden who was present at this changeover meeting conducted the election.) Tex Mitchell was declared president, and Jim Miller took on the role of vice president. (This was the first and only time that the president of the Club was actually elected, until 2002 when the annual election of president, part of the new executive structure, had been written into the Club's by-laws.)

The position of treasurer is probably the least appreciated but most demanding role on the Board. Over the years, this position has captured the imagination and time commitment of a hardy group of number crunchers, and it is interesting that there have been fewer treasurers than any other position. Starting with Kay Wroe who served an impressive seven years, the treasurers that have followed included John Munro, then Bob Bergquist, Alan Yeates, Charlie Taylor, Guido Verillo, and John Wipprecht. Each has brought new strategies and more modern technology to the position. John Munro was the first to bring North Bay Nordic into the computer age of databases and spreadsheets and a more organized accounting system where every revenue or expense had its specific location. Starting with John Munro, all Board and General meetings were punctuated by the computer print outs of budgeted and actual revenues and expenses.

The 1984-85 season was a good one! There were good snow conditions throughout. Membership soared to over 700. With major expenses (finally, the purchase of the property; and the acquisition of a new Alpine snowmachine,

totalling near \$10 000) the Club realized a healthy profit of about \$3000, and closed the season with about \$8000 in the bank, ready for some hefty expenditures next season. The hiring of two clubhouse and parking lot employees and the charging of fees for non-member skiers no doubt had some influence on the growth in membership.

Trails

Hans Frenssen, chief of the trails, encountered some difficulties with trail brushing volunteers as only 18 came out for the weekend trail work through October and November. Tex Mitchell decried the widespread drop in volunteers. Help - Wanted - Volunteers! Maybe, "Don't call us, we'll call you" would be the solution to recruit more volunteers.

During the season, Hans remarked that some complaints were being made about the saplings and raspberry canes poking up through the snow. He pointed out that complaints were to come only from the 18 who had brushed the trails in the fall.

Trail grooming responsibilities this year rested again with Hans and Al (Mitch) Mitchell, and they delighted in the brand new Alpine purchased this season with the help of a \$3000 Wintario grant. Have fun, boys!

The Board decided to take a conservative approach this year, and there was no trail work done during the summer. However, thought was given to bulldozing the Green Trail and to set up a sinking fund to reserve some cash for that purpose.

.....And Other Things

Ski Show at Northgate

The second ski show at Northgate on November 23 and 24, again organized by Don Priebe, had a new look. Joining the Nordic information booth and a variety of lodges and other booths was the Nordic ski exchange. The move from Dr. McDougall School proved to be a positive one for it gave the Club much better exposure in a heavily travelled shopping area; plus, there was a lot of good advertising for the event as part of Northgate's advertising strategy. Organized by Tom Cook, Bruce Scott, and Marie Campbell, the ski exchange and bake sale netted \$1160. Much work and effort behind the scenes contributed to the show's success. Marie had 25 volunteer bakers who contributed their time and energy, as well as their recipes. Claude Jolin built the ski racks, and John Munro and Charlie Olmsted teamed up to manhandle them into a truck for transport to and from Northgate. And many junior racers, high school racers, their teacher coaches, and senior Club skiers helped out at the ski exchange and manned the Nordic information booth.

Other ski show participants included Don Priebe's Activan, the Canadian Ski Patrol, Sport Connection and their ski fashion show, the YMCA, and ski lodges that included Stokely Creek, OpeeChee, Scandia, and Ravenscroft.

Club Programmes - the Green Trail Club

In an attempt to foster some fun and excitement on the trails, I took the opportunity of not being on the Board to organize a series of events throughout the season. Some did not work very well and were abandoned; others have

endured. The most successful was the easiest to set up - the Green Trail Club. The idea came from a discussion with Fred Gunter a couple of years earlier when Fred suggested the need for something like the competition ladder at the Granite Tennis Club. I came up with the idea of a Green Trail Club. To join, you simply had to ski the Green Trail a minimum of four times, recording the date and time elapsed on a chart. It was the perfect "Participaction" kind of ongoing event. Little did these skiers realize my ulterior motives - to acquire a list of skiers who skied the Green Trail regularly and to then set up a system for recruiting volunteers to brush the trail in the fall! In later years, the Blue Trail Club and All Trails Club would be added.

First Green Trail Club 1984-85

| MEN | | WOMEN | |
|----------------|----|-----------------|----|
| Denis Darveau | 38 | Jane Minden | 23 |
| Claude Jolin | 34 | Ann Burton | 14 |
| Lloyd Argo | 24 | Vivian Campbell | 10 |
| T. Lauste | 18 | Shirley Bass | 8 |
| Andy Davies | 17 | Anne Garrett | 4 |
| Stewart Fisher | 17 | Barb Olmsted | 4 |
| Dave Rees | 16 | | |
| Ephram Gallant | 15 | | |
| Dave Minden | 14 | | |
| John Munro | 11 | | |
| Tex Mitchell | 11 | | |
| Cecil Campbell | 10 | | |
| Bill Burton | 10 | | |
| Ron Thompson | 9 | | |
| Helmut Vierich | 9 | | |
| Joe Lynch | 9 | | |
| Ray Kenney | 9 | | |
| Hans Frenssen | 9 | | |
| Bill Sangster | 9 | | |
| Al Garrett | 8 | | |
| Geoff Burton | 7 | | |
| Alec Bialski | 7 | | |
| Angus Bourgeau | 5 | | |
| Gregg Oxley | 5 | | |
| Keith Scott | 4 | | |
| Bill Winsor | 4 | | |

Ski Patrol

The Ski Patrollers included Don Priebe, Jim Miller, and Ed Bowen. The patrollers were used especially during the Langlauf and Invitational races, and fortunately no injuries occurred. The Nordic Ski Patrol Hut finally made its appearance in the parking lot; it was later moved onto the field area near the top of the trails where it was wired with Bruce Scott's electrical expertise. It remained for a year or so. Over the winter, the Ski Patrol reported three minor incidents on the trails.

Carlsberg Count the Kilometres

Carlsberg sponsored a skier participation campaign to reward some long distance skiing. Pins were awarded for skiing on a single day 15 km or 25 km -

this was a precursor of our own Personal Distance Challenge - and over the whole season, 500 km, again a precursor for the Cross Country Canada series of long distance ski awards. Many of us have collections of these pins in "the drawer"! This season, 40 skiers registered and received pins.

The results were sent to the sponsors, Carling-O'Keefe in the hope of winning a VCR or stereo system. We didn't win!

Snowarama / Skiarama

Charlie Olmsted, long time Board member, many times Chief of the Race at Nordic races, and Rotary Club member, headed the Easter Seals fundraiser on the Nordic trails on February 17. Timmy of the Year was Roddy Cornwell, who visited Nordic on the day of the event.

Clubhouse Staff

News that last year's snack bar attendant, Jackie Amond, would not be returning necessitated some important decision making. One plan called for vending machines from Palangio's to be installed. The Club would receive 10% of profits and would provide hydro and security. But there was still a need to have staff on hand to sell either parking tags or day fees to non-members skiers and to generally monitor clubhouse activities.

Joe Lynch set it all up. Take one ski club in need of some permanent staff. Add a Federal Works Program grant that would pay them. Toss in a committee of Joe, Angus Bourgeau, and Hans to hire workers. Mix in a cast-off fridge, hot plate, and electric kettle. And voila! You have a snack bar serving hungry skiers six days a week (on Monday the snack bar was closed) and the parking lot manned seven days a week to nab non-members and charge them a fee for skiing the trails. Thus, we got to know two young people - Gilles and Linda - who strove under albeit difficult conditions to provide Club members and visitors with some refreshment alternatives. Conditions were cramped - they used a small cubicle in the southeast corner of the clubhouse, beside the office area. Although we had no running water (water for cooking and cleaning was brought in large containers) and the hot dogs and chili looked a bit "old" at times, it was a start, and led to two major clubhouse expansions.

When the dust had settled, the year-end financial report showed a net profit of \$4703. This included revenues from trail passes (\$3622), high school races (\$379), and snack bar revenues (\$2348) - boy, that's a lot of hot dogs and chili. Snack bar expenses totaled \$4704. The two employees were paid \$140 per week through the Youth Works Programme.

Instruction

A Dave Rees advanced ski clinic was held on January 20 for 10 skiers who wished to take their skiing to a higher level.

And Don Priebe with his "Activan" ski business set up a simpler system of ski instruction - a four 2-hour package or 1-hour spot lessons for technique improvement at \$10 per skier at designated times on weekends. There would also be instruction for visiting school groups. Don also set up the first ski rental shop using his equipment, stored in the shrinking space of the "office"/snack bar area.

The Jackrabbit Ski League unfortunately was again abandoned for the season due to a lack of volunteers to run the Canada-wide programme.

Building and Property

Finally, the paper work was done. The official papers were signed and sealed on April 12, 1985. The cheque was written for \$3500. We now collectively owned:

“All that Parcel or Tract of Land in the City of North Bay, in the Territorial District of Nipissing and Province of Ontario, containing by admeasurement 1.7219 hectares, be the same more or less of that part of Lot 6, Concession B, as shown on the plan of the Township of Widdifield, designated as Part 1 on a plan and field notes of Location MN 387 deposited in the Land Registry Office at North Bay as Plan 36R-6609.”

Painting of the buildings was carried out to have all of the buildings the same dark brown colour. Gilles and Linda did some of the work.

Tours

Jim Miller again organized the touring component of the Club with plans to travel to Champlain Park, Sturgeon Falls, Scandia, the Fish Hatchery, OpeeChee, and Boulter Township. There was also a NOSD Level I Tour Leader Certification Course offered in Sudbury and Killarney Park. Records of Club activities do not reveal the participation in these tours and courses, but the turnout was not very large. The trip to Scandia did occur, and the weekend after, Al Bangay visited the lodge on James Lake north of Temagami and reported in the March newsletter on the excellence of the food and accommodation.

At the AGM, Jim reported that the interest in organized touring was dwindling. But there was, however, a strong interest shown in the Carlsberg Count the Kilometres and the Green Trail Club. Interests change.

Races

Club Racing

Bruce Scott again took on the coaching responsibilities for a large crew of competitors. The Junior Racing Team included Karen Garrett, Diane O'Grady, Tina Salkeld, Nancy Olmsted, Brian Wallace-Tarry, Stephen Spencer, Alex Mutt, Mat Manuel, and Keith Scott.

Keith Scott, Nancy Olmsted, and Tina Salkeld led the way with numerous medal finishes, and both Keith and Nancy competed at the Canadian Juniors at Morin Heights. Nancy was nominated for the Ellis Hazen Memorial Award.

Nordic hosted the 10th Invitational Races on February 2 and 3, 1985. Among those racing were noted skiers Frank Ferrari and Reino Keski-Salmi. Keski-Salmi, a national team skier in the late 1970s and early 1980s, was tragically killed in a helicopter/ski crash in June 1985 at the age of 28. Born in

Finland and living in Salmon Arm, B.C. with his family, he won the Canadian Junior 15 km in 1977, and by 1979 was the national 30 km and relay champion. Overall, Keski-Salmi won 22 national championship medals (9 gold, 11 silver, 2 bronze).

The Langlauf was held on February 10 and attracted 73 participants on the Green, Blue, and Purple Trails. There were 27 volunteers. On the Green and Blue, two prizes were given to the male and female who had the best predicted times. Keith Scott's time of 59:24 was second to Ken Hawthorne of Bracebridge (59:15).

The DARE Loppet, organized by Mike McCann and other DARE staff, was another favourite for North Bay Nordic racers.

School Racing

Sue Priebe organized the Dave Rees League races, which included six schools - Centennial, Cite des Jeunes, Fricker, Phelps, Dr. Carruthers, and Silver Birches. The schools involved at this time did not pay any fees to the Club.

Tom Cook, as school liaison and also Widdifield coach, coordinated the school involvement at the Club. Tom attempted to institute a high school membership fee of \$90 per school for the season to defray trail-grooming expenses. The motion was defeated as it was felt that the student membership fee was adequate and that the present user pay system should continue. A later proposal called for a \$50 per school team (\$200 if a school had boys and girls, senior and junior teams) for training on school days, and an entry fee of \$1 per racer for high school races. School racers would be encouraged to join as student members. This proposal was accepted.

Future Plans

The decrease in volunteers at Club activities, especially for trail work, was noted by Tex Mitchell, and the question was raised as to the need for a full time paid manager of the Club who would look after trails and property. All other ventures in the Club (such as racing and socials) would be operated by volunteers and would run only if financially viable.

The Club applied for a Canada Works Grant of \$12 343 for 3 workers and equipment costs for trail work (September to November). Lee Crawford at Standard Paving would coordinate the machine time.

Another area being explored was the possible acquisition of the North Bay Canoe Club portable building. They were starting construction of a new brick building and their original building was to be put up for sale.

Jim Miller announced previous to the AGM that he would be stepping down from the Board due to his MNR transfer to Timmins. Jim and Janice were original Club members - singly at first, then as a couple; and Jim (with Janice's help in the background) worked tirelessly over the years on trail development and in setting up the touring division of the Club and the Ski Patrol system. As Tex Mitchell remarked, North Bay Nordic's loss would be Porcupine Ski Runners' gain.

Recollections 1984-85

Chapter 12 1985-86 Jackrabbit Starts Again – 1st Skating Races

Board of Directors

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Tex Mitchell | President - Instruction |
| Dave Minden | Vice President – Publicity - Touring |
| John Munro | Treasurer - Ways and Means |
| Hans Frenssen | Trails |
| Lee Crawford | Building and Property |
| Anne Garrett | Membership |
| Tom Cook | Secretary - Jackrabbit |
| Joe Lynch | Newsletter |
| Dave Rees | Races - Coaching |
| Membership: | 860 (187 Family; 58 Individual; 62 Student) |
| Day passes sold: | 1500 |
| Clubhouse staff: | Guy Bazinet and Dan Solski |
| Busy Beaver Award: | Gail Rees |

First Five-Year Plan

Over the years, North Bay Nordic's leaders have brought unique skills and knowledge to bear. Skills in leadership, building construction, racing and ski instruction, trail construction and trail grooming all have been important in the Club's development. Joe Lynch brought to North Bay Nordic his unique experiences and skills as a government planner and designed the first five year plan.

It called for a steady increase in membership fees to reach \$95 per family by 1991. It forecast year-by-year trail work to widen all of the trails to a 5-metre width with the purpose of setting two parallel tracks for classic skiing. (This plan predated the onset of skating and the need for wider trails for that purpose.) It planned for the purchase of a new Alpine snowmachine in 1987 and the purchase of a Pisten Bulley groomer in 1990, plus the expansion of the clubhouse and installation of a water system. Over five years, it anticipated the injection of \$95 000 from Wintario grants, \$64 500 of our own cash along with 2500 hours of volunteer labour equivalent to \$25 000. It was an ambitious plan.

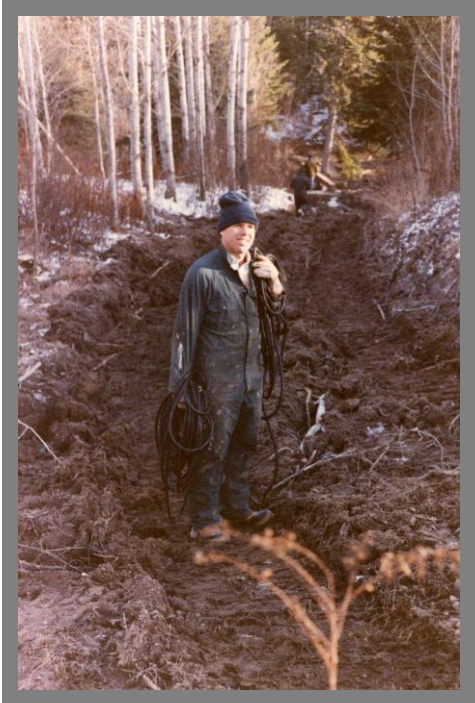
Some of the aims were achieved, some not - the Pisten Bulley did not arrive until 1995. But a plan such as this provided focus to the Club's activities, and 15 years later, while many of the original goals have been met, new goals have replaced old ones, and subsequent multi-year plans have been formulated.

Trails

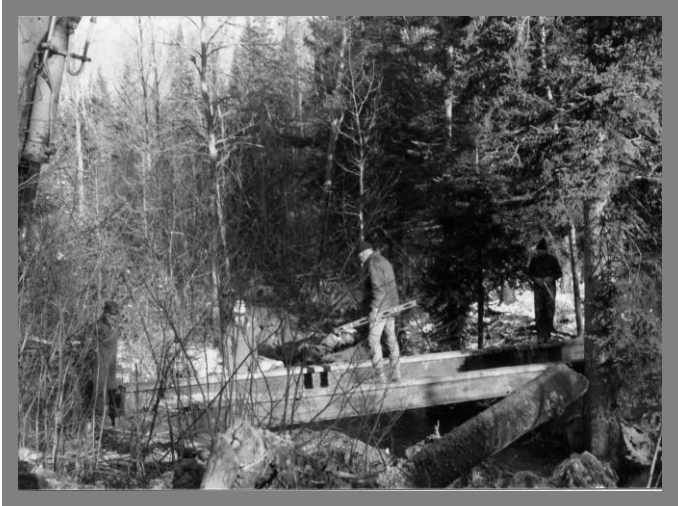
New Bridge

No significant trail improvement work was done this year as the Club attempted to plan for a future blitz on trail upgrading. But an unforeseen event - the collapse of the main bridge on the incoming trail - forced the Club into some emergency work in late fall. Fortunately, two of the Board members, John Munro (Pre-cast Tank and Vault, Ltd.) and Lee Crawford (Standard Paving) were able to access their resources and contributed significantly to the re-construction of the bridge. Actual design details were handled by Charlie Olmsted (Sted's Construction). Among those assisting in the actual bridge construction were John Ducharme, Tex Mitchell, and Bryon and David Bonell. The final result was a

product that featured a deck of 8' railway ties laid on 40' steel beams supported by concrete piers. And being built higher than the previous bridge, it was hoped that being washed out by a fall or spring flood would never occur again.



More fun than crunching numbers, John Munro gets down and dirty



**Laying the beams.
From left: John Ducharme, Lee Crawford, Tex Mitchell, and John Munro**

Trail preparation took a different turn this season with the infusion of the Green Trail Club members. I made personal contact with the Green Trail skiers, and asked them to form groups (including friends and family) to take on the responsibility of a personal 2 km section of the Green Trail. The system worked well, thanks to 38 Green Trail Club skiers and friends who complemented 12 others who assisted Hans Frenssen in brushing the inner trails. The assigning of a particular section to a specific group of people had another positive spin off: Club members began to have a sense of ownership and pride in "their" section of the trail; and for many years, a group would brush the same part of the trail. All told, 50 volunteers contributed about 500 hours in brushing the trails in the fall of 1985. (My Green Trail Club plan had worked!)

The Bachler Equipment

Another significant improvement was the acquisition (with Dave Rees' advice) of the Bachler track-setting device (the yellow one) at a cost of \$3542. The old orange steel tracksetter had been banged up on a rock, and one of the track molds was bent. This resulted in a slanted base in one of the tracks causing very uncomfortable skiing. Attempts to repair the old tracksetter were only partially successful, but it was kept as a backup until 2002 when it was disposed of. The Bachler was used as the primary tracksetter until 1995-96 when the Pisten Bulley was purchased, and it is still used occasionally in the early and later stages of the season. The Bachler is also used for race preparation when a best line is desired - over the entire distance for classical races and on some downhill sections for skate races. The Bachler is always pulled by an Alpine. It is also used extensively when tracksetting the Green Trail.

The Bachler tracksetter creates tracks a bit deeper than the tracksetter on the back of the Pisten Bulley, and when both are used on the Green Trail, a discerning skier can note the difference.

Pipeline Access Road

The Club received a letter in January from P.J. St. Martin at TransCanada Pipelines requesting our response to a proposed road access from Northshore Road to the Blue Trail and the pipeline. We responded with a request for a consideration of an alternate route that would have less impact on our trail system. A meeting with TCP, attended by Tex Mitchell and John Munro, led to some positive discussion, but the matter was in the hands of TCP. It appeared that TCP needed a quicker and more direct access to that part of the pipeline for their line inspectors who had to come in by foot from Feronia.

Trails To Be Proud Of

Through the 1980s, the Nordic trails (despite our awareness of some shortcomings) were becoming recognized as a superior trail system. Following a trip to Barrie, Joe Lynch wrote the following in the January 1986 newsletter.

"Shuffling up the hills on the Green Trail today and sifting down the other side, I had plenty of time to reflect on the excellent skiing and the beauty of my surroundings. The previous four days had found the Lynch family celebrating Christmas in Barrie, and each day I spent a couple of hours on the trails of a Barrie cross country ski centre.

Although the daily rate was identical to the weekday rate at the Nordic (\$2), there the comparison ended! There is something very unsettling about flat trails, tight 90-degree corners, open windswept expanses and head high branches poking at your eyes. The proprietors of the Barrie Club were most amiable; all of the skiers whom I met were as sociable as cross-country skiers world over. But missing were three important ingredients: trail design, abundant space, and a good snow cover.

So back at home now, what we have at the Nordic stands out in stark relief. The trails have never been so good due to our generous early covering of snow; the hundreds of hours of work done on the trails in the fall and, as ever, the meticulous grooming by Hans and his crew. It's good to be home!"

Building and Property

Greg Oxley volunteered some time and completed the painting of all of the Club buildings a uniform dark brown.

Cabane de Claude.

A new building appeared on the field: the timing hut, purchased from the Canoe Club for \$50. John Munro, Dave Rees, and Tex Mitchell coordinated the transportation and moving the timing hut to its site. The addition of a large window would give timers and other race officials a good view of the finish area. Claude Jolin did the refurbishing, and the timing hut was aptly labeled "*Cabane de Claude*".

.....And Other Things

Third Ski Show

The third ski show took place at Northgate in late November. Assisting Dave Minden in the overall organization were Dave Rees and Bruce Scott (ski exchange), Tex Mitchell (new Nordic booth), and Marie Campbell (bake sale). The bake sale netted \$115, the ski show \$388, for a total of \$503, and the organizers again decried the shortage of ski equipment to sell.



The hard sell! Bruce Scott (centre) with Ron Campbell.

Clubhouse Staff

Coordinated by Joe Lynch and with the assistance of a Futures Programme Grant, two workers were hired from the Nipissing Youth Employment Services. Guy Bazinet (parking lot attendant) and Dan Solsky (snack bar) were our two clubhouse managers for the season. This was the first year that we had staff on duty seven days a week (8 a.m. to 4:30 weekdays; 9 to 5 on weekends), and trail fees were charged to non-members. It is interesting to note that the wages paid to the two employees (\$5120) just about matched the combined total of snack bar revenue (\$1350) and trail fees (\$4360) from 1500 day passes.

On a bright and sunny January 28, 1986, Jane Minden was at the clubhouse preparing for skiing. She recalls assisting the snack bar staff with some arithmetic calculations needed for their snack bar work. A flash of insight - what they had been taught in school had not registered, but now with a practical application, it all made sense. Such were the side benefits of the Futures Programs. That particular day stands out not just in Club history. The staff had a TV in the clubhouse, and on that very day they witnessed the space shuttle Challenger exploding 73 seconds after its launch, killing all NASA astronauts aboard.

Membership

It is also interesting to note that when non-members were being charged a trail fee seven days a week, membership shot up by 160 to total of 860, comprised of 187 families, 58 individual, and 62 student.

The Jackrabbit Ski League

Tom Cook sensed the need for a revitalization of the Jackrabbit Ski League after its absence of several years, and he took it upon himself to attend a Jackrabbit Leaders Course at Onaping Falls. The programme that Tom set up for children aged 8 to 13, ran for 7 one and a half hour sessions every Sunday afternoon. Tom saw the value in having high school (teenaged) leaders, not adults, conduct the lessons, for they would be seen as idols to the young Jackrabbit skiers. The leaders for the season were Tammy Lott, Cheryl O'Neal, Matt Manuel, and Brian Honeyborne (the latter two replacing Cam Potter and Karen Garrett who were also involved with the Junior Racing Team). They had a terrific time with their 33 Jackrabbits. Among this group were Mary Beth Burton, Stewart Potter, and Catherine Redden who earned their Blue badges; Mary Beth Burton, Leigh Fettes, Jennifer Jarvi, and Erin Fettes earned speed badges.



Tom Cook (top right) and his Jackrabbit gang

The growth of the Jackrabbit programme over the years ultimately brought increased membership to the Club, and made Sunday afternoons a most vibrant time at Nordic.

Touring and Other Events: the All Trails Club

Touring to other destinations for a day of skiing was phased out as an organized part of the Nordic programme. In its place, we tried several other ventures, such as hotdog cookouts on the Blue Trail, moonlight ski nights, a photo contest, a March barbecue, and a Green Trail trek (for skiers doing their first Green Trail); but not much interest was shown in these organized events.

In addition to the Green Trail Club, we started the All Trails Club. This was to recognize the endurance of the long distance skier who took on the challenge of skiing all of the trails - a total of 42 km - in one day.

Claude Jolin and Jane Minden won Green Trail awards for the most trips around the Green Trail. The Carlsberg 500 km Award winners were Claude Jolin (1568 km), Denis Darveau, and Ted Louste. Winning awards for 15 km in one day were Bob Good, Denis Darveau, Elizabeth Bryant, Allan Ewing, Neil Clark, Colin Davidson, Claude Jolin, Ted Louste, and Mr. and Mrs. Dick Nickerson. Winners of 25 km awards were Alain Larochelle, Tom Cook, Gerard Gaul, Virginia Pearson, Paul Graham, Claude Jolin, Ted Louste and Dick Nickerson.

Marc Jolin won the All Trails Club award for highest number of days skiing all of the trails.

First Potluck Supper

It was quite difficult with no running water, but the first ever Potluck Supper was held in the Nordic clubhouse.

Instruction

Bob McKercher took on the role of Club instructor for the season. A simple series of four lessons for \$10 was advertised.

Races

Club Races and Skating

In addition to the Invitational and Langlauf, Dave Rees organized the first Early Bird race held shortly after Christmas on December 28. There were 37 competitors.

This was also the first season that "skating" began to become an issue in the world of Nordic ski racing. New rules emerged regarding ski length, pole length, and race trail preparation.

The history of the infusion of skating into cross-country skiing is interesting. In most sports, racing techniques and equipment are usually first experimented with at the elite level. If successful, they are copied and a trickle-down effect to recreational levels results. Whether it is the shape of a hockey stick or the use of composite materials in tennis racquets, we watch the pros and copy them. But with the skating technique, it started at the recreational level, moved up to the elite level, and then moved back down in the traditional manner.

One of the joys of cross-country skiing is to head out onto a lake in mid-March. The ice is still firm underneath, but the snow and crust have melted and

re-frozen many times; and if you time it right, you are skiing on a very firm and flat surface that yields slightly to your skis. The glide is incredible. And you can skate! In long gliding actions, somewhat similar to speed skaters, the edge of one ski digs in just enough to get some purchase, and you push and glide on the other ski creating a distinctive alternating series of lines in the snow. And on a lake, there are no trees and bushes to tangle up your ski tips. Forsaking the straight-ahead kick and glide technique, grip wax is not needed; indeed, it is a hindrance to the glide. It is quickly discovered that longer poles give you a lot more push, and that shorter skis don't get tangled up as much as traditional classical skis.

This technique was used for many years, perhaps for many decades or even centuries in Scandinavian countries and was used by many skiers recreationally in North America. But in the 1980s, some racers started to use the technique in loppets.

In the February 1999 issue of The Master Skier, Bob Gregg relates how American skier Bill Koch discovered and perfected the "new" skating technique and took it to World Cup competitions. The first racers to use the technique were those competing in the World Loppet series in Europe in the 1980s. Bill Koch, the American Olympian and Silver medallist at Innsbruck (1976), first observed these skiers in Sweden shortly after the 1980 Lake Placid Winter Olympics. He was competing in a race on a frozen river, and the object of that race was to set a new world record in the 30 km distance. Koch, skiing classic, felt that he was doing well in the race when a World Loppet skier, who was skating the entire distance, overtook him. Beaten soundly, Koch decided to spend the entire 1981 season doing World Loppets and learning how to skate. He used the technique entirely winning the Engadin Ski Marathon in St. Moritz, Switzerland in 1981. And then, in 1982, he dominated the World Cup, winning the title overall. That officially brought skating to the top level of cross-country ski racing. Despite the efforts of the Norwegians and others to curtail this radical new way of winning races, skating prevailed. The result was that both classical and free technique races began to be held at top-level events.

Then the "trickle-down" effect slowly took place. Four years later, in 1985/86, skating was introduced in races at North Bay Nordic. The Invitational that year featured its first two-day event, the first day (February 1) for classical (15 km or three Reds) and Sunday free technique (10 km or 2 Reds). In the early days in the free technique races, many still chose to race classical against others who were skating. It is still an option, and in some cases may be advantageous.

The advent of skating initiated changes that are still unfolding 17 years later. The most dramatic change was the *raison d'être* for trail upgrading. While previously it had been to "double trackset the trails," it evolved into a need to have a skating zone with tracksetting to one side. Changes have also occurred in ski construction, bindings, and boots. Skating skis are shorter, they have less camber, and they are much stiffer so that the surface of the ski can be used more effectively for push (kick) and glide. Bindings have developed that allow less flex, so the heel stays closer to the ski. And boots are higher cut, almost like downhill boots, to keep the ankle in a firmer position.

The World Masters were held at Lake Placid in 1986, and among the competitors were our own Anne Garrett and Emmanuelle Gunter. Emmanuelle recalls that free technique races were held at that event and that she and Anne concluded that it was really only for "the younger racers." Little did they know! For

over the years, many skiers have taken up the technique, both for racing and purely recreational fun. It's really like knowing how to swim, how to do the slower breaststroke and the faster, more tiring, "free-style" or crawl.

Junior Racing Team

Bruce Scott was in his last year of coaching the Nordic junior racers. Keith Scott and Meredith Brown qualified for the Canadian Juniors but did not attend due to other commitments. Also racing for Nordic were Stephanie Rees, Karen Garrett, Cam Potter, Tina Salkeld, Nancy Olmsted, and Stephen Spencer. Lise Meloche, competing internationally in biathlon, had a 4th place finish in one event. Keith Scott made some moves toward biathlon training on the Nordic trails carrying a rifle on his back and competing at the Ontario Biathlon championships. It is interesting to note that Keith set up some sort of firing range that he accessed from the Nordic trails. But he was cautioned that he could not carry a rifle set for firing on our trails and would have to access his "range" in some other way.

Many North Bay Nordic skiers participated in the annual DARE Loppet at Project DARE.

Future Plans

With a five year plan approved, the wheels were set in motion for a clubhouse expansion which would bring running water, indoor facilities and change-rooms to the Nordic clubhouse, as well as the beginning of a systematic upgrading of the trails. An application was made for a SEED grant for two four-man crews for 10 weeks for trail upgrading.

Tex Mitchell had previously agreed to serve two years as President, and at the conclusion of this season, his two main goals had been met. First, membership was doubled from roughly 400 to over 800. Second, a clear five-year plan was formulated to give the Club several long-term objectives. Retiring from the Board with Tex were Hans Frenssen and Tom Cook.

Recollections 1985-86

Chapter 13 1986-87 The Legend of the Blue Machine

Board of Directors

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Dave Rees | President - Races |
| Dave Minden | Vice President - Publicity |
| John Munro | Treasurer |
| Lee Crawford | Trails |
| Emmanuelle Gunter | Secretary |
| Ian Fettes | Building and Property |
| Anne Garrett | Membership |
| Joe Lynch | Newsletter |
| Dick Veenis | Property |

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Membership: | 820 (165 families; 53 single; 75 students) |
| Membership Fees: | Family - \$75-80; Single - \$45-50; Student \$15-20 |
| Membership Revenue: | \$15 665 |
| Day passes sold: | 1652 adult; 750 children |
| Blue Machines purchased: | 1 |
| Busy Beaver Award: | Tom (Mr. Jackrabbit) Cook |

The 1986-87 season was highlighted by the beginning of the trail upgrading programme and the first full-time snack bar / clubhouse manager (Irene Daly). It was also the Club's first foray into the use of a more powerful kind of snow machine for use on the trails.

Trails

Trail Upgrading Begins

The first year of the five-year plan relied on a hefty infusion of cash from Wintario. The plan was to apply for a \$12 000 Wintario grant to be matched by an equal amount from the Club's funds. For 120 hours of work, we could hire a supervisor (at a cost of about \$4000) and three Futures workers, plus rent a bulldozer and operator for about \$8000. With matching Wintario funding, an additional 120 hours of work could be done. But delays from Wintario pushed the work into the fall.

To authorize the expenditure of Club funds for trail upgrading, a special General Meeting was held on August 13, and the motion to approve the expenditure of \$12 000 for trail work was carried unanimously. Work on the trails started almost immediately. It should be noted that an official tendering process was carried out. Two bids were received for the machine and operator, and Standard Paving was the successful bidder.

Dave Rees, John Munro, and Joe Lynch were involved in the interviewing and hiring process. John Lott was hired as the foreman for the project, and two Futures workers were also engaged. One worker unfortunately disappeared after a day's work and ended up in jail. But the other, Bruce Wright, stayed on and among other things was responsible for planting "Bruce's Forest," the row of spruce trees beside the Main Trail heading out past the garage.

As work progressed, money had to be managed carefully. The Wintario grant was still in doubt, and we could not go over our own \$12 000 if the Wintario grant was not forthcoming. This was a prudent course of action as, ultimately, the Wintario grant was not approved; and the trails project ended up \$1100 under budget.

The bulldozer rented from Standard Paving turned out to be a bit of a mistake. There were some personality conflicts between John Lott and the dozer operator, and perhaps a large bulldozer (140 hp with a 12 foot blade) was not the correct piece of machinery to be using. The result was that the machine was driven through the trails at very high speed, and a huge mess resulted. Dozens of Club members were recruited, and they volunteered hundreds of hours of time in raking and shoveling to smooth out the debris left by the reckless operation of the bulldozer. The next year, a large backhoe (again from Standard Paving) and driven by Ron Vaillancourt was used, and the rest of the mess was cleaned up. In addition, forty culverts were installed on the inner trails in the fall of 1986.

Despite the difficulties, the Yellow, Purple, and Red Trails were widened and leveled. And after a bountiful November snowfall, these inner trails were groomed and trackset on December 5, the earliest ever.

On the Red Trail, plans were made to improve and widen the bridge that crosses the creek before the major uphill climb. A temporary improvement was made to the bridge with trees; but eight hydro poles were purchased for use the next year. The adjustments made to the bridge were satisfactory for the year "as long as the track was set properly." (When the track was in the wrong location, skiers risked hurtling off the side of the bridge into the creek!)

At the end of the trail system, the main bridge was widened to accommodate most skiers who found the 8' deck a bit narrow for comfort. With a lot of effort by Joe Lynch and crew (including new member Martin Nighbor), the 8' railway ties were stripped and replaced with a 14' deck.

The Legend of the Blue Machine

Buried in the pages of Nordic's history are some strange events - and even stranger acquisitions. One of these concerned a strange contraption, which became known as "the Blue Machine" for lack of a better phrase. It was blue! It was a machine! Larger than an Alpine snowmachine, but about 1/4 the size of our Pisten Bulley 130, it was powered by a Datsun engine with automatic transmission, and looked like all-terrain vehicles used by Hydro or Bell to pull wire and cable from large drums through difficult areas. The Blue Machine was owned by John Sullivan, who lived southwest of Callander; and on a scudding December day, a group of us ventured out to see this trail wonder. Among the group were Dave Rees, Dave and Jane Minden, and Ian Fettes. After a couple of trial runs with Ian Fettes and Dave Rees driving, it seemed that the machine had lots of power, and it was agreed to give it a try. The price was modest (about \$7000 of which \$3500 could be obtained from Wintario). At the time, Dave Rees reported that a *used* large snow groomer might cost upwards of \$70 000 if one were to become available after the upcoming 1988 Calgary Olympics; so one-tenth the price looked good. The plan was to rig it up with a hydraulic power take-off (like on a tractor) and add a powder maker; and it could also be used to simply pull drags to level the trail surface. Off-season work was another possibility.

Unfortunately, when put to the test on snow, the Blue Machine did not perform well. For unknown reasons, the machine lacked the power that was observed in the trial run. Maybe some high-test alcohol was added to the fuel! Attempts to have it overhauled were not fruitful. In an unusual episode, when Dave Rees was driving it on the trails, one of the tracks came off. Dave attempted to put the track back on by first deflating the tires, and was shocked to

see a liquid spurt out of the tire valve. The previous owner had injected salt water into the tires to lower the centre of gravity! In another incident, when Tom Cook was driving it, the machine veered off the trail and flipped. Tom was thankful to get out unhurt. Ian Fettes also almost tipped it over when hauling hydro poles out to the bridge on the Purple Trail.

Thus the Blue machine, under-powered and too top heavy for our trails, saw limited action and was eventually sold to a moose hunter a year or so later. The details of the finances involved in the purchase and sale of the Blue machine have become a bit of a mystery. But it did become clear that if we were going to get a "big machine" we were going to have to get the real thing, and that was still about eight years off.

Another addition to the Club that was quite useful was the creation of Dave Rees' "magic carpets" - there were two of them. These were made of many 4'-long 2x4s laid edge to edge with a small space (2" or so) in between each to make a mat or carpet about 8' long. A piece of chain-linked fencing stapled to both sides of the entire wood surface held it all together. When dragged behind an Alpine, it was an effective device in breaking up icy and hard packed snow that could be then re-packed and trackset. Well, that was the theory, and in certain conditions, it did work well.

Blue Trail Interpretive Guide

Bill Beckett of the North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority was attempting to find some work for one of their summer student workers and made a request to the Board that student Doug Howe could be engaged to put together a wildlife interpretation brochure. The Board responded very positively to this, and his work resulted in the first interpretive signage on the trails. The system he used, similar to what is used in provincial parks, was to put square numbered signs on the trail at various strategic locations. The interpretive guidebook listed the sites in numerical order and described the location's geology, forest type, and local wildlife. Artistic drawings accompanied the text.

Trails Clubs

The Green Trail Club and All Trails Club were well received in their first years and participation was high. To attract younger skiers to the challenge of skiing long distances over the season, I created the Blue Trail Club for skiers 14 and under. The idea was the same as for the Green Trail Club: ski the Blue Trail four times, and you were a member of the Club. Certificates were designed for presentation at the AGM, but "members" did not have to brush the trails in the fall!

In 1986-87, the winners of the Green Trail Club awards were Claude Jolin and Jane Minden. Winners of the new Blue Trail Club awards were Glen Hansman and Stephanie Rees.

Ski Patrol

The need for an active ski patrol system did not appear to be necessary and despite hundreds of hours of volunteer time spent in certification and preparation by Jim Miller, Don Priebe, Ed Bowen and others, the ski patrol ceased to function. Actions were taken to remove the ski patrol hut from the edge of the field, and it eventually disappeared.

Newsletter

Joe Lynch as editor had three of the five newsletter issues printed at Hamilton Printers (at \$100 each). And The Skiers Shop continued as a major advertiser and sponsor with a \$400 contribution.

Munro's Corner and CJ's Headrest

Two distinctive signs appeared on the trails, both commemorating incidents that occurred on one particularly icy day. John Munro and Claude Jolin were both training heavily for one of their several Canadian Ski Marathon exploits, and they were logging hours of skiing every day in preparation, carrying packs with weight similar to what they would be carrying for their overnight stay during the 2-day 160 km event. A typical rain and freeze-up in mid-January had left the trails slick and dangerous. There was no track to speak of. Irene Daly (in her first season in the snack bar) was about to close up and head home due to the conditions, but she stayed since John and Claude were heading out for several hours of training. Halfway out on the Red Trail, in the winding section before the long downhill, Claude glided and skidded right off the trail, grabbed a tree, and came to a very quick stop. This tree was named CJ's Headrest! Later, on the long Blue downhill, both fell, Claude saved by ending up like a turtle with his pack down on the snow; but John Munro left the trail entirely and bloodied his face and nose in the bush at what is now known as Munro's Corner. They advised Irene to close up and head home! And Claude headed home to create some new trail signage!

Building and Property

Snack Bar Staff

Following several seasons of hiring Futures Programme workers, the Club too its first step in hiring and paying a full time employee to manage the snack bar and clubhouse. The main employee hired was Irene Daly who would work at Nordic for many years and would prove to be a great asset to the Club's operations. The snack bar and day pass selling location was moved to the corner of the building (previously the small office) and a sliding window was installed. Outside, a fence was erected that would funnel skiers, walking up from the parking lot, past the window. Thus, Irene had a good location to note new skiers coming up to the clubhouse and could check if skiers had memberships or not. Although there was no running water, there was a wastewater drain, and some attempts to expand the menu were made. Assisting Irene was Guy Bazinet, returning from last year.

Ski Rental Proposal

At the end of the season (March 19), Ed Rogers made a proposal to the Board that Bigwood Sporting Goods would be interested in setting up (for the next season) a ski rental operation using the new SNS binding equipment (not the older 3 pin binding).

.....And Other Things

Ski Exchange and Ski Show

The 4th annual ski show took place at Northgate in late November and was organized by Dave Minden with Anne Garrett and Emmanuelle Gunter

coordinating the volunteers at the Nordic information booth and Dave Rees directing the ski exchange with the racing team. Also participating with booths were the Ski Barn, the YMCA, and the North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority; but only one lodge attended. The ski show netted a profit of slightly over \$200, the ski exchange just under \$500.

Club Brochure

For promotion of the Club, I took on the task of creating a full colour brochure that would be distributed locally as well as to Ontario Travel bureaus and cross-country ski clubs across the province. It contained a map of the trails and a description of the Club's programmes and activities as well as several full colour photos. And it was sponsored entirely by Pinewood (Best Western at the time) for \$1500 with their advertising on the back. This yellow brochure was used extensively for several years until the photos and information became outdated.

One site where there was extensive advertising done was the Toronto Ski Show. The Nordic Ski Club and Laurentian Antoine Club set up a joint display in Toronto on the Thanksgiving weekend and considerable advertising was done.

Nordic Ski Wear

This year saw the first appearance of North Bay Nordic ski wear in the form of monogrammed turtlenecks. They were quite popular bringing in revenue of \$669 against a cost of \$223. They were sold at the snack bar.

Jackrabbit Ski League

Tom Cook continued to lead the Jackrabbit programme for skiers aged 7 to 14, and forty young skiers were involved in six Sunday sessions, one Saturday time trial, one tour to Project DARE, and the Jackrabbit Carnival Day.

Jackrabbit instructors included Tammy Lott, Matt Manuel, David Herst, Chantel Gunter, and Heather Openeer; and Mrs. Nancy Ferguson assisted with the preparation of the ritual hot chocolate.

Tom Cook stepped down as Jackrabbit leader in the hope that others would become involved in this great programme.

Races

Junior and Masters Racers

The junior racers included Stephen Spencer, Cam Potter, Jason Shulman, Cheryl O'Neal and Kevin Thomas. In biathlon, Keith Scott was competing in provincial competitions while Lise Meloche was placing well in World Cup events.

A contingent of masters level skiers were competing regularly in local and not so local events. They included Alan and Anne Garrett, Fred and Emmanuelle Gunter, Dave and Jane and Dave Minden, Tom Cook, Murray Hale, Al Tough, John Munro, Claude Jolin, Mike McCann, and Ian Fettes. And many younger skiers were competing: Ian McCann, the Reeses (Stephanie and Andrew), the Jarvis (Jennifer, Liz, and Mark), the Chambers (David, Chris, and Rob), the Fettes sisters (Leigh and Erin), the Turners (Chris and Melissa), Glen Hansman, Tim Melin, and Marc Jolin.

Club Races

Our races included the Early Bird on December 28, the Invitational on January 31 - February 1, and the Langlauf (two laps around the Blue) on February 8. All told, the races netted over \$560.

The Tri-Nordic Challenge

A new race series was created involving North Bay Nordic, Parry Sound, and Project DARE. It was based on total times accumulated in the Parry Sound Sounder, the North Bay Nordic Langlauf and the Project DARE loppet. The purpose was to attract more skiers to all of the events, and especially here at North Bay Nordic. Maybe we could entice some of those Toronto area skiers to travel a few more hours to the best skiing in Ontario! They had no difficulty travelling to South River or Parry Sound.

At the three events, the distances were 10 km or less for skiers aged 8 to 14, and up to 25 km (at the Sounder) for adults. In the two years that we organized the series, there was moderate interest with a total of 36 entrants in the first year but much less in the second. There was not much support from Parry Sound skiers to come to our event, and few Toronto area skiers took part; the concept was disbanded after the 1987-88 season.

Pierre Harvey

In 1987, Pierre Harvey won a World Cup event in the 30 km classical! After Bill Koch, Pierre became the second North American and first Canadian to win a World Cup event.

Future Plans

At the AGM, there was considerable discussion about the next stage in the Club's expansion. Should money be spent on trails or in the clubhouse? A further \$12 000 was allocated for improvements on trails, but there was growing demand for running water and indoor facilities. (Cross your legs for another year!)

Knowlton Potter initiated the concept of a Junior Racing Team Committee. This would involve interested parents and members and would give coaching and organization to the junior racers.

Another topic of discussion centred on the growing interest in skating (and the resulting need for wider trails and sometimes conflict of use).

Leaving the Board after the 1986-87 season were Anne Garrett, Lee Crawford, Joe Lynch, John Munro, and Dick Veenis.

Recollections 1986-87

Chapter 14 1987-88 Plans For Expansion

Board of Directors

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Dave Minden | President - Trails (*) |
| Ian Fettes | Vice President - Building and Property |
| Emmanuelle Gunter | Secretary - Membership |
| Bob Bergquist | Treasurer |
| Dave Rees | Trails (*) |
| Bill Burton | Races - Coaching |
| Mike Turner | Races - Coaching |
| Tony Bos | Publicity - Newsletter |
| Ray Kenny ** | Building and Property |

* Dave Rees was named Chief of the Course for the Calgary Olympics (February 1988) and would be away for part of the winter. Thus Trails responsibilities were shared with Dave Minden.

** Ray Kenny retired from the Board in the fall due to family obligations (birth of twins).

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Membership: | 737 |
| Membership Rates: | \$75 (80) Family; \$45 (50) Single; \$15 (20) Student |
| Wintario Grant: | \$3489.18 (Blue Machine and powder maker) |
| Applied for Wintario Grant: | \$18 030 (50% of costs of clubhouse expansion) |
| Building Blitz Fundraiser: | \$10 550 |
| Busy Beaver Award: | Joe Lynch |

Spring Survey

The discussion at the previous AGM led to some doubt as to exactly what the Club membership wanted: trail upgrading - running water and indoor toilets - or both. Thus, it was decided to carry out a survey of the membership, and this was done in June.

A good portion of the Nordic membership responded to the detailed questionnaire with 152 surveys returned. Over 75% of the respondents were regular skiers at the Club (2 years or more as members who skied at the Club at least once per week). The survey revealed that 63% favoured installation of running water and indoor facilities with 56% wanting a combined effort on continued trail upgrading and a modest expansion to the clubhouse with plumbing. Only 37% wanted all trail work to be finished before plumbing and expansion; and less than 2% wanted things to be left as they were. (It was a good thing we went with the combination plan, for otherwise we would be still waiting for plumbing 15 years later!) At the June 25 Board meeting, this plan of attack was accepted, and in the 1987-88 season there was continued trail upgrading plus the high energy planning for an expansion to the clubhouse that would bring indoor facilities and running water in 1988.

With the growth in activity at the Club (membership and day use by the visiting public) and a growing school involvement, the Club was in a position to make a successful application for a large Wintario grant. Also, a new Junior Racing Team Committee brought together an enthusiastic group of junior racers to form the first official Junior Racing Team.

Ron Campbell

Founding Nordic Ski Club member, former director and Club president, Ron Campbell died in the early winter of 1987-88 after a long battle with cancer. Ron's influence on the Club's development, coupled with his MNR work, was great and was appreciated by all.

Trails

In the second year of trail upgrading, we engaged Standard Paving's machine operator Ron Vaillancourt and a large excavator and backhoe to do some serious work on the trails. This big machine was very effective in felling large trees with the force of its bucket, then sliding the trees lengthwise into the bush and with a sweeping sideways motion of the bucket, levelling the trail. To avoid driving over the trail that had just been worked on, the machine proceeded backwards along the trail, sweeping and dragging the bucket over what had been worked on. Also in this process, rocks and sizable boulders were dug out, and gravel and till were found adjacent to the trail to fill in low spots. During the month of August, \$7000 was spent on trail upgrading, mainly on the Red, Purple, and Yellow Trails.

Directing most of the work was Dave Rees who logged 70 hours in supervising the work. I had the distinct pleasure of being out on the Red Trail for two days with Dave, learning much about the intricacies of trail design. One of the highlights was the installation of hydro poles for the new bridge where a creek crosses the Red (just below the major uphill). Previously, in the spring, the Blue Machine had been used to haul the poles out to the site. Later, a crew consisting of Joe Lynch, Ian Fettes, Tom Cook, Tony Bos, John Munro, and Greg Oxley completed the planking of the bridge, and the Lynch family looked after creosoting the lumber.

In continuing the widening of the trails, the purpose now was to accommodate skating. The trails needed to be about 5 m (16 feet) wide to allow the placing of a track on the right, leaving a flat skating zone on the left. The widened area beside the track was also a plus for classical skiers giving plenty of room for getting out of the tracks on steep downhills and for climbing using the herringbone technique.

Hans Frenssen retired from his trail grooming responsibilities after many years of dedicated work. To fill his large boots, the Club hired Glen (Sam) Jessup and Larry Marasse, with Ron Townsend as backup. Joe Lynch and Ian Fettes constructed a new addition to the grooming equipment. It was made of 4" black plastic pipe and was designed to be a trail leveler.

The powder maker finally arrived in January 1988. The powder maker, from Bachler, was a yellow painted metal device with three cylinders with serrated metal bands on the outside surface. One central cylinder was flanked by two outer ones, positioned at an obtuse angle to the central cylinder and to the direction of travel. When hitched behind a machine and dragged, the cylinders rotated and scraped up hard packed snow, turning it into powder. In bad ice conditions, though, it just made big chunks. But the Blue Machine's power problems hampered its effectiveness in pulling this device, and the powder maker was only occasionally pulled behind an Alpine. And when done so, the outer cylinders sometimes caught with the central cylinder, and the whole thing

ground to a stop. The Alpine driver then had to dismount and wrestle with the powdermaker to free the cylinders.

Ian Fettes organized the fall trail brushing activities, and over 30 volunteers, mainly recruited from the ranks of the Green Trail Club and All Trails Club, put in hundreds of hours of volunteer time readying the trails for winter.

A good winter it was not. First there was a dearth of snow in December and January. When heavy snows did come in February, the snowfalls were timed precisely on late Fridays and Saturdays. By the time the trail crew had the trails in perfect shape, the weekend was over. Equipment problems with the two Alpines also caused some grief, as we were frequently down to one Alpine when the other was in for repair.

It was recommended at the end of the season that we should have a fleet of three Alpines, so that if one is in for repair, we still would have two to work with for efficient trail grooming.

Building and Property

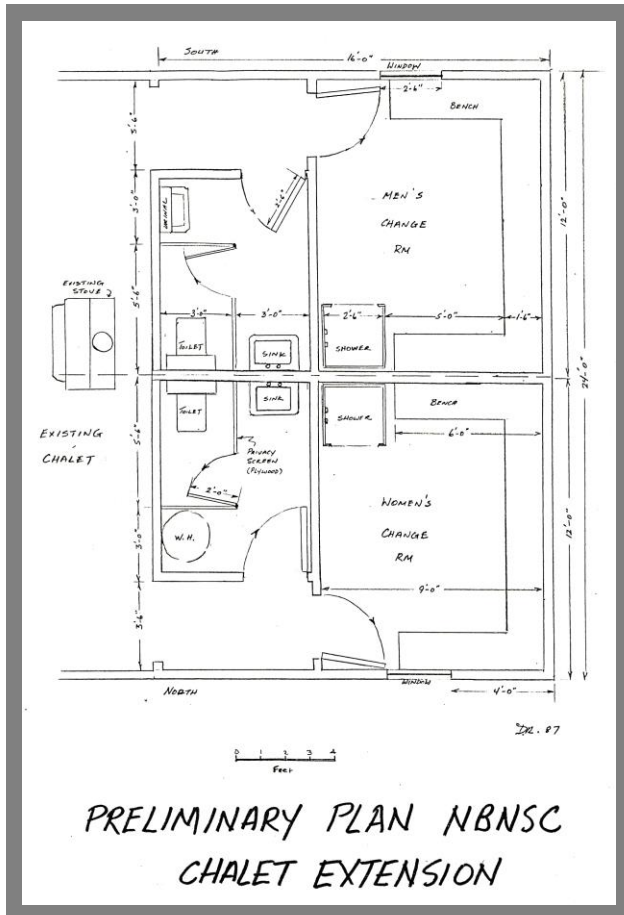
Dave Rees and Joe Lynch combined forces to do the major planning for the expansion which would include a 16'x32' addition on the west end of the clubhouse. This would provide space for separate men's and women's change rooms and washrooms. Also planned were a well and septic system plus water piping and drainage to and from the kitchen area. An unfinished crawl space under the addition would provide space for the water pump. The Wintario grant application required two estimates each for a variety of projects, and they were allocated to Mike Turner (septic system), Ian Fettes (well drilling), Tony Bos (building construction), and Dave Rees (plumbing fixtures and details).

Finally by November 1987, the estimates were in and the Planning Committee (Dave Rees, Joe Lynch, Ian Fettes, Dave Minden) met to discuss and accept the initial estimates:

| | |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Materials and Labour | \$16 000 |
| New roof | 5 000 |
| Septic | 2 700 |
| Well | 5 000 |
| Water system and plumbing | 1 500 |
| Total | \$30 200 |

The Wintario grant to be applied for would allow volunteer hours to be included in the estimate, but a heavy input of Club revenue would still be required. Tom Cook and Joe Lynch headed the fundraising drive - Building Blitz '88 - and set a goal of \$15 000 to be raised between December 1, 1987 and March 31, 1988. With much effort by their committee in telephone calls and arm-twisting, they were successful in raising a hefty \$10 500 for the project. Donors were able to use a system set up by CSA whereby donations made through the CSA were income tax deductible, with Nordic receiving 90% of the donation.

Other Club members also joined in the fundraising fun. Janet Bourgeau donated a painting as an incentive to contribute; tickets for a draw on the painting were given for every \$100 in contribution. The winner was Ken Brown. Also, Claire Proulx and Mary-Jean Cundari raised \$500 through a draw on ceramic figurines they had made.



Dave Rees' Initial Plan For The First Clubhouse Expansion

Minor changes such as switching positions of doors, sinks, and toilets were made. The filing cabinet was placed beside the men's toilet – which made for interesting reading!

Wintario Application

Joe Lynch amassed the detailed information required for the 35-page Wintario application, which was submitted on February 5, 1988, a week before the deadline. The grant requested was for \$18 030, half of the projected \$36 060. The application, which took much time and effort to put together, included written descriptions of the North Bay Nordic Ski Club and its need for an expanded facility, detailed plans and drawings of the site and planned construction, estimates (two each) for construction, septic system, well drilling, and plumbing, proof of ownership, a map of the trails, copies of letters patent and incorporation, a copy of the actual Board of Directors' motion on January 14 to undertake the expansion project, letters of endorsement from the City of North Bay and Parks and Recreation, a copy of the membership survey, and a financial statement showing the Club to be in sound financial order. After all of the planning, it is a wonder that there was any energy left to ski!

Snack Bar Income

Meanwhile, the usual business of running a ski club continued. Ian Fettes was successful in re-hiring Irene Daly; and filling in for her on days off were Gail Rees and Jane Minden.

Because of the poor snow in early winter, memberships were down about 100 over the season, but trail fees (and snack bar revenues) were up. Busy weekends throughout the winter brought in a lot of cash, and Board meetings were reduced to laughter by the scene of Ian Fettes emptying out from a scruffy paper bag, a mountain of cash in \$1000 bundles, while stating matter-of-factly in his Scottish brogue, "We've had a few pretty good week-ends." Treasurer Bob Bergquist's jaw would drop to the floor in astonishment at the thought of someone carrying this much cash around so casually.

.....And Other Things

Ski Show and Ski Exchange

With the ongoing excitement of planning for expansion, the usual Club activities proceeded. The annual ski show was held at Northgate on November 27, 28 with Emmanuelle Gunter organizing the volunteers for the Nordic information booth and Bill Burton and Mike Turner running the ski exchange with the help of the junior racers and others. The ski exchange netted over \$500, but the ski show, which brought in less than \$200, was ceasing to be a revenue maker. The ski show did though provide good public exposure for the Club.

Social Events

The 2nd annual Potluck Supper and moonlight ski was held on January 3, with the anticipation that this would be the last year attempting this without the benefits of running water.

Anne Garret organized a Ladies' Day on Tuesdays from 11 to 3:30.

Instruction and Jackrabbit

Other than a basic wax clinic and basic technique lessons offered at \$5 per adult and \$3 per child, there was little in the way of instruction outside of the organized Jackrabbit Ski League.

Tom Cook returned to lead the Jackrabbit programme although he continued to look for someone to take it over so that he would have more time to coach the younger skiers interested in racing. Jackrabbit leaders were Tammy Lott, Matt Manuel, and Laura Daly. The Jackrabbit programme expanded with a new system for technique improvement with coloured badges (Green, Yellow, Orange, Red, Blue, and Purple) and distance and speed badges.

Charlie Olmsted again organized Rotary's Skiarama, which Nordic hosted on February 14.

Races

Knowlton Potter and Bill Burton initiated a successful Junior Racing Team Committee and brought together an enthusiastic group of junior racers. The growth in interest in racing was the result of the growth of the Jackrabbit programme and the upsurge of school involvement at the high school level

(thanks to the hard work and dedication of many high school coaches such as Tom Cook, Knowlton Potter, Al Garrett, and others). There was also considerable involvement of elementary teachers involved with the Dave Rees league (senior schools) and recreational junior school skiing.

Rod Tupola (previously a junior racer from the Sault and this year a Canadore student) was brought in as coach. The Junior Racing Team Committee set up for the first time a system where members (i.e. their sponsoring family) paid a fee (\$25 per junior skier to a maximum of \$50 per family) to be part of the Junior Racing Team. Budgets were established, and the Junior Racing Team began to be a part of the Club's programme. Financially, the Club made a \$500 contribution to the Junior Racing Team.

Racing this season were:

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Stephanie Rees | Eric Potter |
| Erin Fettes | Stewart Potter |
| Cathy Redden | Kevin Thomas |
| Leigh Fettes | Kevin Denston |
| Jennifer Jarvi | Jason Shulman |
| Kelly Stewart | Marc Jolin |
| Trish McAlaster | Stephen Spencer |
| Karen Garrett | |
| Cheryl O'Neal | |

Knowlton Potter's year end summary noted "Karen and Cheryl losing their clothes, Jason's 2nd place finish to Stephan Ferrari, Erin's 1st place finishes, Trish's giggles, and Stephen's jokes.

Nordic hosted its Early Bird Race (December 27), the Invitational (January 30, 31), and the Langlauf (February 6). The Langlauf was the first race of the Tri-Nordic Challenge, which again included the Parry Sound Sounder (February 20) and the Project DARE Loppet (March 5). Due to a lack of participation from Parry Sound at our event, the Tri-Nordic challenge was discontinued after this year.

Future Plans

The Wintario grant application was accepted, and the Club was notified shortly before the AGM held on April 21. Joe Lynch would coordinate the volunteer labour that would be included with Nordic's financial contribution. Construction would commence in July with Joe's Contracting (Joe Skouris) being awarded the major construction contract.

Following the death of Ron Campbell earlier in the winter, the following motion was carried unanimously at the AGM. Moved by Angus Bourgeau, seconded by Rod Kelusky:

"That the Blue Trail be named the Campbell Nature Trail in memory and recognition of Ron and Marie's many hours of friendship and devotion to our Club; that the bird feeder be maintained in his honor and that appropriate signs be erected."

Recollections 1987-88

Chapter 15 1988-89 Expansion and Ontario Winter Games

Board of Directors

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Ian Fettes | President - Trails |
| Tony Bos | Vice President - Publicity |
| Emmanuelle Gunter | Secretary - Membership |
| Bob Bergquist | Treasurer |
| Bill Burton | Races - Coaching |
| Mike Turner | Races - Coaching |
| Cam Hunter | Building and Property |
| Don Wheeler | Building and Property |
| Don Priebe | Newsletter - Trail Safety |

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Membership: | 664 |
| Membership Rates: | Family (\$85-95); Single (\$45-55); Student (\$20-25) |
| Day Passes Sold: | 2566 (1872 adult, 232 student, 462 children) |
| Day Pass Revenue: | \$10 254 |
| Jackrabbit Leader: | Joe Lynch |
| Busy Beaver Award: | Claude Jolin |
| Ontario Winter Game: | March 10, 11, 12, 1989 |
| Clubhouse Expansion Cost: | \$52 000 |

Trails

Due to the building expansion and water installation, Nordic relaxed its trail-upgrading programme. But in the fall, 40 volunteers brushed the trails under the direction of Ian Fettes.

But instead of paying for trail upgrading, we did, with a \$5000 Wintario grant, purchase a new Alpine for \$9739. It was in service in January of 1989.

Glen Jessup and Larry Marasse were engaged again to groom the trails, but Glen did most of the work himself. Though he did the work quite competently and was always willing to try new techniques, there was a need to have two operators working, simply to have the trails groomed faster. Wider trails meant more time was needed to pack and level the trails after a snowfall. On occasion, other Club members hopped aboard an Alpine and helped out with the grooming.

Trail usage was up over the winter (no doubt due to the availability of indoor washrooms) even though the weather was not that good. The winter alternated between extreme cold and frequent snowfall (daily through some stretches), keeping Glen very busy.

Building and Property

As with any construction project, unforeseen problems have a habit of escalating the anticipated costs, but fortunately Nordic had the cash reserves to deal with these problems. Nordic's never ending supply of volunteer labour also contributed to keeping costs much lower than they would have been otherwise.

The first group of problems had to do with the design of the expansion. Dave Rees first anticipated a simple 16' x 32' addition that would perhaps not even need a building permit. But in hiring Joe's Contracting, not only was a building permit required, but also City Hall demanded architectural and engineering drawings and several expensive alterations to the initial plan. A foundation under the addition was required even though the existing portable

building was on pads. The new roof on the addition had to be "hinged" to the existing roof so that there would be some flex built into the system that had one floating part and one fixed part. And the City demanded 2"x12" floor joists at 12" centres, "strong enough to drive a Mack truck on" as Dave Rees commented. (Maybe the City thought cross-country skiers were Sumo wrestlers!) Some errors crept into the construction when Joe (the builder) made some design changes; in both the men's and women's washrooms, the light switches ended up behind the toilet partitions; a crude rectangular hole cut in the plywood solved that problem in an unusual way. (A challenge for visitors and out-of-towners!)

The weeping tile bed for the septic system was installed during the month of July. Joe Lynch, Ian Fettes, Fred Gunter, and Dave Rees were the diggers of the first two trenches, but after much toil and moving of large boulders, they agreed to bring in machinery for the other trenches. Then 30 volunteers contributed hundreds of hours of volunteer labour (and this was hard labour!) in levelling the trenches and hauling crushed stone by bucket and wheelbarrow onto the tile beds over the pipes that had been laid. Precast Tank and Vault, courtesy of John Munro, donated the 2000-gallon septic tank.

The finding of water and getting it to the clubhouse brought another set of problems. Dave Rees had located what appeared to be a good spring up past where the new garage is now located and the first attempt to dig a well in September with a backhoe seemed to be fruitful. A 200-metre trench was dug 1.8 m deep, and pipes were laid and connected to the pump; but alas, there was not enough water for the Club's needs. So in October, the decision was made to hire Marshall Well Drilling from Emsdale to drill a 6" well. With Dave, the Marshall well drillers agreed on a spot for the wellhead (the result of witching the well), but when Dave returned later in the day, they had moved to a different spot because they had run into a boulder! So the wellhead is at its present somewhat awkward location on the slope up to the new garage.

They drilled four hundred feet down - but found no water - at a cost of \$8000 at \$20 per foot. The well drillers then brought in Mr. Harold Kidd (from Kidd's Hardware in Sundridge) who, with clusters of sticks of dynamite taped to the end of a wire and some electricity from his truck battery, blew out the bottom of the well to open up a vein of water. Dave Rees, with Andrew, hid behind the corner of the clubhouse to watch it blow, and even young Andrew was impressed. It was like a 400' cannon shooting debris 500 feet into the air. Another \$1000 down the well - but this time, success! We had our water!

To finish off the expansion, Claude Jolin, leading a crew of 15, constructed the cedar deck on the chalet.

November was spent cleaning, painting, scrubbing and readying the clubhouse for the season opening - the first (now annual) Open House on December 4, 1988. Mike Harris was invited in recognition of the awarding of the Wintario grant that was crucial to the expansion project. Including the hundreds of hours of volunteer work that went into the expansion, the final tally was \$52000 for the clubhouse expansion and installation of water and indoor facilities.

Expanded Snack Bar

Probably the most pleased with the availability of water was Irene Daly, manager of the snack bar. Now able to expand the snack bar capability, Irene started to add to the menu to include chili and toast, hot dogs, soups, as well as

chips and drinks. Filling in on Irene's days off were Tammy Lott, Jane Fawcett, and (once) Jane Minden.

Water Woes

But problems with the new water system started to show up. Occasionally the pump would not prime correctly and with a particular technique and sequence of actions known only to a few, the pump would start working. Another problem resulted from it being very cold in the crawl space under the men's change room where the pump was located and a small electric heater was donated to keep it warmer.

In the depths of the first winter, the water line froze. The line ran under the upper parking lot and when plowed, the frost was able to penetrate deep under the ground. To solve the problem for the season, a small diameter plastic pipe was fed through the water intake pipe, and Ian Fettes rented a little steam jenny, which forced steam through the smaller pipe thus freeing it of ice. Since then, the water line has been relocated to a position where freezing would not occur.

.....And Other Things

Northgate Ski Show and Ski Exchange

The annual ski show and ski exchange were again held at Northgate, with the Junior Racing Team (under Bill Burton and Mike Turner) netting \$500 from the sale of used ski equipment. They again noted the severe lack of equipment for sale - a perennial problem.

Jackrabbit Programme

Joe Lynch agreed to take over the Jackrabbit programme from Tom Cook and was quick to try out a new format with one session on Saturdays (10 a.m. to noon) and one session on the traditional Sunday afternoon (1 p.m. to 3 p.m.) This was to accommodate families with a busy Sunday schedule. This did provide a good alternative and was used for several years. One problem encountered though was that the morning sessions proved to be quite colder than the afternoon sessions simply because they were earlier in the day.

The Jackrabbit programme attracted 58 young skiers between the ages of 7 and 13, under the leadership of Jill Atkins, Leigh Fettes, Jennifer Jarvi, Marc Jolin, Tammy Lott, Tom Brouse, Heather Manning, Jason Shulman; and assisted overall by Bert Tremblay.

Another innovation this year was the provision of distinctive outerwear for the Jackrabbit leaders. Distinctive Green shell tops were worn this year, partly as a result of the sponsorship provided by the Fraser Hotel Minor Sports Association.

Food City Tapes

Al and Anne Garrett continued collecting Food City Tapes, doing the math, and submitting them for the donation from Food City. Over \$150 was raised over the season.

Visitors

North Bay Nordic's reputation as having one of the finest trail systems and facilities in Ontario became appreciated when 90 visitors from Halton Ski Club visited for a weekend of skiing and had many compliments about our well groomed trails (anything was better than Burlington!) and our new flush toilets! And our friendliness and hospitality went unsurpassed, for Shirley Bass was noted to have hosted a Halton skier who had broken a wrist just prior to skiing on the trails.

Ski Rentals

Bigwood Sporting Goods again organized and ran the ski rental outlet at Nordic. Don Priebe, who was working for Ed and Marianne Rogers at the time, was frequently the man on duty at Nordic and was able to provide good instructional assistance to first time skiers.

Awards

Winning the Green Trail Club awards were Frank Jokinen (40), Ruth Jokinen (29) and David Jokinen (13). Blue Trail winners were Andrew Rees (25) and Stephanie Rees (23). Claude Jolin won the All Trails Club award with most times completing all the trails in one day.

Races

Junior Racing Team



Back row: Lise Van Schie (chauffeur), Mark Thomas, Kevin Denston, Kevin Thomas, Steve Shore, Rod Tupola
Front row: Mary Beth Burton (thumbs up), Karli Statham, Leigh Fettes

Rod Tupola again coached the Junior Racing Team although with a reduced time commitment because of his school pressures.

The team included:

| | |
|------------------|--------------|
| Erin Fettes | Mark Thomas |
| Leigh Fettes | Kevin Thomas |
| Mary Beth Burton | Rob Telford |
| Trish McAlaster | Steve Shore |
| Carly Statham | |

Also helping out were Brian Thomas (chauffeur to Sault Ste. Marie) and Dick Denston and Lisa Van Schie (chauffeurs to Timmins). The Junior Racing Team competed at Stokely Creek, Hiawatha, the NOD Championships, and the Ontario Winter Games as well as at our own Nordic races.

Local Races

The Race Committee headed up by Bill Burton organized our local races that included the Early Bird (December 27), Invitational (January 28, 29), and the Langlauf (February 4). The Invitational attracted 77 racers for the Saturday "free technique" races and 67 for the classical races on Sunday. At the Langlauf, skiers could choose their own technique, though classic was recommended due to the narrowness of the outer part of the Green. Numbers were down at the Langlauf (66), and it was noted that we were getting away from the "family participation" kind of event that it was originally supposed to be; it was now becoming too much of a race. The Junior Racing Team finished the year about \$700 under their \$2240 budget.

Dave Rees League

The Dr. Carruthers "A" Team won the Dave Rees Cup. Silver Birches won the Gord Rees Cup (for most improved team) and the Consolation Cup (as winner of the B division). Individual awards went to girls: Stephanie Rees, Liz Jarvi, Erin Fettes, and Erin Hansman (all from Dr. Carruthers); and Mary Popp (Fricker), and to boys: Judd Hards and Jamie Gilbert (Fricker), Bryan Dubeau and Jeff Lyttle (Dr. Carruthers), and Richard Jokinen (Silver Birches).

World Masters and Canadian Ski Marathon

Emmanuelle Gunter and Anne Garrett competed at the World Masters at St. Ferriol les Neiges, east of Mt. Ste. Anne and Quebec City. Competing also in a variety of races were Al and Anne Garrett, Emmanuelle and Fred Gunter, Tom Cook, Al Tough, and the Reeses (Andrew, Stephanie, and Dave). Claude Jolin, Andy Davies, and Ian Fettes took part in the Canadian Ski Marathon. In the Courier de Bois class, they skied the 2-day 160 km event, carrying packs for their stay overnight on the trail.

Ontario Winter Games

North Bay Nordic hosted its first big event in its history, the Ontario Winter Games, in March 1988. Several pieces of equipment acquired by the Club then are still used to this day. They include the red and white wooden podium for medal winners, and much of the racecourse signage - the red and white START

and FINISH sign boards, and signage for repetitive laps (listing 3 distances skied) around the Purple and Red Trails.

Heading the organization for the race was Chief of the Race Dave Rees. Working with him on the Race Committee were Sheila Taylor (Race Secretary), Jim Rees (Starter), Gail Rees and Jane Minden (Calculations), Knowlton Potter and Bill Burton (Manual Back Up Timing).

Never was "manual back up timing" so important, for enter into the fray of race organization one self serving race official from southern Ontario, Bob McKerron who appeared as the race organizers were setting up the day before the races began. He announced that he had a computer race result programme that would not only eliminate the need for hand calculations, but would also eliminate the need to have timers and callers standing out in the cold recording numbers and relaying data into the timing hut. He would look after the computer input of data. Fortunately, the powers that be (Dave Rees and others) thought it would be prudent to have back up just in case of power failures or some other glitches. Good plan!

At the end of the first day of races, mid-afternoon, after the last racer was across the line, McKerron stated calmly: "I only missed a couple". Dead silence filled the camper trailer used for calculations. Was this guy serious? Did he understand the consequences of missing just one skier's time? That would throw out all of the results, as the times would be matched to the wrong skier. All of the computer results were invalid.

Amid curses, condemnations, and ensuing panic, McKerron was asked to leave, and he quietly disappeared. Gail Rees, Sheila Taylor, Jane Minden, and Dave Rees gathered in the trailer and started to reconstruct the race, first going through the necessary paper work of setting up manual race result sheets, then step by step, doing every mathematical time calculation, re-doing the complete results by matching up the sequence of bib numbers to the sequence of recorded times, finally coming up with the final results.

At 12 midnight Jane Minden drove off to the local motel (Venture Inn on Lakeshore) where the teams were staying and delivered the results to them.

Meanwhile, Dave and Gail Rees with Sheila Taylor made up the race sheets for the next day of races. Computer timing would not be used - just reliable callers, recorders, and timers with Knowlton Potter and Bill Burton doing this all-important task.

Bob McKerron faded into North Bay Nordic's history and would not resurface until 1995 when Jane and I would meet him face to face at the World Nordics at Thunder Bay.

Future Plans

No sooner was one construction project completed than another one was being planned. With Nordic's growing fleet of Alpines, there was no room at the inn in the small cramped shed used for equipment storage. And with a large snow-grooming machine foreseen in the 5-year plan, there would soon be the need for a much larger facility. So the recommendation from Don Wheeler and the Building and Property Committee was to construct a new large garage that would also house a waxing facility and ski storage locker area.

And Irene's kitchen was in need of standard kitchen equipment: stove and fridge to replace hot plate and coolers.

Recollections 1988-89

Chapter 16 1989-90 Dave Rees Wins The Dave Rees Award

Board of Directors

| | |
|---------------|------------------------|
| Tom Cook | President |
| Bill Burton | Vice President |
| Katy Brown | Secretary - Membership |
| Bob Bergquist | Treasurer |
| Cam Hunter | Trails |
| Mike Turner | Races - Coaching |
| Ken Brown | Building and Property |
| Don Wheeler | Building and Property |
| Tony Bos | Publicity |

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Membership: | 713 (140 family; 79 single, 70 student) |
| Membership Fees: | Family \$85 (95); Single \$45 (55); Student \$20 (25) |
| Membership Revenue: | \$17 634 |
| Busy Beaver Award: | Joe Lynch |
| Wintario Grant: | \$13 500 (in the spring for new garage, summer 1990) |

Trails

Summer trail upgrading continued on several fronts. Culverts were installed and ditches dug on the Main Trail out. We started to experiment with the idea that to control drainage, a useful strategy would be to raise the level of the trail and to dig a drainage ditch beside the trail; hopefully water would collect in the ditch and flow to a culvert and then cross the trail under it - instead of over it. Well, that was the theory, and many times, it worked. At other times, we would miscalculate where the low point was, or the trail would change during freeze-up, and water would find a way to flow across the trail before getting to the culvert, necessitating putting in a culvert at that new problem spot.

The merging of the Red and Blue was realigned and the final S-turn was widened significantly with a broad plateau created half way down. Attempts were also made to bank the curve so skiers would not "fall off" on the outside of the turn. These were very significant improvements to the S-turn that until then was perceived as a very difficult part of the trail that restricted skiing the Red, Blue, and Green Trails.

But the major activity was out on the Blue Trail. First, TCP spent the summer constructing the Pipeline Access Road from Northshore up to the pipeline - right on top of much of the Blue Trail and the Green from the pipeline down to where the Green and Blue merge. They constructed a broad, flat, level, graveled road that in many ways vastly improved the existing trail - especially that wild downhill curve where the Green met the Blue. The downside was, of course, that the Northshore Road access would provide an opportunity for vehicles (summer and winter) to drive up the Pipeline Access Road and access our trails. The upside was that we could use the road as well to access the outer parts of the trail for off-season work.

Also on the Blue Trail, a new route was found to avoid the wetland area beside High Lake. This was a very difficult part of the trail to clear in the fall due to the very wet and soggy conditions. And since it was protected by a heavy growth of hemlock, it received little snow. The alternate route was scouted out by Dave Rees who found a plateau under top of the cliff that could be widened out. With much effort that carried over to future years, the route up "Porcupine Hill"

(so named for the porcupine activity in the hemlocks) was created, resulting in a panoramic view of High Lake and a pleasant sweeping downhill to the flats under the cliffs.

Cam Hunter, trails director, organized the saws and brushers and all of the volunteers for the fall brushing campaign. It was a very dry fall in 1989, and enterprising teachers and coaches seized the opportunity to hold the first cross-country running events at North Bay Nordic. The snow came early and plentifully, and skiing commenced on November 22.

Glen Jessup continued as primary trail groomer using the Alpines. With the widened trails, discussion turned to the length of time it took to groom the trails: 15 hours which involved three to four passes with the snowmachine pulling drags to level and pack the snow, and then the tracksetter. Thus due to the time required for grooming, "the Green and Blue Trails were not widened to allow skate technique."

Cross Country Canada Distance Awards

Cross Country Canada initiated the Great Canadian Ski Expedition Awards System. CCC had noticed the increasing popularity of simply skiing a distance and the common question at the end of a day: "How far did you ski today?" The pin awards that many skiers began to collect were for skiing 160 km (Canadian Ski Marathon), 300 km (Jasper to Banff), 600 km (Quebec to Moncton), 1000 km (Icewalk Ellesmere to North Pole), and 1775 + km (Polar Bridge Expedition).

Building and Property

With the expansion project complete, there were still many "little things" to be done, and at the forefront was Claude Jolin, who on his own or with a crew of assistants, built the new cedar deck, the ski racks, the trail conditions board in the clubhouse, new doors onto the deck, and completed renovations in the timing hut.

In the snack bar, a new (to us) stove, fridge, and microwave plus new counters (courtesy of Jim Riddler at Laidlaw Goodwood Industries) increased Irene Daly's efficiency. And in the Nordic clothing line were turtleneck shirts and headbands inscribed with the Nordic logo.

Freezing of water pipes and drainage continued to be an occasional occurrence.

.....And Other Things

Dave Rees Distinguished Achievement Award

In 1989, Dave Rees was President of Cross Country Canada, and in June, Dave was in Ottawa for its AGM. At the conclusion of the meeting, Dave, to his surprise, received from CCC the first ever *Dave Rees Distinguished Achievement Award*. It was to "honour long term outstanding commitment to the sport of cross country skiing in Canada" and what better choice for the first winner than Dave Rees himself.

Northgate Ski Show and Ski Exchange

The annual ski show and ski exchange were again held at Northgate on November 24, 25. The Junior Racing Team brought in a record amount of \$650 under the meticulous mathematical management of Bill Burton.

Jackrabbit

Joe Lynch, as Mr. Jackrabbit, continued organizing the Saturday morning and Sunday afternoon sessions. Assisting Joe was Bert Tremblay. A total of 85 young skiers participated under the enthusiastic leadership of Jason Shulman, Leigh Fettes, Heather Manning, Jamie Palcik, Katie Lott, Erin Fettes, Liz Jarvi, Carlie Statham, Mary Beth Burton, Bryan Dubeau, Dione Allen, Jason Dubeau, and backups Bob Rankin and Tammy Lott.

Joe also organized a pre-season (November 26) Children's Day at Nordic with a Rubber Duck race on High Lake Creek. The winner (i.e. the owner of the winning rubber ducky) received a complete high quality cross-country ski set from Bigwood Sporting Goods. The event was an enticement for early registration in the Jackrabbit programme, for it was free to those already registered.

Potluck Supper

The annual Potluck Supper was held on January 6 and was the typical tasty success with over 60 in attendance.

Food City Tapes

Al and Anne Garrett continued to be the recipients of all of our grocery shopping receipts, and Food City kicked back \$150 during the season to bring the cumulative total to \$375 by season's end. This was a very neat way to raise a bit of extra cash!

Ten-Day Membership

Nordic decided to offer a ten-day membership for those who might be staying in the area for a period of time over the holidays.

Races

Racing Team Director Bill Burton inked North Bayite and McMaster University coach Peter Dimmel to a one-year contract to coach our Nordic junior racers. Twenty skiers joined the team and were the first to wear official Nordic warm up suits purchased through Bigwood Sporting Goods. The Junior Racing Team of 1989-90:

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| Steve Bursej | Mary Beth Burton |
| Bryan Dubeau | Erin Fettes |
| Kevin Denston | Leigh Fettes |
| Judd Hards | Elizabeth Jarvi |
| Paul Kontra | Jennifer Jarvi |
| Duncan Lindsay | Cathy Redden |
| Eric Potter | Christine Redden |
| Andrew Rees | Stephanie Rees |
| Steve Shore | Carlie Statham |
| Kevin Thomas | |
| Mark Thomas | |

The Juniors raced at the Soo, Sudbury, Onaping Falls, Deep River, and Timmins, as well as at our Nordic races. Stephanie Rees, Jennifer Jarvi, Mary Beth Burton, and Kevin Thomas all qualified for the Canadian Juniors.

Our races included the Early Bird (December 30), the Invitational, which was also an interdivisional race (Free Technique - January 27; Classical - January 28); and the Langlauf (February 7). (The full results have unfortunately been lost.)

To encourage more participation in the Langlauf, a variety of awards were instituted involving predicted times and family combination times. Winners included: Brian, Kevin, and Mark Thomas for most kilometres skied; Joe, Marilyn, and Colleen Lynch for the "most experienced" team; and Stephanie and Andrew Rees for the best predicted times. Winning age categories were James Lindsay, Andrea Nighbor, Robbie Chambers, Jenny Dawson, Steve Burse, Melissa Turner, Bryan Dubeau, Erin Fettes, Stephanie Rees, Lowell Greib, Darin Gibbons, Kevin Thomas, Nancy Olmsted, Katy Brown, Tom Cook, Allan Tough, and Helen McCallum. (Again, the Langlauf results for 1990 have unfortunately disappeared.)

At the organizational level, the four independent Ontario ski divisions were organized under the umbrella group Cross Country Ontario. CCO became the governing sports body for cross-country skiing in Ontario and included NOD (Northern Ontario Division), SOD (Southern Ontario Division), NCD (National Capital Division), and LSD (Lake Superior Division).

Future Plans

New Garage

Grab your hammer and apron; sharpen the saws; and where is that tape measure, anyway? Yes, the building boys were soon to be back at work. An application to Wintario was successful in securing \$13 500 for the construction the next summer (1990) of a new garage. But not just "a garage." This would be a 20' x 40' monster of a building - a super garage - that would house our Alpines with room to spare (room for a large snow grooming machine if we were to get one) plus a separate insulated waxing and locker room.

The Building Committee, chaired by Joe Lynch, included Tom Cook, Don Wheeler, Ian Fettes, and Cam Hunter. Coach (and draftsman) Peter Dimmel did the architectural drawings.

Before a shovel could hit the dirt, locker rentals were being sold at \$30 for the 1990-91 season!

Nature Interpretive Signage

Don and Marion Wheeler proposed that a series of nature interpretive signs be created for the trails since there were so many natural phenomena to write about and inform skiers about - especially young skiers and visitors to the area. Their plan would revitalize and expand the nature interpretive sites that had been created a few years previously by NBMCA student worker Doug Howe. It was anticipated that the new signage could be ready for the next season.

Retiring from the Board this season were Mike Turner, Bill Burton, Bob Berqui\$, and Tony Bos.

Recollections 1989-90

Chapter 17 1990-91 New Garage and Waxing Room

Board of Directors

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Tom Cook | President – Races |
| Charlie Taylor | Treasurer |
| Cam Hunter | Trails |
| Sheila Taylor | Secretary |
| Katy Brown | Membership - Newsletter |
| Don Wheeler | Building and Property |
| Thom Rolfe | Publicity |
| Brian Thomas | Racing Team |

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Membership: | 615 |
| Membership Rates: | Family - \$95 (110); Single - \$50 (60); Student - \$30 (35) |
| Locker Rental: | \$35 (includes lock) |
| Busy Beaver Award: | Bert Tremblay |
| New Trail Experience: | Cook's Mountain |
| New Man Ready: | Jack Aiton |

Trails

Even though the main focus in the summer of 1990 was the construction of the new garage, there was still some major trail work accomplished. On the Blue Trail, widening and levelling work was done, and 10 culverts were installed. One of the most difficult areas on the Blue Trail that saw some improvement was the long twisting uphill climb a few hundred metres after the newly re-built Cam Hunter Bridge. Rocky outcrops and granite ridges presented giant steps in the trail, and it took a lot of snow to be able to level this off. Even with the machine work done this summer, more would be required and was eventually done in the summer of 1992.

The Pipeline Access Road (built in the summer of 1989) had wiped out several hundred metres of trail at the end of the Green Trail and part of the Blue Trail, and a plan was made to cut a new trail parallel to the Access Road. To do this, permission had to be obtained from the owner of the private property in that area, the Murbys from Aurora, Ontario. Perhaps the delay in obtaining this permission was a blessing in disguise. Tom Cook had written to the Murbys but it was some time before Mrs. James Murby replied, in a letter dated December 6, 1990, giving permission for North Bay Nordic to cut a new section of trail across their property. It was too late, of course, to do any work of this magnitude, so the work was put off. Over the previous winter it was discovered that it was quite a delight to ski on a snow covered road - wide, flat, and smooth; and discussion then led to how often TCP might actually use the road in the middle of the ski season to deal with some emergency on the pipeline. This led to a decision in consultation with TCP that we would be able to use the road as part of our trail system, and this arrangement has continued satisfactorily.

To date, there has never been a need for TCP to use the road during the winter. There have been a few but infrequent incursions by snowmachines and ATVs onto the ski trails in winter. The more pressing problem has been one of off-season access by these machines and 4x4 pickup trucks to other parts of our trails as much damage has been done at various times. There have also been incursions made by persons on foot to access High Lake for ice fishing, but the route of the Pipeline Access Road has followed an old trail from Northshore Road

up the valley between two hills, so the historic use of this route to High Lake has some precedence. The Pipeline Access Road has also enabled us to access much more easily the Green Trail and the middle part of the Blue Trail for trail upgrading and fall brushing.

Cook's Mountain

Another significant bit of trail work provided an alternate route to the S turn, considered to be a challenge to those skiers who could not negotiate the downhill turns. Better to find a route with a straight run down and a level run out. Exploring the area above the S turn, two enterprising and experienced skiers did discover a route that would accomplish this, and it took only a few hours of machine time to carve out the new descent. Mysteriously, during the winter, a new sign appeared a hundred metres before the S turn. It pointed the way to this new route, now aptly named "Cook's Mountain". Tom Cook has always claimed innocence in the project (no doubt for personal liability insurance reasons) and has suggested it should have been called "Rees' Ridge". Claude Jolin has another sign ready just in case.

The Fred-Ian Trail

It was about this year that Ian Fettes and Fred Gunter conspired to carve a narrow trail up to the "mountain" – the high hill above the cliffs on the Blue Trail.



**Panoramic view: Tom and Jean Cook atop the cliffs
Four Mile Bay and One Mile Bay (Trout Lake), and Lake Nipissing are in the background.
The clubhouse and garage are visible on the extreme right**

Access to this path is just after the Blue Trail turns off the Pipeline Access Road. Then, it is bushwhacking at its best to climb up to the top where skiers can roam about a plateau to three different vantage points. At the southeast side, you can look across and down (!) to the Lookout, recognizable by its stand of white pines.

Looking northwest, there is a panoramic view of High Lake and the distant hills, a scene that rivals the lookouts on the Centennial Ridges Trail in Algonquin Park. And looking west towards North Bay, the clubhouse appears like a small model building, and Trout Lake and Lake Nipissing loom in the distance. The descent, mildly perilous even in good snow conditions, and quite dangerous in bad conditions, rejoins the trail near Porcupine Hill. This is not an official Nordic trail, and for safety reasons, skiers are not encouraged to ski it alone.

Jack Aiton

For trail grooming, Nordic again employed the services of Glen Jessup, but it was felt that a second person was necessary to fill in and to assist on busy days. It was also recommended that Glen have a cellular phone for emergency use when out on the trails. Brian Thomas investigated whether cell phones would work out on the trails and discussed this with friend, bridge colleague, Nordic member, and telephone expert Jack Aiton. Jack wasn't too sure about the cell phone but did indicate that he could help out on the trails a bit. And that was how Jack Aiton got involved initially on the trail grooming crew at North Bay Nordic in 1990-91. He did not do any actual work that year, but he would get very highly involved in the winter of 1992-93 when Glen was had to take some time off in the early part of December 1992.

And remember the Blue machine? It was sold to a local moose hunter.

Building and Property

New Garage - Waxing Area and Lockers

The highlight of the summer was the construction of the new garage - the new home for the fleet of Alpines, a safe and warmer location for waxing and locker space for those skiers who wanted to leave their skis at the Club and not have to transport them to and from home every time they went skiing. And, looking ahead, the garage was built knowing the specifications of a large Bombardier or Pisten Bulley snow-grooming machine that would eventually reside here.

The Wintario grant was received in the spring, and the 50% of the garage building costs that Nordic would have to provide came in the form of materials and volunteer labour. Only one major part of the project was contracted out, and that was for \$4300 to Artan Contracting to level the site and lay the foundation and concrete pad. The rest was up to the Building Committee and scores of volunteers.

The Building Committee included Joe Lynch (chairman), Tom Cook, Cam Hunter, Don Wheeler, Dave Rees, and Ian Fettes. Claude Jolin, expert carpenter and builder, was brought in as foreman, teacher, and slave driver to head up the crews of builders. Peter Dimmel did the project drawings.

In a series of building bees, the building was framed with military precision. Unfortunately, photos of the project have disappeared. Boards of various dimensions and lengths were cut to prescribed dimension and hauled off to nearby assembly locations where crews were assigned the task of framing the four walls on the ground. The two twenty-foot walls were both made in one piece; the forty-foot walls were built in two sections of twenty feet each and then later joined together. One by one, each wall section was carried to the concrete pad floor, and with the help of a motorized winch, pulled up into a vertical position,

with Claude Jolin then quickly erecting wind braces, scampering up ladders and along the tops of the walls, securing them to each other, while all of us held on to the wall sections to prevent them from falling over. Then came the all-important task of squaring up the building, only to discover that the foundation was a bit out of square, a problem that would affect the alignment of the building and all of the details (trusses, roofing, siding) that require a square cornered building. But Claude was successful in getting it "pretty close" - a phrase not usually heard on a Jolin construction site.

Raising the roof was also a memorable building bee. Trusses (from Kent's) were carried one by one to the interior of the new building, hauled up to the top, and maneuvered into place. Then, Claude and Tom Cook (Tom turning various shades of green while standing on a middle support) would nail each truss in place to a central beam and into place at the tops of the walls.

And so it went, sheathing for the roof, then shingling, aluminum siding, and interior partitions - hundreds of hours of volunteer labour. Don Wheeler looked after the electrical hook up, forewarning that it was an older electrical fuse box "that might conk out some day."

In the waxing room, several banks of lockers salvaged from one of the local high schools were installed. Paul Harding constructed wooden ski forms and mounted them on the wax benches. (There are now six of them in the waxing room, and on busy days you can get a good lesson on waxing techniques if you watch and listen carefully.)

In the fall, the Club purchased 50 combination locks that would be used on the lockers. The \$35 locker rental fee would include the price of the lock.

Other projects

In other clubhouse work, Don Wheeler attempted to deal with the problem of sand in the water with the installation of a \$500 in line water filter. It was not entirely successful, and the water problems continued. Don also erected a flagpole and Canadian flag on the timing hut.

.....And Other Things

Trail Awards

Records of Green Trail, Blue Trail, and All Trails Club awards have not survived, but records of distance awards were listed in the AGM minutes.

Courier de Bois (160 - 300 km)
Jasper to Banff (30 - 600 km)

Darlene Goch
Andrea Nighbor, Kimberly Nighbor,
David Nighbor, Donna Nighbor,
Martin Nighbor,
Jamie Palcik, John Goch, Jon Pitt,
Ric DeMeulles

Quebec to Moncton (600 - 1000 km)
Ellesmere to North Pole (1000 km+)

Marilyn Lynch, Bert Marsden,
Dave Minden, Tom Rolfe
Stephanie Rees, Jane Minden,
Emmanuelle Gunter, Claude Jolin,
Tom Cook, Joe Lynch

Jackrabbit Programme

Joe Lynch, assisted by Bert Tremblay, headed up the growing and increasingly successful Jackrabbit programme that attracted 100 young skiers to the fun and skills development sessions. Also beneficial was another anonymous \$1000 donation to the Jackrabbit programme. Bert Tremblay's assistance in the increase in Jackrabbit numbers from about 40 to 100 was recognized with the Busy Beaver Award for the season.

Jackrabbit leaders for the winter of 1990-91 were Steve Shore, Jamie Palcik, Carlie Statham, Tammy Lott, Katy Lott, Jennifer Jarvi, Elizabeth Jarvi, Andre Delorme, Jeff Graham, Rob Telford, Bryan Dubeau, Leigh Fettes, Erin Fettes, Rob Rankin, Cathy King, and Philippe Chien.

Bigwood Ski Rental Changes Hands

Ed Rogers decided to back away from the ski rental operation at Nordic as it was simply not cost effective to provide the man hours and supervision every hour that the Club was open. But Ed felt that Nordic should maintain and run a ski rental outlet, so a very generous deal was struck that proved to be very beneficial to North Bay Nordic. The complete inventory of skis, boots, and poles was sold at a cost of \$2000 to be paid at the rate of \$500 per year over four years. And Irene Daly was somehow convinced to take on the added responsibility of managing the ski rental operation, fitting boots and skis to visitors - usually novice skiers - and jockeying hot dogs and day passes at the same time.

And about other things -

A change was made to the day pass format. A date stamped ticket with a perforated edge was used; the skier kept half in his or her pocket, and the Club kept the other half. The problem of identifying skiers as non-members or members began to be noticed, and many wondered if everyone was paying his or her way.

Opening day for the season was originally planned for the December 1 Open House, but this was delayed until January 6 due to late snow.

Gary Morgan and partner handled the ski instruction responsibilities for the season and Gary had many skiers complimenting his efforts. His skating clinics were well attended.

Races

With Peter Dimmel moving away from the city, the Junior Racing Team again faced the problem of finding a coach for the junior racers. Fortunately, Rod Tupola was able to come in again on a part time basis. Race team director Brian Thomas put together an extensive plan for the Junior Racing Team that included a \$5200 budget for the season. Part of the anticipated revenues came from \$2500 worth of Nevada tickets plus bingos and raffle tickets. Two teams, A and B, had different levels of financing (a \$100 fee and a \$35 fee) to reflect varying abilities and involvement. Bigwood Sporting Goods was involved with subsidized racing suits for the A team carded racers. Our local races were the Early Bird (December 29 and 30, postponed to January 5 and 6); the Invitational (January 26 and 27); and the Langlauf (February 16).

Special Olympics

In response to a request by Larry Sheppard at the October 25 Board meeting, North Bay Nordic agreed to host the Ontario Special Olympics Nordic Skiing Championships on March 2, 1991. About 150 competitors including Chris O'Connor raced distances of 100 m, 400 m, 1 km, and 3 km. There was also a request for some sharing of waxing expertise, and Brian Thomas suggested that a few members of the racing team could conduct a waxing clinic for the Special Olympics racers. Kevin Thomas and Kevin Denston contributed some time for that. Tom Cook was the "Club manager" for the event while the Special Olympics people actually ran the event. We provided the site and the trails at no charge. The races were held on the Main Trail (race out to around the Yellow turnoff and back), and Club skiers were routed out the Brown to access the other trails.

Level II Officials Clinic December 1990

North Bay Nordic was already gaining a reputation for well-organized races and thought was given to the hosting of larger events in the near future. In anticipation of a need for well-trained officials, North Bay became the site for a CCC Level 1 and 2 Officials Course on December 8 and 9, 1990. The course attracted several candidates from Timiskaming Nordic and Sudbury and a strong contingent from North Bay Nordic. Janet Gates from CCO was the course instructor, and at the end of the vigorous 2 day clinic, North Bay Nordic had six Level 2 race officials: Tom Cook, Bill Burton, Knowlton Potter, Dave Minden, Jane Minden, and Gail Rees. This would be the core of the Race Organizing Committee for the next 10 years. They would oversee (with much assistance from Dave Rees) the Canadian Masters in 1992 and 2000, OFSAA in 1996 and '97, several Ontario University championships, and our own usual local races. And indirectly, involvement in this course led to the discovery of one particular Pisten Bulley snow-grooming machine in Thunder Bay in 1995.

Future Plans

A new five-year plan was presented at the AGM in 1991. High on the priority list was the purchase of a new, large snow-grooming machine.

Don Wheeler and Cam Hunter stepped down from the Board. Don would continue with considerable involvement in the installation of interpretive nature signs on the Blue and Green Trails.

Recollections 1990-91

Chapter 18 1991-92 We Host The Canadian Masters

Board of Directors

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Tom Cook | President - Races |
| Dave Minden | Vice President - Trails |
| Charlie Taylor | Treasurer |
| Sheila Taylor | Secretary |
| Katy Brown | Membership - Newsletter |
| Ken Brown | Building and Property - Trails |
| Danielle Laumann | Publicity |
| Thom Rolfe | Social - Publicity |
| Brian Thomas | Racing Team |

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Membership: | 559 |
| Membership rates: | Family \$100 (120); Single \$50 (60); Student \$30 (35) |
| New Seniors Discount: | 10% |
| Day Pass Rate: | Adult \$7 weekend, \$5 weekday; student \$3, \$2; child \$1, \$1 |
| New Trail: | Golden |
| New Snowmachine: | Used 1991 Alpine II |
| Busy Beaver Award: | Joe Lynch |

Trails

Pipeline Twinned

TransCanada Pipelines (TCP) was active again in the summer of 1991, twinning the pipeline. Northshore Road and the Pipeline Access Road were busy with truck traffic hauling pipe sections to the work site that again crossed our Green Trail and wiped out the relatively new section paralleling the Green. But TCP and OJ Pipelines were aware of our concerns and did cut a new section of trail. This new part of the trail was in a wetter location, a bit closer to the wetland area just to the south of it, and Dave O'Neal, Tom Cook, and I spent a muddy afternoon cleaning up the trail after the machine work had been completed.

Trail Work and the Gold Trail

More major trail construction and upgrading were accomplished with \$3575 spent for 40 hours of machine time with Ron Vaillancourt operating Standard Paving's backhoe. Supervising the work were Tom Cook, Dave Minden, Joe Lynch, and Dave Rees.

The Brown Trail was widened, going out backwards or clockwise on the trail, for 1 km to a point near the Blue / Red intersection, and a new section of trail was cut from the Brown over to the Main Trail. This created a trail that would have fewer steep downhills and would be suitable for more senior skiers, and was thus dubbed the Golden Trail. This was soon shortened to simply the Gold Trail.

There were some rumours floating around of a seniors group through New Horizons that wanted to join the Club and the possibility of some funding; but for the summer of 1991, trail upgrading expenditures were borne by North Bay Nordic.

The Gold Trail was soon to be used for another purpose. In the races held in the winter of 1991-92, the Gold Trail provided a way to get those involved with the race out to the newly created "main intersection;" it was an ideal vantage point for spectators and coaches. It also provided a route for recreational skiers

to access other trails not being used for races at that particular time. This was Tom Cook's concept, although we had not known that it had been recommended years before by Glen Parfitt, and it has worked out very well. With the Brown Trail closed at its entrance off the Blue, the Gold Trail was designated a two way trail and wax testing trail providing a parallel route out to the main intersection. This was first used at the Canadian Masters in January 1992.

Tom Cook was aware that the Brown Trail crossed private property and when investigating this, located a corner property marker near the 1 km point out on our Main Trail. This marker is about 50 m off the right side of the Main Trail, in the hollow, about 100 m before the main intersection. In September, using a compass to determine approximate north and east lines, Tom and I followed and marked these lines through the bush to the points where they crossed the Main Trail and the Brown and Gold Trails. These trails essentially nip off a small corner of the back part of a rectangular 100-acre lot owned by Raymond St. Jean on Daley's Road to the north. In fact, we saw what might be the remnants of an old trail around the corner post, and it looked like the original tote road might have jogged around the corner of that property. Over the years, the trail may have been straightened out, crossing private property. But Mr. St. Jean is aware of the Club's crossing his property and has given his permission.

Other work involved widening the entrance to the garage for the Alpines to use both doors effectively, taking out the bumps at Munro's Corner, improving Cook's Mountain, removing more of the Kiedyk corners on the Blue, and installing a culvert at Jane's spring. "Jane's Spring" is the wet area at the end of the Yellow Trail. Jane Minden has made it an annual ritual to put boards and plywood over the water and mud before races. She did not want any young racers getting stuck in the mud!

Fall Trail Work

The fall trail-brushing programme was streamlined. The Green Trail was divided into 1 km sections and "section chiefs" were asked to form crews of their friends and relations to clear and brush their section. Section chiefs for the season were Jon Spencer, Bill Burton, Paul Harding, Lloyd Argo, Danielle Laumann, Rob Dawson, Tony Bos, Joe Lynch, Cam Hunter, Mike Turner, Brian Thomas, and Dave Minden. This process also strengthened the "bond" and sense of ownership that the crews had in their personal section of trail. As well, a crew of Tom Cook, Ian Fettes, and Claude Jolin cruised the Green in search of Alpine destroying trees.

Brian Thomas continued the tradition of involving the Junior Racing team in Club affairs by having them brush back all of the inner trails after the tractor mowing by John Lott in the summer.

On an experimental basis, we bought 35 bales of hay from Irene Daly's husband, Herb, and spread them on the Main Trail, filling in holes and depressions (some of them created by the big back hoe).

New Trail Signs

During the winter, Claude Jolin was hired to create the bright and colourful trail intersection signage that indicated the distance back to the clubhouse and the degree of difficulty of the trail. Occasionally nibbled by porcupines, these signs have weathered well and were in place every winter until

2002 when they were replaced by all-season metal signs. (But that's another story!)

New Alpine

In mid-January we were once again experiencing problems with our fleet of two elderly Alpines and one younger 1990 Alpine, and the decision was made to apply to the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation for a "New Recreation Capital Grant" to assist in the purchase of a new or slightly used Alpine II for up to \$5000. We could not wait to hear if the grant would be approved, and we proceeded to purchase a new (new to us, 1991) Alpine II from a Perry Achtenberg for \$4500. A generous anonymous donation of \$2000 was received in February, and this helped immensely. The 1991 Alpine II was used extensively through February and March.

Six months later, in July 1992, we received a letter from The Ministry of Tourism and Recreation: "due to insufficient funds" the application for funding for the new snowmachine was rejected.

A Snowy Winter

Despite a slow start to the winter, the snow did fall and the trails were in good shape for the Canadian Masters and Invitational, which we hosted at the end of January. Plentiful snowfall in February and March (60 cm just before the school winter break) gave us good skiing into April.

Building and Property

Garage to Jackrabbit Lodge

Like a butterfly emerging from its chrysalis, the new Jackrabbit Lodge appeared after hundreds of hours of work by Joe Lynch, with the assistance of John Goch and Ric DeMeulles. Before they began the restoration, Tom Cook and Claude Jolin, in a separate and independent effort, first jacked the old garage up onto poplar logs and a load of gravel was poured in. The original thought was that the old garage would simply be another storage facility. (Had they known that some major refurbishing was to take place, something other than poplar logs would have been used, for in a few years they began to rot.) Joe and his crew donated many hours of time as well as some of their own money for the re-construction. Beams, joists and a plywood floor were added. Walls were insulated and paneled with pine boards on the inside. The ceiling was also insulated. An old woodstove and a new insulated chimney along were installed (although some wonder where two other donated woodstoves disappeared to). A large front window and new door enhanced the overall appearance. Covering of the exposed styrofoam ceiling was put off until the next year when it was again delayed until the spring of 1993 - but it was one detail that was never finished.

The new Jackrabbit Lodge quickly became the regular retreat for Jackrabbit skiers in search of hot chocolate and other treats; and it would also come to serve as an auxiliary meeting place, the "servery" for many potluck suppers, and a race organizational and registration headquarters. Aware of the potential good uses for this revitalized building, and aware of the personal time, effort, and money donated by Joe and his crew, the Board wisely paid an unusual truck rental fee after a slight mishap.

Ken Brown looked after solving the perpetual freezing water problems with the installation of a heat line inside the existing water pipe as well as a new pump. With these items costing nearly \$2300, there was little cash left for a planned new floor. So less expensive stain and varnish were used to upgrade the existing plywood floor. The heat line worked well - until one day when the switch was tripped, the water froze in the pipes. Fortunately no damage was done.

Irene Daly returned as primary clubhouse and snack bar manager. With her daughter Christine heading off to school, Yvonne Bellaire was hired as the second staff person to fill in on Irene's days off or to assist on busy weekends.

.....And Other Things

The Golden Trails Club

John McClay, representing a group of senior citizens, was interested in promoting physical activity among seniors in the area. Mention of this group first occurred at the October 9 Board meeting when the Board moved to support and begin to implement a "Mature Skiers Chapter." There was the potential for up to \$15000 from the Federal Government for such things as 20 pairs of skis, boots, and poles, equipment for clearing and maintaining a "senior's trail," and for transportation and instruction. At the December 4, 1991 Board meeting, Joe Lynch with Harold and Audrey McLean made a proposal for the startup of a senior skiing group, the Golden Trails Club, which would be coordinated through the Nipissing Board of Education and New Horizons under the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation and Northern Development. Funding from New Horizons would be available but not until the 1992-93 season and would cover rental of facility, equipment, and instruction. The Board, in a special motion, approved the submission of a grant application to enhance the "Golden Trails Club."

Under Vic Proulx, a group totalling 43 skiers came out at various times and in various numbers to the Club paying a special \$20 membership fee which was valid while the group was at the Club. Many rented skis; frequently they received instruction from a variety of Club members (early "Friends of Nordic") such as Fred Gunter and Shirley Bass.

In March, a shipment of 20 pairs of donated skis, boots, and poles was received. The skis and poles were stored in the attic area of the new garage. The boots were stored in a garbage bag. Never store things in garbage bags! One rumour was that they went to Dick Denston's for safekeeping away from mice and other critters. Another was that they had simply been disposed of. The mystery of the missing ski boots continued until the summer of 1993.

Nordic Nature

Don Wheeler and Dave Chamberlain (both science teachers) revitalized their proposal from several years previous to set up a nature interpretative guide on the Nordic trails. With Don and Dave on the Planning Committee were Danielle Laumann and Dave Minden. Funding of \$500 for this project was obtained in February 1992 through Canada Trust's *Friend's of the Environment*, and Don and Dave set up the first 10 nature interpretive signs on the Blue Trail in March. These were mounted on cedar posts secured on 4x4 cedar bases. The signs were enclosed in specially made Plexiglas covers designed to keep the weather out but to allow easy replacement of the paper document. While a few of these signs have succumbed to such hazards as wayward ski poles, thieves,

hunters, and the occasional bulldozer, many are still in place and, judging by the ski tracks in winter, continue to draw interest from passing skiers. The written text on the signs was augmented by ink and pen drawings by Glenn Hansman; as more signs were added, colour photographs were used. (In the late 1990s, Tom Cook took over the role of interpretive trail sign maker, and using Internet web sites and a colour printer, Tom has produced many signs relating to tree species in the area.)

Also, a "white board" was set up in the clubhouse for skiers to record their personal sightings while out on the trails. Sightings of animal tracks (wolf, moose, deer,) and actual glimpses of pine martens, fishers and pilleted woodpeckers soon began to be recorded. But after a year or so, we also began to see notations about woolly mammoths and saber-toothed tigers, so the accuracy of some of these sightings began to be questioned. After many years, the board is still in use but is now just used for Club information notices.

Races

Brian Thomas coordinated the Junior Racing Team's activities, and was assisted by Kevin Thomas who set up the summer training schedules and organized involvement at a NOSD training camp at French River with Larry Sinclair, Norm Neal, and Jamie Calleo. Nancy Olmsted shouldered some-part time coaching responsibilities for the team, which this season was solely the "A" team; there was no "B" team.

The Junior Racing Team for 1991-92 included:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Midget Boys | Andrew Rees |
| Juvenile Boys | Stephen Burseay Eric Potter |
| Junior Boys | Bryan Dubeau Craig Little Judd Hards |
| Junior Men | Kevin Denston |
| Juvenile Girls | Erin Fettes Stephanie Rees |
| Junior Women | Mary Beth Burton |

One highlight of the season was the new set of team racing suits (from Lizzard's in Sudbury) purchased through Bigwoods.

Stephanie Rees and Stephen Burseay qualified for the Canadian Juniors, February 15 to 23 at Canmore, and their trip west was partially funded by the Club.

Club races included the Early Bird and Poker Run on January 4 and 5 (it rained but attracted 60 racers; the Poker Run organized by Gail Rees was an entertaining highlight on a dreary damp day); the Invitational and Canadian Masters on January 25 and 26 (227 competitors); and the Langlauf on February 22 (65 entrants). In total, the races contributed over \$3000 to the Club's revenues.

The Canadian Masters - January 1992

Our first big race! The Race Organizing Committee included Dave Rees, Chief of the Race; Dave Minden, Chief of the Course and Stadium area; Jane Minden, Chief of Controllers and Marshals, Sheila Taylor, Race Secretary; Tom Cook, Chief of Grounds, Pinewood Banquet, Shirts, and All Other Details; Jean Cook, Chief of Registration; Bill Burton, Chief of Start / Finish; and Gail Rees, Chief of Timing. Technical Delegates were John Raynor from Ottawa and Laurie Penttinen from Thunder Bay.

The hours of planning, the trail work in the summer, and all of the hours of preparation before the race weekend paid off. (I have vivid and frosty memories of riding the tracksetter with Dave Rees driving the Alpine, setting the tracks for several hours at midnight on the Friday evening before the races. The temperature was a frosty -25C, and I recall rolling off in a frozen heap after we had finished, but still smiling!) But it was the scores of frozen volunteers who assisted in many capacities who made the event a huge success. Yes, there were some major disappointments. The biggest letdown was when the Technical Delegates announced that the Saturday's races were cancelled due to the extreme cold (the temperature barely reached -26C; Tom Cook was practically in tears). Even Sunday's races were modified due to the cold temperatures, which struggled up to -19C, barely above the -20C mark that would have forced another cancellation. Fortunately there was no wind! And instead of using the 5 km Red Trail and its long downhill and bone-chilling descents, we were forced to use the 3.2 Purple Trail (5 laps for the 15 km). And it was cold - especially for the timers and marshals who had to brave the elements for several hours.

Chief Technical Delegate John Raynor was effusive in his praise for the work of the Race Organizing Committee (and the Alpine drivers - Glen Jessup, and Dave Rees who set the tracks). But it was all of the volunteers who made it a great success, and the Board agreed with the Race Committee's suggestion that the AGM in April also be designated a Volunteer Appreciation Night, not just for the race volunteers, but also for all of the Club's volunteers. So the first Volunteer Appreciation Night was held at the Portage on April 10, 1992.

.....And Other Things

Jackrabbit Grows

Joe Lynch again directed the Jackrabbit Programme that was expanded this year to include the Challenge Programme for skiers aged 11 to 15. This was to provide an opportunity for those with several years of Jackrabbit experience to take on more of a challenge than the Jackrabbit programme offered. It would include distance challenges and a bit of competition in an anticipated Provincial Challenge Team competition. Four dryland training sessions were held in November. A total of 107 skiers took part in the Jackrabbit programme, 12 in the new Challenge programme, all under the supervision of 17 leaders. They were Philippe Chien, Andre Delorme, Bryan Dubeau, Leigh Fettes, Cheryl Gowan, Heather Lawson, Jeremie Lott, Katie Lott, Shannon Mantha, Ray Horton, James (last name not known), Bob Rankin, Steve Shore, Carlie Statham, Melissa Turner, Rob Telford, and Yvonne Bellaire.

Distance Clubs and Awards for 1991-92

Green Trail Club

| | | | |
|------------------|----|-------------------|----|
| Bert Marsden | 56 | Dawna Nighbor | 72 |
| Martin Nighbor | 38 | Jane Minden | 33 |
| David Nighbor | 29 | Andrea Nighbor | 33 |
| Joe Lynch | 28 | Kimberley Nighbor | 30 |
| Dave Minden | 17 | Emmanuelle Gunter | 22 |
| Bill Burton | 14 | Marilyn Lynch | 22 |
| Doug Graham | 13 | Anne Garrett | 19 |
| Cam Hunter | 10 | Toni Brown | 10 |
| Tom Cook | 9 | Jan Dawson | 7 |
| Paul Harding | 9 | Victoria Turner | 4 |
| Kevin Denston | 7 | Beth Workman | 4 |
| Gary Morgan | 7 | Ann Evans | 3 |
| Mark Thomas | 4 | | |
| Glen Hansman | 3 | | |
| Peter Puddicombe | 3 | | |
| Steve Shore | 3 | | |

Blue Trail Club

| | | | |
|-----------------|----|-----------------|----|
| Stephen Bursey | 16 | Victoria Turner | 14 |
| Andrew Rees | 16 | Kim Nighbor | 9 |
| Eric Potter | 10 | Colleen Lynch | 8 |
| David Nighbor | 8 | Andrea Nighbor | 6 |
| Duncan Lindsay | 7 | | |
| Robbie Chambers | 5 | | |

All Trails Club

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Three Times | Tom Cook |
| Twice | Joe Lynch, David Nighbor, Marilyn Lynch, Kim Nighbor |
| Once (was enough) | Robbie Chambers, Paul Harding, Duncan Lindsay, Dave Minden, Mark Thomas, Katy Brown, Jan Dawson, Anne Garrett, Emmanuelle Gunter, Jane Minden, Andrea Nighbor, Victoria Turner |

Cross Country Canada Awards

Courier de Bois (160 km)

Victoria Turner (396), Kelly Lynch (250), Patty Turner (192), Sarah Pitt (185)

Jasper to Banff (300 km)

Colleen Lynch (402)

Quebec to Moncton (600 km)

Marilyn Lynch (800), Anne Garrett (667), Jon Pitt (666), Dave Minden (632)

Ellesmere to North Pole (1000 km)

Martin Nighbor (1415), Andrea Nighbor (1377), Kim Nighbor (1332), David Nighbor (1319), Bert Marsden (1252), Joe Lynch (1220), Tom Cook (1125), Jane Minden (1039)

Polar Bridge (1775 km +)

Dawna Nighbor (2224), Kevin Denston (1885), Mark Thomas (1783)

Total distance skied by the Nighbors: 7667 km (Amazing!)

Food City Dollars

We kept shopping! The Garretts kept on doing the math! And Food City handed over another cheque, this time for \$119. The total contribution had now reached over \$1000.

Social Events and other items

Brian Thomas and the racing team looked after the ski exchange at Northgate, part of the annual membership drive. In an interesting move, the Board changed the date of the membership discount to November 1 to coincide with the earlier date for the Northgate weekend. However, this was put back to December 1, when it was realized that the Club's by-laws stipulated that December 1 was the date for the early membership discount.

Thom Rolfe arranged the details for the Potluck Supper on January 11. A severe lack of snow to that date prompted Thom to lead a group chant and incantation to the Norse weather gods for a bit of the white stuff. It must have worked!

The Lynches organized the annual Pancake Breakfast on February 1.

Instruction

Gary Morgan handled the ski instruction duties. Mark Thomas and Kevin Denston conducted a waxing clinic on January 27, noting that an earlier date would be preferable.

Publicity and Public Relations

The original yellow brochure was re-printed for \$500 thanks to the contribution and sponsorship from Pinewood Best Western, which was the race headquarters for the Canadian Masters races.

After an absence of several years, a group of blind (visually challenged) skiers took to the trails on February 1, some of them skiing the Blue. They were very appreciative of the warm and friendly welcome they received and the quality of the trails. Those of us who have skied at night can appreciate some of the problems visually challenged skiers have.

Future plans

The active search for a new snow-grooming machine such as a Bombardier or Pisten Bulley began at the AGM in April 1992. Tom Cook, stepping down from the Board after two successful years as President, volunteered to head a Ways and Means Committee that also included Joe Lynch and Thom Rolfe. The anticipated cost for a snow grooming machine would be upwards of \$200 000 for a brand new state of the art machine; but there were hopes that perhaps a less expensive used machine might become available. Lappe Nordic, for example, had a used Pisten Bulley for sale for \$70 000. A major fundraising effort would be required. Tom's plan was to put together a team of 5 captains each in charge of eight to ten canvassers who would solicit donations from the membership. Donations made through CCC would be income tax deductible. Also a Wintario grant application would be put together to obtain half of the required funding. It was noted during the season that there was a need to do more checks to see if skiers on the trails were indeed paid-up members or non-members paying trail fees. Members were not required to show

identification; visitors who bought day pass tickets simply carried them in a pocket. So there was no visible means of knowing who was who. Perhaps there was a better way.

Recollections 1991-92

Chapter 19 1992-93 The Year of the Button

Board of Directors

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Dave Minden | President, Races - Trails |
| Tom Cook | Past President - Ways and Means - Social |
| Brian Thomas | Vice-President - School Liaison - Newspaper Article |
| Charlie Taylor | Treasurer |
| Martin Nighbor | Trails – Instruction |
| Sheila Taylor | Secretary – Newsletter – Membership |
| Chris Lindsay | Building and Property |
| Knowlton Potter | Racing Team |
| Danielle Hart* | Publicity |
| Marilyn Lynch | Publicity |
| Ric DeMeulles* | Membership |

* The Board accepted with regrets the resignations from the Board of Danielle Hart in October and Ric Demeulles in November. Sheila Taylor assumed the duties of the Membership chairperson, and Marilyn Lynch agreed to join the Board and to serve as Publicity chairperson.

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Membership: | 696 (Family, 138; Single, 93; Student, 44; Senior, 28) |
| Membership rates: | unchanged from last year |
| Busy Beaver Awards: | Don Wheeler and Dave Chamberlain |
| New Trail Groomer: | Jack Aiton (takes over for Glen Jessup) |
| For Members To Wear: | I.D. Buttons |

Trails

Summer Trail Work

The general focus continued to be preparing the trails to a level 15-foot width that would eventually accommodate the passage of a large Pisten Bulley snowgrooming machine. Summer trail work in the summer of 1992 was to the tune of \$2850 for four days of backhoe time with Ron Vaillancourt aboard the Standard Paving machine. Sharing in supervising the work were Dave Minden, Tom Cook and Joe Lynch. One of the primary objectives was the very rough uphill section about half a kilometre past the Cam Hunter Bridge where a series of rocky outcrops and granite ridges presented giant steps that required extensive amounts of snow to cover. This section had been worked on in the summer of 1991, but it still needed work, and we wanted to get it right this time. Fortunately, Ron was able to find sufficient gravel and soil beside the trail to fill in the hollows between the high points, and this section was improved greatly; but even now, the tops of these rocky points are exposed and visible. Watch for them if you are running or walking the trails in the off-season.

Another trouble spot was the section of trail just after the bottom of the S-turn where the Purple Trail merges. This several hundred-metre stretch, to where the Cook's Mountain Trail merges with the main trail, was full of bumps and rolls with many rocks, roots and stumps. It was also quite narrow, confined between the hill to the left and a drop-off down to the right side. This resulted in very difficult skiing especially after rocketing down the S-turn. After several hours of work, this section was levelled and widened.

Unfortunately, the machine work done on the trails had a downside, and that was the potential of changing of water flow across the trails. During the

winter, in several locations on the Gold and at the bottom of the S-turn, water spilled over the trails creating treacherous ice sheets. To deal with this, bridges were constructed of 2x6 lumber and plywood to raise the level of the trail and allow water to continue to flow (and freeze) underneath. The curved and banked ramp at the bottom of the S-turn was an engineering marvel, thanks to the efforts of Jack Aiton and Glen Jessup.

The main bridge at the end of the trail system was another scene of activity. Previously, the timbers had been laid with a several inch gap between them. Occasionally, the snow would fall through the gaps providing an "unusual" ski platform. Joe Lynch and Martin Nighbor tackled this weighty job in the fall, moving the timbers closer together and laying new ones where needed to fill in the gaps.

The summer work paid off, and the Blue Trail was opened much earlier than usual. By January 7, all trails except the Brown and Green were in good condition.

TransCanada Pipelines

TransCanada Pipelines (TCP) graciously accepted some responsibility in helping us out at the two pipeline crossings and in controlling traffic on the Pipeline Access Road that many local residents were using to get firewood along the pipeline right of way. At our request, TCP constructed rudimentary bridges (plywood on 4x4bases) at the two Green Trail pipeline crossings; the gas flowing through the pipeline was generating a lot of heat and melting the snow on our trail, and we hoped to create a bit of an air space to help preserve the snow. Also, they agreed to pay the cost of fencing at Northshore Road and at the top of the road at the pipeline. I did the negotiating and contracting for the work at the lower end with a local fence company, and the bills were paid by TCP. The fence at the top of the Pipeline Access Road was also paid by TCP (\$500). With padlocks on the gate at the bottom, North Bay Nordic had keys and access to the road for work on the trails. (Unfortunately, a variety of people on ATVs and snowmachines used every means possible to circumvent the fencing, and the problem of unauthorized machine access continues to be a problem.)

The new section of trail that parallels the pipeline on the Green needed more work as it was in a very wet area. Standard Paving's backhoe was put to work elevating the trail. The bill for \$6000 was paid by TCP. Some extra machine work was done on the Green Trail between the turnoff from the Blue up to the first pipeline crossing.

Skate or Classic on the Blue

The inner trails (Yellow, Purple, Red) were now being groomed for both classic and skate techniques. A track was set on the right side while the remainder of the width was the skating portion. The Gold, Brown, Blue, and Green were designated "classic only". So the debate of skate vs. classic moved to the Blue Trail: should it also be groomed to allow skating, or should it remain a more traditional trail? Many had emotional and passionate views on the subject. The Blue Trail was officially the "Campbell Nature Trail", and was the first to be posted with nature interpretive signs (both several years before and recently by Dave Chamberlain and Don Wheeler). Also, skiers who preferred the classical style of skiing did not appreciate being "pushed to the side" by the skiers using skate technique who were given the preference of a best line of skiing. And it

was being quickly noted that skiers who were skating were not controlling their skis, as they would knife over onto the tracks creating a bumpy and uneven surface on the base of the track. Some members felt a bit intimidated by the skaters (often skiers training for races) who were rushing past them and felt that their enjoyment of the trail was being diminished.

On the other hand, the interest in skating was growing. All of the high-school racing teams were fully immersed in skating. In fact, classical skiing was not done at all - there was simply no time for it - and the NDA, NOSSA, and OFSAA races were strictly skating. Younger skiers in the Jackrabbit programme were attracted to the style and the speed that skating offered. Everyone else involved in competitive skiing was giving it a try (some more, some less seriously than others), and many masters level skiers were starting to compete in the skate technique events. Over the past seasons, skate technique clinics were becoming very popular with adult skiers, and Jamie Kalleo returned in February of 1993 to conduct two successful clinics. Skating was definitely here to stay. It was difficult and exhausting on the uphill - but a thrilling way to ski the flats and downhill.

Trails director Martin Nighbor attempted to get a feel for the wishes of the membership. On the first March weekend, he had the Blue Trail groomed for both skating and classic on the Saturday and then, on Sunday, double trackset for classic only. He then solicited feedback from skiers. And at the AGM, another survey was conducted. The results of these surveys continued to show a split in preference, with a slight majority of those responding in favour of skating on the Blue. But the Board kept the Blue reserved for classical technique for the winter of 1992-93 and this continued until 1993-94 when the Board made the decision to groom and trackset the Blue for both skate and classical technique. It was not until the AGM in April 1994 that skating was officially allowed on the Blue.

Snowmachine Woes

North Bay Nordic's fleet of Alpines included two relics that were becoming expensive items to keep in good repair. Two of them were sold: #3 to Peter Udeschini at the Portage for \$1500, and #4 was sold for \$1000.

Jack Aiton Subs In for Glen Jessup

In December, Glen injured his back (trying to rescue an Alpine) and with other personal reasons in the background, called on Cub member Jack Aiton, who had been on the "future potential" list for a few years, to fill in. Jack did so and quickly started to learn the intricacies of grooming and tracksetting - aided, no doubt, by the personal observations of his wife, Lorena. Jack also skied a bit and discovered how, for example, momentum carried a skier to the outside on a downhill curve, and with careful experimentation learned where to lay the tracks for that elusive perfect line. Jack Aiton carried the task of grooming and tracksetting for the duration of the season.

Interpretive Trail Signs

An application for continued funding for the interpretive trail signage was submitted to Canada Trust's Friends of the Environment programme. But to the consternation of Dave Chamberlain and Don Wheeler, the applications were lost and mishandled not once, but twice, and Canada Trust eventually sent North Bay Nordic a letter informing us that the application was not successful. A letter from the Board was sent asking them to re-assess the application but to no avail. And

at the AGM, a letter of protest was presented for the membership to sign as well. The general feeling was that the people at Canada Trust had absolutely no idea as to the positive value of this signage and the great amount of interest it was generating. But these efforts were not successful, and the Board funded the project from that point.

Don and Dave continued to create new signs that appeared on the Green (about bear nests in the Beech trees, for example) and on the Purple (high bush cranberries). These signs were a very positive addition to the trails, and for their efforts, Don and Dave were awarded the Busy Beaver Award for the season.

Near North Trails Partnership

A. Blackbourn and L. Bachelder from Nipissing University approached North Bay Nordic with a proposal for a unified approach to the trail systems in North Bay with the prospect of future advertising and promotion. North Bay Nordic contributed \$200 to this venture in support of an integrated network of recreational trails in the area. Near North Trails Partnership has evolved into the Discovery Routes trails network.

Cross Country Running at Nordic

North Bay Nordic had hosted some cross country running meets the previous year, and with its reputation growing, local high school teacher and runner Kelly Brown approached the Board with a proposal. Kelly was shooting for the big one and envisioned North Bay Nordic co-hosting with the North Bay Legion Track Club the 1995 Canadian Cross Country Running Championships. But to do that, more trail upgrading would have to occur, especially on the Yellow, Purple, and Red Trails. Kelly suggested that laying down wood chips would greatly enhance the quality of the trails for running (all the dips and bumps would be levelled) and proposed that some method of sharing of expenses be found. Also, the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation could be approached for possible funding.

We were concerned that the proposed date (mid-November) could possibly interfere with early skiing, and we also noted that there might be some required negotiation with the MNR regarding chipping on the trails or bringing in wood chips from outside. And costs could approach the \$16 000 to \$20 000 range according to Kelly Brown. But North Bay Nordic voted to support the idea in principle.

The event that Kelly Brown envisioned never occurred. But the seeds were sown to further investigate this idea of wood chipping, and Martin Nighbor did some initial searching for wood chip sources, such as Eagle Tree Service and Tembec. In the following years, this eventually led to extensive wood chipping on the inner trails and the hosting of many cross-country running events.

Building and Property

Firewood was available in great supply up on the pipeline, and Peter Puddicombe volunteered to do some cutting and splitting, assisted by Fred Gunter, Al Tough, and Chris Lindsay.

Irene Daly returned to be the primary snack bar manger, assisted by Laura Daly and newcomer Shelley Lopenen.

Jackrabbit Lodge became the focus of some attention as the styrofoam ceiling needed to be improved. But the project of installing fire resistant drywall was postponed until the spring and then to the next year, and has yet to be done. Shelving units were installed in January 1993, a great benefit for both Jackrabbit and race organizers.

Andrew Rees was engaged to work one hour per day, filling the wood box, shoveling the steps and deck, and locking up in the evenings.

Building and Property director Chris Lindsay noted that he was often assisted by (non-member and co-worker) Bob Truchon as they made some technical repairs to the electrical system that probably saved the Club thousands of dollars.

.....And Other Things

Button - Button - Who's Got the Button?

The need was growing for some sort of skier identification system. With membership in the 600+ range and a large group of skiers who came out to the Cub irregularly and bought day passes, it was felt that it was necessary to have some sense as to who was who and to ensure that all skiers were paying their way. It was suspected that some were getting a free ride at our expense.

After deliberation at the Board level, the day pass system was decided on easily: we would adopt the system used at Alpine ski facilities where coloured and dated day passes are attached to a wire bale. But the problem of how to identify Club members was more difficult. Since the Club membership entitled everyone to unlimited "free" skiing, there was no need to issue a daily ticket. And the nature of the sport of cross-country skiing was seen to be different from Alpine skiing. We did not want things flapping around loosely (which ruled out anything worn around the neck), and we did not want anything so expensive that it would cut into the membership fee (which ruled out photo ID).

Sheila Taylor and I were given the job of finding some inexpensive, practical, and sensible alternative, and after some trial and error, we decided on a coloured, laminated membership button available locally at AAA Trophy. In the first years of membership buttons, a sequence of actions was taken to ensure the security of the name on the button. First, AAA Trophy provided sheets with the membership button logos printed on them. After the membership form was received, the skier's name was hand printed on the paper impression. Then these were returned to AAA Trophy where they were attached by machine to a blank button. Finally a plastic laminating coat was applied. This process resulted in an inexpensive, weatherproof, individualized membership button. Assisting Sheila Taylor in this process were Ric DeMeulles, Mary-Jean Cundari, and Pat Williams.

The membership button and day pass ticket combination were a dramatic change for the Club. True, there was some resistance from a few skiers, but most got into the routine of wearing the buttons, and it was a good way to advertise our pride in belonging to the Club to non-members. Also, the revenues for the Club showed a quick change.

Day pass revenue dropped \$2390 (from \$8732 to \$6342). Membership increased from 559 to 696, and membership revenues increased from \$16 624 to \$21 858, an increase of \$5234. Thus, the net increase of day pass and membership revenue was \$2844. It is difficult to tell with certainty whether these

changes resulted simply from the membership buttons, or whether it was due to changes in the economy or other factors such as snowfall. But it was good to see membership and revenues go up. It was also good to be able to connect a lot of names with faces even if there was a bit of eyestrain trying to read those names!

Golden Trails Club

The Golden Trails Club became a fixture at the Club. Their weekday membership fee was \$25 per person, and it was hoped that some grant money would be coming in to the Club.

Social

Food continued to be a drawing card at North Bay Nordic's many social events. Tom Cook provided doughnuts at for the Trail Walk (and site cleanup) on October 24. The Open House (wine and cheese) was held at the clubhouse on November 29. Sixty-five attended the annual Potluck Supper on January 24; and 75 early risers netted the Club a \$20 profit at the Pancake Breakfast, organized again by the Lynches on February 6. The second annual Volunteer Appreciation Night (pizza and wings at the Portage) was held after the AGM on April 16.

Newsletter

Sheila Taylor produced the Cub's three expansive newsletters through the Business Office Skills Program. Assisting her were Karen Chamberlain, Pat Williams, her students, and Xerox Canada.

Jackrabbit

Joe Lynch continued to organize the very successful Jackrabbit programme that in the 1992-93 season attracted 106 young skiers under 12 leaders. Jackrabbit leaders (from high schools and Canadore College) were Steve Shore, Rob Chambers, Katy Lott, Duncan Lindsay, Rafael, Heather Lawson, Sheryl Gowan, Shannon Mantha, Laura Burke, Colleen Knight, Colin Baker, and Renee Point. There were also three assistants, one who worked exclusively with a handicapped skier. As well, several backup personnel filled in when necessary. They were Karlie, Andre, Tammy, Jeremy, and Leigh.

Two successful barbecues highlighted the season's activities, thanks to Michael Hart who constructed and donated the barbecue to the Jackrabbit programme.

Martin Nighbor, after attending a Jackrabbit and Challenge Programme Workshop in mid-September, led the Challenge Programme, assisted by Dawna Nighbor and John Sinclair. The Challenge group was for skiers aged 10 and up who had attained the Red Jackrabbit badge and who were interested in a more "challenging" set of activities, including some entry level race experience. Their season was capped off with an overnight trip to Sandy Peden's cabin located near Project DARE, east of South River. Claude Jolin accompanied the group to lend his wilderness skills. Stories about the trip indicated not much sleep but a lot of fun and good skiing.

Instruction

With Gary Morgan not returning, Gail Rees stepped in to fill this difficult but badly needed position. Gail offered a series of four classic technique lessons at \$10 per skier per lesson, and arranged for Jamie Kalleo to repeat his skate

technique clinics on February 14 for \$20 per skier (Novice in the morning, and intermediate or advanced in the afternoon).

Nordic Ski Wear

Jane Minden continued to keep the Nordic snack bar stocked with a variety of skiwear. From Mad Rat appeared turtle-necks and long sleeved cotton T-shirts which were very popular, half of the stock being sold by the end of January. Long sleeved cotton Ts became popular with the Challenge skiers as well and became the group's distinctive and unofficial uniform.

Food City Tapes

The Garretts secured a cheque for \$140 from Food City in return for all of the grocery tapes that we had submitted. (That's another hour and a half of summer machine time on the trails; or over 12 hours of snow grooming time!)

Skiarama

Skiers at Nordic raised a whopping \$4500 for the annual Easter Seals fundraiser.

Publicity

Brian Thomas continued to write the "Nordic News" articles for the Nugget on a weekly basis. Marilyn Lynch spent time with the local radio stations ensuring that ski reports featured Nordic's conditions and events.

There was also a proposal for First Generation Video Productions to produce a five to six minute promotional video about North Bay Nordic. They would drop the price from \$6000 to \$3200, but the Board felt that this was a bit too pricey for the benefits and the motion to go ahead with this was defeated.

I include this bit of trivia for a special reason. I had gained the dubious and erroneous reputation for conducting extremely long meetings. So just for the record, the meeting held on Sunday January 10, 1993, to consider the motion to do the video lasted 8 minutes!

Races

Knowlton Potter and Gail Rees led the Junior Racing Committee with Nancy Olmsted coaching. Al Garrett, Tom Cook, Brian Thomas and Knowlton continued to provide leadership and coaching expertise at the high school level, which had a strong tie-in with the Nordic racing programme.

The annual ski exchange was again held at Northgate on November 20, 21 and with Joyce Fettes and helpers, was very successful.

Competing under North Bay Nordic's colours were Steve Baxter, Eric Potter, Stephen Bursey, Jodi-Scott Thompson, Bryan Dubeau, Stephanie Rees, Andrew Rees, Erin Fettes, Heather Lawson, Craig Little, Graeme Cobb, Jon Rogers, and Mark Thomas.

Bryan Dubeau, Stephen Bursey, and Eric Potter qualified for and had some outstanding results at the Canadian Juniors in PEI. And Nancy Olmsted travelled with them as one of the Ontario team's coaches.

To foster leadership skills, Knowlton Potter arranged for several junior racers to take the Level I Coaching Course (Theory and Technical) and others the Level I Officials Course.

In Knowlton's final race report, he congratulated Nancy for the hours she had spent developing training programs, training with the skiers, and providing encouragement, leadership, and motivation that led the team to placing second out of the 29 Ontario clubs with a racing programme.

Club Races

The Race Committee included Level II Officials Dave Minden, Jane Minden, Tom Cook, Bill Burton, Gail Rees, and Knowlton Potter assisted by many faithful volunteers. The Early Bird and Poker Run were slated for December 27, but were cancelled due to rain. The very successful Invitational (and Interdivisional) Races were held Saturday January 23 (Classical - 83 racers) and Sunday January 24 (Skate - 74 racers) all on the Red Trail. A successful and fun poker run, organized by the Reeses, was held following the Saturday races.

The Langlauf (loppet) on February 20 attracted 60 (fewer than hoped for), skiing for some big prizes (arranged by Tom Cook: overnight motel accommodation, dinners at Pat and Mario's Restaurant, free video rentals) for the participation events (most distance skied, most years, best predicted times). The Race Committee once again recommended changes in the loppet format that would be less of a "race", more of a "fun, family participation" event.

In this and the previous season, Tom Cook organized a late winter fun triathlon that included a last ski around the Blue (or any trail with snow), a short first bike ride of the season, and a similarly short run. It was decided to make this event a more official Club event in the 1993-94 season.

Special Olympics

Two outstanding North Bay Nordic skiers, Eddie Phippen and Chris O'Connor, had the experience of their lives when they competed at the Special Olympics in Austria, bringing back many great memories as well as Gold and Silver medals. They and their coach Larry Sheppard were recognized for their achievements at the AGM. Chris continues to be a regular skier at North Bay Nordic.

Distance Clubs and Awards for 1992-93

Green Trail Club

| | | | |
|------------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|
| Dawna Nighbor | 76 | Bert Marsden | 53 |
| Andrea Nighbor | 42 | David Nighbor | 44 |
| Kim Nighbor | 42 | Martin Nighbor | 44 |
| Jane Minden | 35 | Joe Lynch | 32 |
| Marilyn Lynch | 24 | Bill Burton | 20 |
| Anne Garrett | 13 | Dave Minden | 15 |
| Jan Dawson | 7 | Al Garrett | 14 |
| Victoria Lampkin | 7 | Rob Dawson | 10 |
| Jocelyne Perabo | 6 | Duncan Lindsay | 7 |
| Erin Fettes | 5 | Mark Thomas | 7 |
| Colleen Lynch | 5 | Tom Cook | 6 |
| Natalie Burke | 3 | Cam Hunter | 5 |
| Jenny Dawson | 3 | Andy Davies | 4 |
| Heather Lawson | 3 | Jeff Dawson | 4 |
| Stephanie Rees | 3 | | |

Blue Trail Club

| | | | |
|------------------|----|---------------|----|
| Andrea Nighbor | 20 | David Nighbor | 20 |
| Kim Nighbor | 20 | Andrew Rees | 9 |
| Colleen Lynch | 16 | Jeff Dawson | 7 |
| Victoria Lampkin | 11 | | |
| Jenny Dawson | 4 | | |
| Natalie Burke | 3 | | |
| Jocelyne Perabo | 3 | | |

All Trails Club

| | | | |
|------------------|---|----------------|---|
| Victoria Lampkin | 4 | Duncan Lindsay | 3 |
| Patty Donahue | 3 | | |
| Colleen Lynch | 3 | | |

Cross Country Canada Distance Awards

Courier de Bois - 160 km

Sarah Pitt (176)
Eric Bedard (173)
John Harding (160)
Claude Join (160)

Jasper to Banff - 300 km

Duncan Lindsay (420)
Derek Jodouin (412)
Jenny Dawson (332)
Jeff Dawson (329)
Jocelyne Perabo (325)
Kelly Lynch (305)
Renee Fillion (302)
Stephanie Fillion (302)
Natalie Burke (301)

Quebec to Moncton - 600 km

Colleen Lynch (725)
Dave Allan (658)
Victoria Lampkin (602)
Dave Minden (600)

Ellesmere to North Pole - 1000 km

David Nighbor (1601)
Andrea Nighbor (1653)
Kim Nighbor (1561)
Martin Nighbor (1534)
Joe Lynch (1250)
Marilyn Lynch (1010)
Jane Minden (1001)

Polar Bridge - 1775 + km

Dawna Nighbor (2113)
Eric Potter (1800)

Future Plans

At the April 6, 1993, Board meeting, Marilyn Lynch made the suggestion that the Club should have lists of the past Boards of Directors mounted on the walls echoing a similar suggestion from Nancy Olmsted several years previously. Marilyn also suggested the need for "Club Historian." (These suggestions would be implemented in 2002!)

At the AGM, Tom Cook related that the Ways and Means Committee (Tom Cook, Thom Rolfe, Joe Lynch, and Dave Rees) had temporarily abandoned the fundraising campaign for the Pisten Bulley due to the economic recession and the lack of government funding. Tom Cook hoped to re-activate it as soon as possible.

Gail Rees and Dave Minden volunteered to form a By-laws Committee to revamp the Club's by-laws and constitution.

A SEED grant application was submitted in April for continued extensive work on the trails: culverts on the Gold and Red Trails, the long Blue downhill, and other work totalling \$4000.

Bert Marsden

Veteran skier Bert Marsden, aged 67 in 1993, composed this Nordic poem, *The Green Trail*, after skiing it 53 times in the 1992-93 season. He read this at the AGM and presented it to the Club, framed and with photographs he had taken on the trail. It was the first of a continuing series of poems, and they add much to the spirit and warmth of our clubhouse.

The Green Trail

I just hope I never tire
Of a day out on the Green
With all its wondrous beauty
Just waiting to be seen.

From its lofty pine and mighty oak,
And hemlock trees galore
To its rocky bluff and scenic lakes
You just couldn't ask for more.

Wildlife still abounds there
The fox, the wolf, the moose,
And you may see the porcupine
Aloft in some great spruce.

The thrill of all those downhill
With the wind upon your face
And those muscle building uphill
You won't find a better place.

So I hope that I shall never see
The day that I can't say
"Looks like a beautiful morning -
Think I'll do the Green today."

Bert Marsden, 1993

Recollections 1992-93

TAKE TIME TO SMELL THE ROSES

Take time to smell the roses
When you're out there on your skis
And try to see the beauty
That lies there in the trees

From those tiny little beech trees
With their leaves still hanging there
To those picturesque big windfalls
With their branches now so bare.

Did you notice all those game tracks
As you slipped along the trail
Like that tiny little field mouse
And how he drags his tail

Or that deep depression in the snow
Where a partridge spent the night
And the markings of his wingtips
When he once more took to flight

It's always such a thrill to see
A red fox on the run
Or a beautiful pine martin
When he's playing in the sun

And how about the porcupine
So high up in the trees
There's so much beauty to be seen
When you're out there on your skis

The shadows grow much longer
As we reach the end of day
On the snow they paint a picture
That I wish was here to stay

The snow is full of diamonds
And they sparkle in the sun
And it's times like this I realize
I'm a lucky sun-of-a-gun.

Bert Marsden 1994

Board of Directors

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Marilyn Lynch | President - Publicity |
| Dave Minden | Past President - Races |
| Martin Nighbor | Vice President - Instruction - Trails |
| Alan Yeates | Treasurer |
| Sandra Kilroy | Secretary - Membership |
| Bill Pitt | School Liaison - Newspaper Article |
| Chris Lindsay | Building and Property |
| Knowlton Potter | Junior Racing Team |
| ***** | |
| Jean Cook* | Newsletter - Social |

The Board was one person short of its mandated 9-person complement. Jean Cook volunteered to head up the two positions of Newsletter and Social, but not to be on the Board. Joe Lynch assisted with social functions.

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Trail Groomers: | Jack Aiton and Glen Jessup |
| Membership: | 635, down 65 from previous year (Little snow and very cold) |
| Membership Revenue: | \$19 293 |
| Membership Rates: | Family \$100 (120); Single \$50 (60); Student \$30 (35) |
| | Senior \$45 (54) – rates same as previous year |
| Busy Beaver Award: | Tom and Jean Cook |

SEED Grant

In the spring, the Club applied for a SEED grant under Canada Employment and Immigration. While we were not successful in obtaining exactly what we hoped for (over \$32 000 for two workers and a supervisor), we did get one student for a 7-week period, which was then negotiated to two students for six weeks at 30 hours each week. The two students hired initially were Jodi Scott-Thompson and Norm Charron. After 3 weeks, Norm Charron left for a better paying job, and the Club brought in Duncan Lindsay for the balance of the time.

Marilyn Lynch set up the supervision schedule whereby Club adults would check in once a day to monitor work and progress. The students filled in a logbook to record their work on different projects. Brian Thomas, Tom Cook, and other Board members assisted in their supervision.

During the six weeks, the students gave the clubhouse a facelift with new paint, brushed back the inner trails, piled firewood, removed deadfalls and branches from trails, and worked with Bill Thompson as he did some machine work on the trails.

Trails

During the summer, a variety of improvements were made to the trails. Ten culverts and extensive ditching was done on the Main, Gold, Purple, Red, and Blue Trails. Two bridges were built on the Blue. And the long Blue downhill to Munro's Corners was widened and straightened, and "the dip" that trapped unwary skiers was filled in to produce a more constant descent.

I had the pleasure to be the "director" for the work on the "long Blue downhill," and was extremely pleased with the result that Ron Vaillancourt

produced on his big Standard Paving backhoe. No more sudden twists and turns at the top and skiing in a trough. No more cautiously skiing down, wondering if some skier ahead had bailed out and was flopped across the trail out of sight under that infamous dip. Now we could get a clear view of the descent, get into a tuck, and enjoy the ride down to Munro's Corner. If conditions were fast, there was now ample space for putting on the brakes with one ski out of the track, or stepping out of the tracks entirely, to slow down with a snowplough. And at the bottom there was a wider space for step turns. As with many other locations on the trails, we did not get it perfectly right the first time at Munroe's Corner. In a later year, when Michel Chartrand was trails director, the long Blue downhill was improved and widened again with even greater success as the turn was significantly widened and banked for a much smoother turn.

Glen Jessup came back to Nordic for the 1993-94 season after the untimely death of his son the previous winter and joined Jack Aiton on the Alpines. This was a great combination. It was safer with two men operating the machines on the trails, especially on the Green where they could work together as a team. It was obviously faster and more efficient, especially on heavy snow days when we would be anxious to get out skiing. New Year's Day was a good example of that! And problems that arose were better solved by two mechanical geniuses than one acting alone.

Icy patches developing on the Main, Gold, and Blue Trails continued to be a problem, and so it was noted where drainage ditches culverts would need to be added.

Building and Property

The SEED grant work done in the summer made Chris Lindsay's job a bit easier, although Chris was highly involved in setting out work projects for them.

Irene Daly continued as chief manager of the clubhouse, snack bar, and ski rental. Irene was assisted by her daughters (Christine, Laura, and Tracy) and Liisa Loponen.

.....And Other Things

Ski Show and Ski Exchange

Sandra Kilroy organized the volunteers for membership booth at the Northgate Ski Show assisted by a crew of booth volunteers: Martin and Dawna Nighbor, Tom and Jean Cook, Dave and Jane Minden, Marilyn Lynch, Ruth Fazzari, Chris Lindsay, Duncan Lindsay, Toni Brown, Mary-Jean Cundari, and Ric DeMeulles.

Knowlton Potter with the Junior Racing Team organized the annual ski exchange.

Jackrabbit and Challenge

Joe Lynch again headed the Jackrabbit programme with 74 young skiers attending the Saturday morning and Sunday afternoon sessions. Joe also tried a Jackrabbit for Adults program, in a push to get some non-skiing Jackrabbit parents involved in a learn-to-ski programme. The Jackrabbit leaders for 1993-94

were Cheryl Gowan, Heather Lawson, Shannon Mantha, Colleen Knight, Colin Baker, Renee Point, Duncan Lindsay, Jocelyn Perabo, Alanna Gareau, Erin Fettes, Cindy Goch, Nikki-Lee Renaud, Victoria Lampkin, and Colleen Lynch.

Martin and Dawna Nighbor set out a varied program for the Challenge Programme skiers. Their schedule included the spring triathlon, the Kate Pace Parade, a challenging bike trip to Restoule Park (75 km each way with swimming, volleyball, baseball, and an overnight campout in between), plus a fun fall triathlon (canoe, run, bike). Assisting with these events were John Sinclair, and Claude and Nellie Jolin. But those were just the summer events! The fall programme included dryland training every Sunday until, finally, on-snow activities could begin. They included skill technique improvement in both classical and skate, team racing, winter camping (again at Sandy Peden's cabin), as well as some out of town racing and tours.

Newspaper Article

Bill Pitt took over the role of Club scribe and brought a fresh look to the weekly "Nordic News" articles.

Social

The annual events held were the Potluck Supper on January 15 and the Lynches' Pancake Breakfast on February 5. New this year was the Easter Egg Hunt, and it attracted 45 young egg hunters on March 6. The system used was quite ingenious. Each entrant was given a numbered racing bib. Out on the inner trails were numbered flags, placed there prior to the event. The task for the Easter egg hunters was to find the numbered flag matching his or her bib number and to bring in the flag. The flag was then traded for one scrumptious chocolate Easter egg. This was one of Joe Lynch's great concepts to keep the Jackrabbit skiers coming back to the Club after the Jackrabbit programme concluded. It attested to the theory that to be a successful ski club, you need programmes and events to draw the skiers in.

Skiarama

Don Wheeler took over the organization for the Easter Seals fundraiser at Nordic. In this year's successful event, skiers raised 10% of the total Snowarama effort. Victoria Lampkin and Jeff Dawson won awards for collecting the most pledges. A non-member, Dan Perreault, raised \$1000, and a total of 16 skiers contributed \$2850 to Skiarama-94.

Nature Interpretive Signs

Don Wheeler and Dave Chamberlain continued with their sign-making and established new sites on the Green. Some of the original signs needed some refurbishing, as the weather seals did not work perfectly in all of them. The white board continued to be used in the Club for skiers to record wildlife sightings.

Skating on the Blue

A survey was conducted through the newsletter to get a feel for the controversial issue of skating on the Blue Trail. At the March 3 Board meeting, Marilyn Lynch reported that 43 responses had been received, with a "slight majority" in favour of skating. After some discussion, the Board decided to experiment and designated the Blue Trail for both classic and skating, instructing

Glen and Jack to groom it as wide as possible and to set one track on the right side as was done on the other trails.

There were still some narrow spots where skaters were asked to squeeze through without crossing over onto the tracks, and these spots were noted for future trail widening.

Distance Awards and Green Trail, Blue Trail Clubs

Awards were presented at the AGM for skiers who had joined the Green Trail, Blue Trail and All Trails Club as well as the CSA distance awards. Unfortunately, records of these have disappeared.

Races

Junior Racing Team

Knowlton Potter headed the Junior Racing Team with Nancy Olmsted now certified as a Level II Coach.

The Junior Racing Team for 1993-94:

| | | |
|--------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Steve Baxter | Stephen Bursey | Jenny Dawson |
| Bryan Dubeau | Jon Pitt | Heather Lawson |
| Eric Potter | Andrew Rees | Stephanie Rees |
| Jon Rogers | Steve Shore | Jodie Scott-Thompson |
| Mark Thomas | | |

It was a very successful season with Andrew, Stephen, and Eric qualifying for the Canadian Juniors at Canmore. Also, Steve Shore and Nancy Olmsted skied for Nipissing University under coach Dave Rees. Steve registered personal bests, and Nancy, with two 2nds, led the Nipissing Lakers to its first ever team win.



Back row: Andrew Rees, Jon Rogers, Jon Pitt, Kevin Thomas, Bryan Dubeau
Front row: Stephen Bursey, Heather Lawson, Stephanie Rees, Steve Shore, Steve Baxter, Eric Potter
Missing from photo: Jodi-Scott Thompson, Jenny Dawson

Club Races

The anticipated Early Bird Race and Poker Ski on December 27 were once again scrubbed due to poor weather and insufficient snow. The Race Committee decided to cancel this race indefinitely as it seemed that December snow was not reliable enough to plan a race.

But the "North Bay Nordic Ski Races" (note the change in name from "Invitational") were very successful, grossing \$1500 for the two-day event on January 29 (classic) and 30 (skate). Successful despite the weather! It was extremely cold that weekend (indeed, all of January). The Saturday races (classic on the Yellow, Purple, Red Trails went off as planned. But on Sunday morning it was -22 C at the Start area, and a nippy -24 at the bridge on the Purple. It was decided to abandon the Purple and Red Trails and hold all of the events on the Yellow. Racers skied one, two, three, or five laps of the Yellow, and the abridged format worked successfully. Despite the cold, it was highly entertaining to watch as the racers came into the lap and finish areas very quickly and regularly. And the timing crews took it all in stride!

The Loppet took place on Saturday, February 12. In an attempt to restore the "long distance" spirit of the event, the middle distance of 8 km was eliminated, although the 3.2 km race was maintained for younger skiers and adults accompanying them. It was classic on the Green and Free Technique on the Purple.

The Fun Triathlon was held on Saturday, April 9, and included a planned 8 km ski on the Blue, a 10 km bike ride, followed by a 5 km run. About 20 hardy and hearty skiers showed up for the event, including several from out of town who contributed to the Potluck Lunch that followed the event.

School Races

There continued to be a strong involvement at the high school level by Tom Cook at Widdifield and Al Garrett at Chippewa organizing the mixed up relay (January 6), pre-NDA (January 13), NDA (February 3), NOSSA (February 10), leading up to OFSAA at Hardwood Hills on February 23.

As well, Anne Garrett and Carol Ann Pitt at Phelps and Dave O'Neil at Dr. Carruthers continued to encourage skiing at the junior schools.

Future Plans

A survey in the March 1994 newsletter asked the membership to consider future plans. Did we want an expanded clubhouse? Did we want to purchase a Pisten Bulley snow-grooming machine? Was there a need for a "skate only" trail?

The Trails Committee made up of Joe Lynch, Dave Minden, and Martin Nighbor planned to widen the Blue from the bottom of the cliffs to the beginning of the long Blue downhill.

Dave Minden and Bill Pitt stepped down from the slightly short-staffed Board of Directors. The 1994-95 Board would have a full complement.

Recollections 1993-94

The three ski seasons of 94/95, 95/96, and 96/97 were definite highlights in Nordic's history, and it was a privilege for both Jane and me to be part of two great Nordic teams. The first was New Nordic Tracks '95, which, under the direction of Bill Gaves, set out to raise funds for the purchase of a large snow-grooming machine. The second was the race organizing team under Widdifield teachers Tom Cook and Doug Jess who co-directed OFSAA '96 and '97. These developments brought North Bay Nordic into the modern age of cross-country skiing and put North Bay Nordic on the map as a premier cross-country ski facility. These were exciting years at North Bay Nordic.

Chapter 21 1994-95 Searching for the Big Machine

Board of Directors

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Marilyn Lynch | President – Publicity – Social |
| Martin Nighbor | Vice President – Trails – Instruction |
| Alan Yeates | Treasurer |
| Sandra Kilroy | Secretary |
| Heather Chambers | Membership |
| Paul Larsh | Races – School Liaison |
| Chris Lindsay | Building and Property |
| Knowlton Potter | Racing Team |
| Bill Gaves | Ways and Means – Publicity |

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Membership fees: | Increased by 20% to: Single \$60 (75); Student \$36 (50); Family \$125 (150) |
| Day Rates: | Adult \$5 weekday, \$8 weekend; Student \$3, \$5; Child \$1, \$1 |
| Membership: | 622 |
| Membership Revenues: | \$30 833 |
| Busy Beaver Award: | Bill Burton |

Trails

Summer and Fall Trail Work

Summer trail work continued. Martin Nighbor again conspired with Standard Paving to tackle another rough section of the Blue Trail, from the spot just past the cliffs before “Herringbone Hill” up to the top of the long Blue downhill. As well, culverts and ditching continued on the Main, Gold, and Yellow Trails to fine-tune the water drainage on these trails. The Yellow Trail was also widened to a width that would accommodate a big snow-grooming machine.

I had volunteered to be the director that day, working with Ron Vaillancourt who was in his usual spot aboard the Standard Paving backhoe. It was a pretty routine afternoon. Point to a tree – make a motion with the hand moving from the vertical to 90 degrees to the side – meaning, “Take it down.” Ron would raise the bucket to a height of 20 feet or so up the trunk and with steady pressure push the tree over into the bush. Then he would lower the bucket to the exposed root end of the tree and slide it lengthwise straight into the bush off the trail. But on one particular occasion, I got careless and stood too close to the operation. The tree being moved into the bush hit another old log beside the trail. It was that log that spun wildly back onto the trail and in hardly a tenth of a second, the log, flying through the air, struck me squarely on the back of the leg below the knee. I was down on the trail; Ron was already off the

machine and seeing if I was still breathing before I even realized what had happened. Fortunately I was okay although a little bruised and sore. Later, it was a painful evening as I hobbled around at one of Knowlton Potter's fundraising bingos on Lakeshore Drive.

But the most significant development in Nordic's trail upgrading involved high school running teams and their coaches who joined forces with North Bay Nordic in an effort to make the trails more suitable for cross-country running. Thanks to the efforts of Kelly Brown and Tom Cook, a small mountain of woodchips was deposited on the parking lot. Scores of volunteers that included Nordic members, teachers, and high school runners and skiers were recruited for a weekend of activity in hauling and spreading that huge pile of wood chips on the inner trails. A small fleet of ATVs and pickup trucks carried chips to the shovelers and rakers out on the trails where they filled in the dips and holes to make the surface safe for running. But the important side-benefit of this effort was that it would mean earlier skiing!

Kelly Brown and assistant coaches spent many hours that fall working on the Main, Yellow, Gold, and Purple Trails making them ready for cross-country races. In fact, while the trails had been mowed earlier in the season, Kelly was seen trimming the grass again with a lawn mower.

Wood chipping has now become an annual September tradition at Nordic. While we have yet to host the Canadian Championship event that Kelly Brown originally proposed, we have hosted numerous high school (Baron's, NDA, NOSSA) and many elementary school cross-country running races. And we can now ski after the first or second significant snowfall in early winter.

Trail Groomers

Jack Aiton and Glen Jessup again teamed up for the 1994-95 season hoping that this would be the last season relying totally on our Alpines.

Thompson Park Grooming

Sharon Kitler from North Bay Parks and Recreation approached the Board with a request to groom and trackset some ski trails at Thompson Park behind the YMCA. The Board negotiated a price of \$60 per hour plus transportation costs of \$15 for each grooming. On four occasions, Jack and Glen groomed and trackset the trails on the Thompson Park fields, and on all four occasions, wind quickly filled the fresh tracks with snow. This was, perhaps, a good idea for a specific event (like night ski lessons many years ago) but Thompson Park was not an ideal location for regular trail grooming.

New Nordic Tracks '95

At the September 8 Board meeting, a motion was passed (proposed by Bill Gaves, seconded by Martin Nighbor) "to launch a fundraising campaign for the procurement of trail grooming equipment. The campaign will be called New Nordic Tracks '95 and will attempt to raise \$200 000."

In the previous few years, the economy had slumped badly with the 1992-93 recession, and our collective dream of acquiring a large snow-grooming machine had been put on hold. Now, with the improving economy and "fresh blood" on the Board of Directors in the person of Bill Gaves, it was felt that the time was right. Bill Gaves, with his retail experience as manager of Shoppers

Drug Mart (Lakeshore) approached this as just another business plan. How much do we need? When do we need it by? What are the possible sources? Okay – let's do it! That was what we needed: a take-charge guy and a bit of confidence!

The New Nordic Tracks '95 Committee included Bill Gaves (chairperson and Board liaison), Tom Cook, Joe Lynch, Dave Minden, and Martin Nighbor. Bill set out a plan that included government (Wintario) funding, corporate and personal donations, and existing Club funds. With a figure of \$200 000 for a state-of-the-art brand new Pisten Bulley or Bombardier snow groomer, the goal then became \$100 000, if Wintario would support 50% of the initiative.

For soliciting donations, a system began with newsletter advertisements, followed up by letters and personal phone calls by members of the Phoning Committee. This sub-committee included Tom Cook, Tony Burke, Joe Lynch, Ken Brown, Dave Minden, Bill Gaves, Emmanuelle Gunter, Peter Puddicombe, Katy Brown, Martin Nighbor, Robert Renaud, and Jack Aiton. With the cooperation of Cross Country Canada, donations would be routed through CCC who would keep a small percentage, and an income tax receipt would be issued to the donor. (Unfortunately, this process is no longer available. Revenue Canada has determined that donations made to CCC must now be designated only for national level programmes.) By mid-November, \$11 770 had been raised. This grew to \$13 000 in December and over \$16 000 in January. By the spring, the total was a more encouraging \$22 000. It was a start. But we were far from our goal. After much discussion, it was considered that the goal of a brand new machine might be unattainable, and that a used groomer might be more appropriate. Contacts were made with a variety of dealers to get the word out that North Bay Nordic was hunting for a machine. But at that time, nothing suitable was on the market.

While this activity was progressing, Jane and I, as Level II Race Officials, had applied successfully to work as volunteers at the World Nordic Championships in Thunder Bay in March 1995. As we drove to Thunder Bay in eager anticipation of working at this top-level international competition, little did we realize that our trip would result in the discovery of our Pisten Bulley grooming machine.

At Thunder Bay, our free and much appreciated accommodation with many other volunteers was at the Fort William Golf and Country Club. It sounded ritzy, but Jane and I slept in sleeping bags (on a mattress on the floor in their pro shop) while others slept on cots in the locker rooms. Our co-volunteers and co-habitants included others on the timing crews as well as those on the grooming and tracksetting crew.

From our World Nordics journal:

Wednesday March 15, 1995

Following the Men's 4 x 5 km Nordic Combined, we drive to Kamview for an afternoon of Skiing with Len Gottselig (expert tracksetter from Canmore and distributor for Bachler track-setting equipment), Norm Brown (New Brunswick), Lise Begin-Langlois (Quebec City) and George LeFeuvres (Newfoundland's expert groomer and tracksetter). George disappears somewhere. The rest of us ski to a scenic lookout up incredibly steep hills. The view is remarkably similar to our Lookout on the Green Trail, only magnified, and there is no lake below. The

skiing today is free and turns out to be the last day of skiing at Kamview as too many bare spots are opening up. Thunder Bay has lost over two feet of snow in just a few days. Sitting inside afterwards, we see George LeFeuvres going for a ride in Kamview's Pisten Bulley.

At supper that evening in the Golf Club Dining Room, Jane overhears George in conversation:

...."Pisten Bulley.....for sale.....good condition.....low price...."

We spring into action! We get more information, make phone calls, and get an appointment to visit Kamview's Pisten Bulley.

Sunday March 19, 1995

Following the Men's 50 km Free Technique (which Sylvio Fauner won in an amazing 1:56:10 beating Dahlie (1:57:48) and Smirnov (1:58:10)), we watch the closing ceremonies with Knowlton and Jani Potter. Smirnov strides by and I get to shake hands with him.

We head right out to Kamview for our appointment to inspect their Pisten Bulley 130. We take photos and talk with Allen Tabor, their driver. I go for a ride. The machine is highly recommended by two pros Len and George. It's a 1985 model, with 2900 hours of operating time on it and in very good condition. They are asking about \$35 000, base price. We are excited about this and can't wait to get home with this news. We hope that Kamview will get the funding they need to buy a new PB 160, and they will have to sell this machine.



Our first view of the Pisten Bulley 130 D at Kamview Nordic, Thunder Bay, Ontario, March, 1995

After our return to North Bay, I immediately contacted the New Nordic Tracks Committee. After a short committee meeting, Bill Gaves then took the proposal to the Board. Through March and April, much discussion ensued

between the Board, Jack Aiton, and the people in Kamview. At the AGM in April, held at the Portage, Bill Gaves presented the motion to purchase the Pisten Bulley from Kamview Nordic. The motion was accepted, but it would be up to the 1995/96 Board to bring the process to a close.

.....And Other Things

By-laws Revisions

Gail Rees and Dave Minden overhauled the Club's by-laws, bringing them up-to-date to reflect current practices and the changing dynamic of the Club. One significant addition was a section of policy guidelines, which spelled out expectations for skiers, both Club members and visitors. It covered such things as the requirement to wear membership buttons and day tags; prohibition of such things as dogs on trails, smoking in buildings, and walking on the trails when there was snow cover; and the maximum width of skis allowed (That went back a few years to an episode when a particular female skier arrived with skis that were wide downhill skis with cross-country bindings. One pass around a trail wiped out the track entirely. The new guideline specified a width that was no greater than the width of the bottom of the tracksetting mold – 6.0 cm).

Social and Publicity

Dave Minden resumed writing the “Nordic News” article and CFCH carried a weekly ski report. The traditional events continued: the Open House on December 4, Potluck Supper on January 21, and a new event, the Personal Distance Challenge on March 11. The Personal Distance Challenge was the brainchild of Martin Nighbor. It was a simple concept - set a goal for a long distance and try to achieve it in one day of skiing (with breaks for food if needed).

Personal Distance Challenge - 1995

To 25 km

5 km Beth Connell
 25 km Mary Connell
 25 km Jodie Lindsay
 25 km Paul Lindsay
 25 km Tracy Lindsay
 25 km Kelly Lynch
 25 km Marilyn Lynch
 25 km Cathie Rennie
 25 km Brenda Walsh

To 50 km

30 km Eric Connell
 32 km John Connell
 35 km Jean Cook
 35 km Don Farquhar
 35 km Sandra Farquhar
 50 km Brian Hoetmer
 50 km Colleen Lynch

To 75 km

53 km Tom Cook
 63 km Alan Yeates
 70 km Paul Connell
 70 km Noreen Yeates

76+ km

Joe Lynch 76 km
 Andrea Nighbor 101 km
 David Nighbor 101 km
 Dawna Nighbor 101 km
 Kimberley Nighbor 101 km
 Martin Nighbor 101 km

Jackrabbit and Challenge

Joe Lynch again led the Jackrabbit programme that ran successfully from January 7 to March 5. The Easter Egg Hunt was held on March 12.

The Nighbors - Martin (Level II coaching) and Dawna (Level I Coaching, Level II Theory) - had 13 skiers involved in their challenging Challenge programme. Summer activities of biking, hiking, and canoeing led to dryland training in October. Their distinctive blue jackets were a fine addition to the programme.

Races

Club Races

The Race Committee of Dave Minden, Tom Cook, Jane Minden, Gail Rees and Bill Burton continued to put in the hours organizing the Club's races. The Invitational was re-named the Annual "Bigwood" Cross-Country Ski Races, as Ed and Marianne Rogers continued to support the event with a generous donation of awards and prizes. Saturday's classic events were held on the Yellow, Purple, and Red; but Sunday's free technique events switched to the Blue Trail for the longer 7.5 km and 15 km events. (By leaving out the cul-de-sac on the Blue Trail, the course was a bit shorter than 8 km and close enough to the desired 7.5 km.) With the steady improvements made to the Blue Trail (particularly the long Blue downhill), and with the decision to allow skating on the Blue, it was felt that a safe and exciting race could be held on this trail. Close to 100 racers competed on each of the two days. The Blue Trail was praised as an exciting race trail with its hard 3 km climb at the beginning and the long downhill at the end.

An exciting 3 x 1.5 km relay was also held. Seventeen teams dashed around the Yellow Trail, with Stephanie and Andrew Rees and Dave Vodusek taking first place.

The Family Loppet was staged on February 18. Despite the enthusiasm of the small number participating, race organizers again anguished over how to attract more to the event.

Junior Racing Team

Team manager Knowlton Potter continued to gain experience in fundraising as he organized five Bingos, and gained additional funding of \$500 from Wingate and \$500 from North Bay Mall.

The ski sale brought in \$348 plus \$117 from a 50:50 draw. Paul Larsh won the other \$117 and was either so impressed or so humbled that the following year joined the Board as President! Knowlton recommended that the ski sale at Northgate be evaluated. Should it continue as is or be scrapped entirely? Should a joint Nordic-Laurentian ski sale be considered? Or should the ski sale be held at the Nordic clubhouse? Knowlton's recommendations were listened to, and this was to be the last ski exchange at Northgate.

The junior racers were low on quantity but high on quality. In a year of little snow, the three boys qualified for the Canadian Juniors at Canmore, and despite fighting illnesses of one sort or another, Stephen, Eric, and Andrew did quite well. Eric Potter was named Ontario Junior Boys Champion and the Nordic junior racers placed 8th overall.



Junior Racing Team 1994-95

From left: Eric Potter, Stephen Bursey, Andrew Rees, Jenny Dawson, Heather Lawson, coach Dave Vodusek

Flashback to Ontario Winter Games 1989

Another interesting event unfolded when Jane and I were at the Thunder Bay World Nordics. On the first evening after our arrival at the Fort William Golf Club, several of the volunteers were sitting about chatting about race related topics. When we mentioned that we were from North Bay Nordic, another volunteer started to bad-mouth the Club, and described our bad reputation for messing up timing results. Jane planted an elbow firmly in my side and whispered to me, "This is the guy that messed up the timing at the Ontario Winter Games." (I had been out west skiing, and I had missed the whole affair.) It did not take long to clarify that this was, indeed, the infamous Bob McKerron – the one with the "foolproof" computer programme; the one that had declared, "I only missed a few." We did not hesitate to set the story right!

Future Plans

Finalizing the purchase of the Pisten Bulley and arranging for Jack Aiton to become familiar with its operation became the number one priority.

And Tom Cook's suggestion that the time was right for Nordic to host a large ski event – the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations (OFSAA) high school Nordic skiing championships - set the wheels in motion for much trail work, much planning, and some heavy organization. There was a large turnover on the Board with five members retiring: Martin Nighbor, Sandra Kilroy, Chris Lindsay, Knowlton Potter, and Mr. "New Nordic Tracks" Bill Gaves.

Recollections 1994-95

Chapter 22 1995-96 The Pisten Bulley Arrives for OFSAA '96

Board of Directors

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Paul Larsh | President |
| Heather Chambers | Vice President – Membership |
| Alan Yeates | Treasurer |
| Lee Rice | Secretary |
| Peter Puddicombe | Trails |
| Marilyn Lynch | Instruction – Social – Newsletter - Publicity |
| Dale Hall | Building and Property |
| Jan Vandermeer | Junior Racing Team |
| Tom Cook | Races - OFSAA |

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Membership Fees: | Single \$65 (80); Student \$40 (55); Senior \$58 (70); Family \$130 (155) |
| Membership: | 765 |
| Total Cost of Pisten Bulley: | \$40 400 |
| Busy Beaver Award: | Jack Aiton |

A SKIER'S LAMENT

I spent a long, long winter
With my leg up in a cast
And every day I hope and pray
I'd get over this real fast

But things don't always work that way
As I was soon to see
There was lots of snow out on the ground
But not for me to ski

The waiting now is over
And I'm back out on my skis
My leg still hurts, and my back is sore
But life is now a breeze

I could hear the Green Trail calling
As I wiled away the hurt
In a voice real clear it seemed to say
"Where the hell is Bert?"

Bert Marsden, 1996

New Nordic Tracks '95 - The Continuing Story

At the Board meeting of May 15, 1995, a motion was made by Tom Cook, seconded by Martin Nighbor, "to purchase the Thunder Bay Pisten Bulley at the agreed price of \$38 000, conditional on hydraulic pump inspection." The motion was carried. The mechanical inspection was done in Thunder Bay in June at a cost of \$140, and the machine was given a positive grade. Its mechanical and hydraulic systems were working well. Allen Tabor had cautioned that the

tracks would need replacing some time soon and that they could do it there with an increase in price. The Club arranged for Jack to go to Thunder Bay for a training session with Allen Tabor at a cost of \$1000, and with transportation costs of \$850 to ship the Pisten Bulley, the final price was about \$40 000. Add to that a set of tools for Jack to work on the machine and the grand total was \$40 400. Our funds included \$37 700 from donations and Wintario, plus \$870 raised at the garage sale held at the Lynches in June, for a total of \$38 570. The Club was able to make up the difference easily from its cash reserves.

Ironically, Bill Gaves, who stepped down from the Board after one very successful year, was not on the Board that actually brought the Pisten Bulley to North Bay Nordic. But Bill Gaves and Shoppers Drug Mart Lakeshore would continue to make substantial contributions to OFSAA '96 and OFSAA '97.

An interesting sidebar to the Pisten Bulley story is that we were almost out-bid by other parties. Track Vehicle Repair, a company in Barrie that deals in snow-grooming machines, had also heard about the Kamview Pisten Bulley. They offered substantially more (in the \$45 000 range). And a ski club in Wisconsin was rumoured to be interested in it and was also prepared to pay a higher price. But since we were the first to express interest and to make a definite offer to purchase, Kamview honoured the first price that they had given to us and they were probably happier knowing it was going to a Canadian ski club.

The Pisten Bulley finally arrived by transport truck in late July 1995. Tom Cook had arranged that he and Jack Aiton should be down at Warren Equipment where the machine was to be off loaded and stored until the garage was ready to accommodate it. But a storm delayed the transport truck's arrival and Jack returned to a previous engagement. A few hours later, Tom phoned Jack again – "The truck will be here in 10 minutes!" So Jack rushed down to Warren Equipment ready for his first assignment on the Pisten Bulley.

Jack had made that one previous trip to Thunder Bay and had received several hours of instruction and advice: how to go ahead, how to go back, how to start the tiller, how to raise and lower the plow. But the lessons did not include "how to back machine off transport trailer". With much trepidation, Jack climbed aboard and started the machine; he found reverse. "Don't slide off now", Jack whispered to his new companion. With heart pounding, he slowly eased the machine down the ramps. Success! There would be many difficult days at Nordic but none would quite rival that first all-important task.

So after many years of dreaming and enviously seeing large machines operate at other cross-country ski facilities, we at North Bay Nordic could now boast that we were part of the new age of cross-country skiing.

Trails

Trail work activity focused on readying the inner trails not only for the Pisten Bulley but also for OFSAA '96. Many Club members and skiers generally are not aware of the extensive preparation required before a major competition and the groundwork that is laid in the summer, sometimes many summers, before.

A list of the 1995 trail work sheds light on the detailed planning that was done by Chief of the Competition, Tom Cook.

TRAIL WORK FOR SUMMER OF 1995

HYDRAULIC BACKHOE ON TRACKS

All work done with the large backhoe should be done with the understanding that a bulldozer is coming in behind to back blade. It would probably be a good idea to have these machines work together.

1. Start area and finish area work for OFSAA (widening)
2. Yellow Trail moderate finish and culvert
3. Ditching final hill on Main Trail
4. Ditch and raise trail bed through the evergreens
5. Stump and rock removal on Red
6. Relay trail modification for OFSAA at Yellow turn off (cut through to Gold and on return)
7. Raise trail bed at the beaver dam area on Blue just before the Brown intersection
8. Stump and rock removal at the Kilroy-Cook clearing on Blue
9. Wash-out area on Blue at 3 km; ditch and culvert
10. Martin's bog – ditch and culvert
11. Stump and rock removal on Blue at Green-Blue intersection
12. Stump and rock removal at Porcupine Hill
13. Bulldozer
 1. Back blade Green Trail loop off Access Road (low priority)
 2. Back blade Purple downhill
 3. Red and Gold – ditch and culvert to solve water problems

Applying wood chips to the trails continued as well. Tembec and Columbia Forest Products shipped \$1500 worth of chips (5 truck loads) that were spread at various points on the inner trails.

At the AGM in April 1996, Glen Jessup formally retired from the trail crew at Nordic. Peter Puddicombe presented Glen with a gift, and Glen was thanked for his many years of dedicated service to the Club.

Races

Junior Racing Team

This was a year of transition as Jan Vandermeer took over the reins as Director of the Junior Racing Team, and Martin Nighbor assumed the duties of coach, a position he (with Dawna) would hold for eight years.

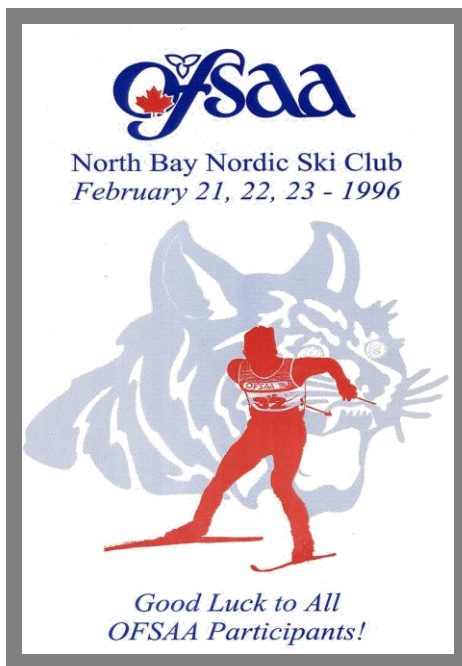
One major change made (on the advice of Knowlton Potter) was the venue for the November ski exchange. After many years at Northgate and dealing with the restrictions on outside businesses being represented, a move was made to North Bay Mall on Lakeshore. This was home turf to Bill Gaves, and there was no sports store at this mall. So for the first time, the ski exchange could include Bigwood Sporting Goods, a major supporter of the Club. Another significant change was that North Bay Nordic teamed up with the Laurentian Ski Racers and held a joint ski sale. Advertising and rental costs were shared. The weekend resulted in a \$1300 profit.

The Junior Racing Team of 95/96 included Andrea Nighbor, Victoria Lampkin, Heather Lawson, Eric Potter, and Andrew Rees.

Club Races

Leading up to OFSAA '96, Nordic hosted the annual North Bay Nordic Ski Races, which were also billed as a pre-OFSAA event. The hope was to attract many high school entrants to pre-ski the courses, and we would gain some extra revenue from this. Despite freezing rain on Saturday, which decreased the numbers from 350 registered to 250 actual racers, the races were a success.

OFSAA '96



Cover of Souvenir OFSAA '96 Program

It had been rumoured at the AGM in the spring of 1995 that Nordic might host the OFSAA high-school Nordic skiing championships, but that was contingent on our having a large snow-grooming machine. With our imminent purchase of the Pisten Bulley, Tom Cook brought the idea to the Board at the May 15 Board meeting. Outlining that it would be a mid-week event, necessitating the closure of the Club for general skiing, Tom received the backing of the Board. This would be the biggest ski event that Nordic had ever hosted, with more than 700 athletes over three days – a pre-ski day, individual races, and relays.

The event would be co-hosted by Widdifield Secondary School, and North Bay Nordic. Widdifield teachers Tom Cook and Doug Jess set up a Race Organizing Committee that included North Bay Nordic Club members, most of the Nordic Race Committee, plus Widdifield staff, and members of the North Bay community. After the summer trail work had been completed, the Organizing Committee met regularly during the fall and winter and turned the vision into reality.

The OFSAA '96 Race Organizing Committee

Co-conveners and co-Chiefs of the Race Tom Cook and Doug Jess

In addition to working with every committee chief on thousands of details, many special items had to be attended to - from the Shoppers Drug Mart timing clock, to T-shirts and vests for volunteers and OFSAA clothing for the athletes, to arranging for 1st Aid personnel, and coordinating the work of the North Bay community, Widdifield Secondary School, and North Bay Nordic Ski Club.

Co-Chiefs of the Course Dave Minden and Jane Minden

Working with the Chief of the Race, the race trails were planned for the four individual-start races and the team relays; this included mapping, signage for pre-skiing the course, designing the start/finish and stadium areas with fencing, flags and banners. Other tasks included organizing grooming and tracksetting, recruiting of volunteers for marshals and controllers and their transport to locations on the trails to control the race; and organizing race forerunners to officially pre-ski the course and course closers to sweep the trails at race end.

Chief of Registration Linda Payne

In the weeks, days, and hours leading up to the event, over 700 skiers from scores of high schools would be registering. This would be coordinated with the setting up of the official start list for the program, the set up and distribution of every racer's race kit and bib, and providing start lists for Sports-Stats, the official starters, and race chiefs.

Chief of Timing and Starters Bill Burton

Working with Sports-Stats and their electronic timing and computer-generated results, a full team of starters and manual timers was necessary for back up.

Site Coordinator Dave O'Neil

Don Farquhar donated several Port-A-Rooms for shelter and eating and these needed electric power for heaters. Diesel generators were brought to the site for this. Another small building housed the OFSAA play-by-play announcer. Tents were erected for waxing and shelter. Also many "Johnny on the Spot" toilets were needed.

Canteen Joe Lynch

The Jackrabbit Lodge was transformed into a kitchen that provided a variety of snacks and meals ranging from fresh fruit and drinks to barbecued hot dogs and pizza. A tarpaulin covered the area in front of the main window where food orders were made. Port-A-Rooms and tents with picnic tables served as eating areas.

Results Sue Bimm

Reproduction of the official results required an expert on photocopying machines. Zero tolerance for paper jams!

Program and Fundraising Heather Windrem and Barb Olmsted

A fundraising campaign raised thousands of dollars. A souvenir program that featured the schedule of events, a full start list of all competitors, and advertising

was completed in the last few days before the event and was included in the 746 athlete race kits. The program was a unique addition to the OFSAA Nordics

Accommodations

April Peterson

Pinewood Park was the designated Race Headquarters. They provided discounts on rooms for teams as well as rooms for coaches meetings and space for waxing.

Coaches and OFSAA Nordic Meetings

Jean Cook

Coaches meetings and information sessions took place at Pinewood Park in the evenings before each of the two days of racing.

Awards and Social

Brian Thomas

The individual awards ceremony on Thursday evening took place at the Education Centre at Canadore College / Nipissing University. This was followed by the traditional OFSAA Nordics dance, another feature that makes the OFSAA Nordics unique among OFSAA sports events. Relay awards were presented following Friday's races at Nordic.

Media

Peter Handley and Randy Pike

The local media provided excellent coverage of the event in the Nugget and on local TV and radio.

Parking/Traffic

Lee Rice

Parking was at a premium, if not nonexistent, because the main Nordic parking lot was taken up by the modified racecourse and portable buildings, and the upper parking lot was taken over by a large tent. Parking areas for buses were created along Northshore Road past the Nordic parking lot. Other parking areas were created near the Knights of Columbus building and on roads such as Garland Avenue near the Portage. A shuttle service was established to transport spectators.

As co-Chiefs of the Course, we were responsible for drawing up the plans for the start/finish and stadium area that would transform the look of North Bay Nordic. Originally conceived by Tom Cook, the plan called for bulldozing snow onto the parking lot to make it part of the racecourse. When finishing the individual races, skiers would come up off the bridge, turn right up onto the field (backwards at the end of the present Yellow Trail), circle around the field and head into a straightaway to the finish not far from the entrance to the parking lot. For the relay races, racers would be lined up in lanes, seven abreast and five or six deep, on what is actually the middle of our parking lot. At the start, they would stay in their lanes for about 50 m, then enter a scramble zone which would funnel down in front of the timing hut as they raced to the entrance to the trails.

The entire stadium area had to be set up to control spectators and non-racers using fencing, banners and flags. Tom Cook arranged for a Widdifield woodworking class to construct the wood fencing which was stained green. Jack Aiton constructed the short wooden 2 x 4 posts with re-bar rods, which Jane and

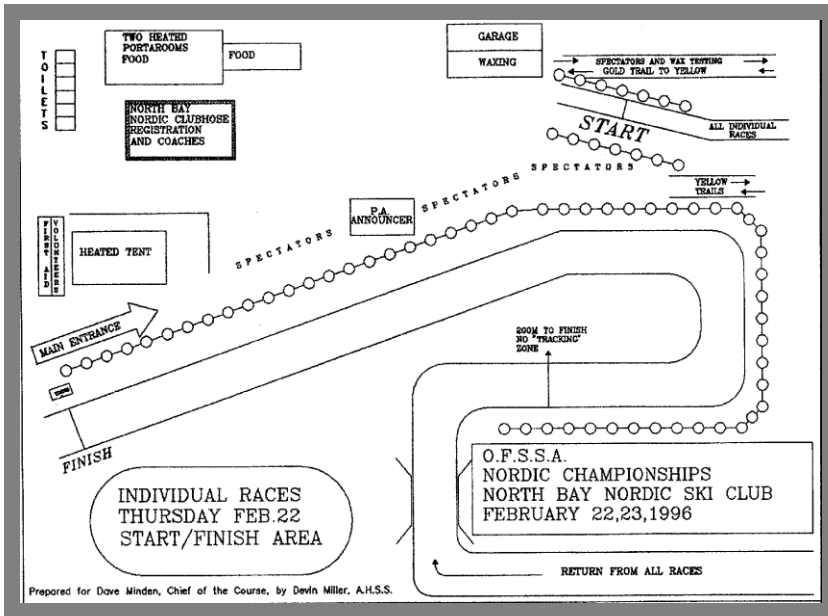
I helped to paint a bright red. Canadian and provincial flags added to the festive appearance.

But barely two weeks before the event, a potential major disaster occurred when Jack was maneuvering the Pisten Bulley near the garage, and he noticed some unusual difficulty steering. There wasn't any! Climbing off the machine, Jack discovered to his horror that most of the track on the left side – four of the five belts – had disintegrated, and the wheels were down on the ground. The belts on the right side were also in poor shape, so the immediate conclusion was that all ten belts needed immediate replacement. Phone calls to Track Vehicle Repair in Barrie did not bring good news. New tracks would cost thousands of dollars (\$700 for each of the 10 belts) and take weeks to deliver. There had to be a less expensive and speedier alternative. Jack contacted a snowmobile club in Verner to find out the source of the belting used for large snowmobile trail grooming machines and found out that the source was B and R Rubber in Sudbury where they manufacture conveyor belts used in mines. Jack took one of the belts to them the next day (Tuesday) to show them exactly what was needed, and they proceeded to build a jig for cutting all the holes for the hundreds of bolts that fasten the belts to the cleats. They were ready the next day and Jack journeyed back at 1 a.m. to get them, returning to North Bay at 4 a.m. on Wednesday morning.

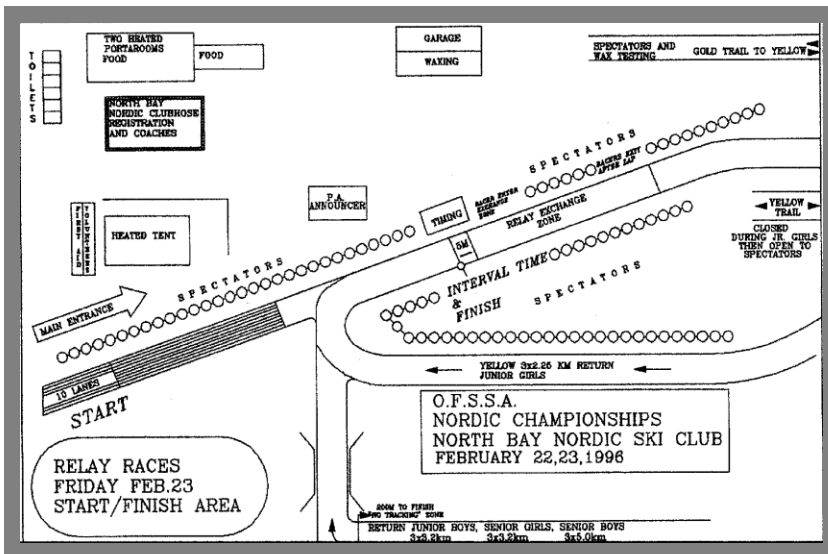
Meanwhile, Jack's volunteers had dismantled the tracks from the Pisten Bulley, dragged them to the clubhouse, and laid them out on the floor. Then began the tedious job, one that took over 12 hours of effort, of removing every nut and bolt – all 2200 of them – that secured the 10 belts to the aluminum cleats. Of course, many were stuck and corroded and difficult to remove. When the new belts arrived, the entire process was reversed. It took the small, hardworking group (Jack Aiton, Peter Puddicombe, Andrew Rees, Jan Vandermeer, and Ralph Champaign) another 12 hours to re-install the tracks. After this heroic super-marathon effort, exactly one week before OFSAA, the Pisten Bulley was back in action and ready for its next big test.

Tom Cook had arranged for bulldozers to come in the weekend before to begin bringing snow in from the edge of the parking lot to create the finish area and relay start. This took several days to complete, and then Jack set about to pack and till using the resurrected Pisten Bulley. Some of the OFSAA trail signs had been in place for the pre-OFSAA and North Bay Nordic Ski Races, and more were added. And through the week, there arrived Port-A-Rooms, tents, generators, fencing material, advertising signs as well as a small army of volunteers to put it all together. The Nordic Ski Club was soon transformed into a small village with a carnival atmosphere.

The weather preceding OFSAA '96 was frightful. On Monday it rained and froze resulting in the typical crusty snow that is not a delight to ski on. But Jack on the Pisten Bulley churned the icy crust into the fastest snow imaginable, and when the schools started arriving on Wednesday, weather conditions were improving and the snow conditions were superb and fast. The two days of racing were held under ideal weather conditions – clear and sunny with temperatures slightly above 0C.



For the individual races, the parking lot became a straightaway to the finish line



The relay start lanes led into a scramble zone that funneled the racers into the Main Trail



A view from the Clubhouse roof: a carnival atmosphere

North Bay High School Athletes – by start (bib number) in individual races

For results, refer to complete *North Bay Nordic Ski Race Results*

Junior Girls

| | | |
|-----|-------------------|------|
| 4 | Lindsay Williams | SJSH |
| 5 | Rebecca Nathan | WFSS |
| 6 | Jamie Cadger | CSS |
| 7 | Julie Ouellette | ESA |
| 68 | Jennifer Ferguson | SJSH |
| 69 | Meredith Warner | CSS |
| 70 | Kim Carmichael | WFSS |
| 71 | Erica Padley | WSS |
| 87 | Jenny Brideau | WSS |
| 90 | Melanie Blanchard | SJSH |
| 91 | Lindsay Gilbert | CSS |
| 104 | Shanna Lochhead | WFSS |
| 118 | Colleen Lynch | ESA |
| 136 | Jessica Rogers | CSS |
| 137 | Natalie Burke | WSS |
| 149 | Courtney Crawford | WSS |
| 161 | Andrea Nighbor | CSS |
| 168 | Victoria Lampkin | SJSH |

Junior Boys

| | | |
|-----|--------------------|------|
| 197 | Josh Young | SJSH |
| 198 | McLean Edwards | CSS |
| 201 | William Nelson | WSS |
| 202 | James Lindsay | WSS |
| 240 | Gene Marshall | CSS |
| 243 | Jeremie Guertin | ESA |
| 250 | Chris Statham | WSS |
| 282 | Philip Kendall | WSS |
| 284 | Andrew Smith | SJSH |
| 287 | Chris Ridler | CSS |
| 300 | Brian Hoetmer | WFSS |
| 305 | Evan Firth-Eaglard | CSS |
| 311 | Jeff Dawson | WSS |
| 320 | Nathan Manning | WSS |
| 335 | Derek Jodouin | CSS |

Senior Girls

| | | |
|-----|----------------------|------|
| 355 | Julie Pigden | WFSS |
| 356 | Alissa Firth-Eaglard | CSS |
| 357 | Kelly Wallace | CSS |
| 358 | Melanie Ouellette | ESA |
| 359 | Holly Brodhagen | CSS |
| 420 | Rikst Attema | CSS |
| 434 | Laura Klemetti | WSS |
| 435 | Andree Perron | ESA |
| 442 | Michele Warren | CSS |
| 462 | Sherry Sutherland | WSS |
| 473 | Christy Wallace | WFSS |
| 493 | Rowena Peden | CSS |
| 504 | Becky Martin | CSS |
| 523 | Heather Lawson | CSS |
| 527 | Jenny Dawson | WSS |

Senior Boys

| | | |
|-----|-------------------|-------|
| 550 | Kevin O'Bright | ESA |
| 558 | Jon Tipler | WFSS |
| 559 | Graeme Moffat | CSS |
| 580 | Len Baker | WSS |
| 649 | Marc Lacasse | ESA |
| 654 | Ian Lawson | CSS |
| 667 | Steven Menard | WSS |
| 673 | Joe Rogers | CSS |
| 689 | Patrick Pelletier | ESA |
| 702 | Andrew Rees | CSS |
| 705 | John Pitt | SJSH |
| 713 | Gilles Delorme | ESA |
| 730 | Eric Potter | CSS |
| 746 | Steve Bursey | HC-TB |

It is not possible to recount the excitement and the details of the races. Suffice it to say that the whole event was an unqualified success due to the hard work and dedication of all of the volunteers.



Just a typical day at Nordic

After the event I sent in the following report for the next week's "Nordic News" in the Nugget.

OFSAA leaves fond memories

North Bay Nordic put on a show last week – the OFSAA '96 Championships, – and it was a spectacular and successful event. Some OFSAA memories: The village atmosphere, the tents and buildings, the hum and smell of the generators, the colour of the flags and banners, the buzz of excitement as busload after busload of skiers

arrived at Nordic. The perfect weather conditions for three days. After experiencing many Nordic races in rain, wind, heavy snow, minus 20-degree temperatures, the Norse weather gods owed us big time, and they paid off their debt, indeed. The incredibly excellent (and fast) trail conditions thanks to the hard work of Jack Aiton and Glen Jessup, and previously to Jack, Peter Puddicombe, Andrew Rees, and Ralph Champaign who put the tracks back on the Pisten Bulley. The 750 high school athletes and their coaches who really appreciated the City of North Bay and our North Bay Nordic Ski Club. Compliments were plentiful – mainly the “You guys live in paradise” variety. We know we do. The enthusiasm of the hundred plus volunteers who worked so hard to make this a successful event, and the financial support from many North Bay corporations. The hard work of convenors Tom Cook and Doug Jess; the blending of Widdifield staff and the North Bay Nordic Race Committee; the great awards ceremony at Nipissing University. The superlative results of our North Bay Nordic skiers. Most had personal bests. Our junior girls Courtney Crawford, Andrea Nighbor, Victoria Lampkin, 1st, 3rd, and 4th were superb; followed by the solid 5th place finish by seniors Heather Lawson and Eric Potter. On Friday the awesome 2nd place senior girls relay team of Becky Martin, Jenny Dawson and Heather Lawson; and 3rd place senior boys team of Andrew (where’s the trail?) Rees. Joe Rogers, and Eric Potter. And now we start planning OFSAA ‘97!

THE VOLUNTEERS – OFSAA ‘96

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Jack Aiton | Al Devolin | Glen Jessup | Peter Puddicombe |
| Bette Allard | Jackie Devolin | Gary Jodouin | Dave Rees |
| Lloyd Argo | Patty Donahue | Allison King | Stephanie Rees |
| Jody Baker | Agnes Ellies | Willy Klemm | Cathie Rennie |
| Yvonne Belaire | Don Farquhar | Ann Lawson | Cliff Riopelle |
| Ken Beswitherick | Sandra Farquhar | Bob Lewis | Marianne Rogers |
| Mary Beth Burton | Rob Farris | Chris Lindsay | Bob Ryckman |
| Jeff Bos | Ruth Fazzari | Marilyn Lynch | Rodney Ruddock |
| Mary Jane Bradford | Leigh Fettes | Kim Malkowski | Rob Saunders |
| Dennis Brown | Lois Filion | George Manning | Paul Seguin |
| Kelly Brown | Des Forget | John Manuel | Rod Sinclair |
| Ken Brown | Jane Gaves | Janice Mattichuk | Dave Stewart |
| Toni Brown | Ted Gawinski | Ann McRuer | Dennis Stokes |
| Lloyd Burke | Emmanuelle Gunter | Gene Mullen | William Taylor |
| Ann Burton | Fred Gunter | Brian Murray | Rob Telford |
| Heather Chambers | John Harding | Sally Neufeld | Kevin Thomas |
| Ralph Champaign | Dale Hall | David Nighbor | Mark Thomas |
| Graham Clark | Simon Hopkins | Kim Nighbor | Morley Thompson |
| George Cole | Bob Horne | Martin Nighbor | Warren Thynne |
| Carolyn Crawford | Joan Horne | Charlie Olmsted | John Toswel |
| | Florence Hunter | Murray Peavoy | Al Tough |
| | John Irwin | Knowlton Potter | Jan Vandermeer |
| | | Ted Price | Mary Vassbotn |
| | | Bill Ramore | Brenda Walsh |
| Michel Chartrand & students | | | Elmer Ypya |
| Al Garrett & students | | | |
| Sue Celentano & students | | | |

MAJOR OFSAA FINANCIAL SPONSORS

TEMBEC & COLUMBIA FOREST PRODUCTS (WOOD CHIPS)
 PINEWOOD PARK INN (RACE HEADQUARTERS)
 PORT-A-ROOM (DON FARQUHAR)
 BIGWOOD SPORTING GOODS (ED AND MARIANNE ROGERS)
 SHOPPERS DRUGMART (LAKESHORE (BILL GAVES)
 WALDER CREEK (DON PRIEBE)
 BELL TELEPHONE (GENERATORS – JACK AITON)
 PENNEY AND COMPANY (PHOTOCOPIERS)
 GATORADE

As a result of hosting the North Bay Nordic Ski Races and OFSAA '96, the Club realized a net gain of over \$5000. Extensive wood chipping, improvements to the inner trails, and the acquisition of the timing clock donated by Shoppers Drug Mart Lakeshore represented a cash infusion of about \$8000. At the AGM, Doug Jess presented to the Club a wall plaque featuring the distinctive and colourful OFSAA '96 logo, the artwork that appeared on OFSAA '96 clothing.

Building and Property

As a result of the purchase of the Pisten Bulley, several improvements were needed and made to North Bay Nordic's facility.

The Pisten Bulley needed a warm and comfy environment and so in the summer (1995) \$1800 was spent on insulating the walls and ceiling of the garage, and an electrical heater was installed.

Electricity was brought into Jackrabbit Lodge through an underground cable. And new eaves troughs were installed on the Clubhouse.

.....And Other Things

Jackrabbit and Challenge

A snowy season brought the Jackrabbits out in droves as 115 were registered for the Saturday morning and Sunday afternoon sessions. Joe Lynch, in his final year as Jackrabbit leader, recruited another fine crew of Jackrabbit leaders. Saturday leaders were Duncan Lindsay, Victoria Lampkin, Heather Lawson, Becky Martin, Stefane Filion, Jeff Dawson, and Becky Saari. Sunday leaders were Bob King, Cathy King, Cathy Harding, Rob Chambers, Cindy Goch, Colleen Knight, Renee Filion, Jenny Dawson, Rowena Peden, Nikki Lee Renaud, and assistants Laura Burke and Allyson Bachelor.

Dave Payne took over the management of 14 enthusiastic Challenge skiers, who were very visible in their bright green sweaters. As part of an official Challenge programme, these skiers were the first to earn Bronze Challenge awards.

For eight years, Joe Lynch had headed the very successful Jackrabbit program that had brought hundreds of young skiers (and their parents) to North Bay Nordic. Two new directors were found – Cathy and Bob King – who took over the reins in 1996/97.

Socials and Publicity

Amidst the excitement of OFSAA '96, other traditional Nordic activities continued unabated. They included the Open House in December (good skiing with early snow), the January Potluck Supper, the February Pancake Breakfast (75 skiers showed up to chow down), the Personal Distance Challenge and Potluck, and the Easter Egg Hunt.

Personal Distance Challenge – 1996

To 25 km

15 km Katie Larsh
18 km Nicole Wise
18 km John Wipprecht
20 km Vicky Bernstein
20 km Jeff Dawson
25 km Murray Tough
25 km Allan Tough
25 km Norah Larsh
25 km Don Farquhar

26 to 50 km

26 km Patty Donahue
26 km Kayla Turner
26 km Becky Saari
27 km Dale Wise
27 km Karna Wise
30 km Stan Vasiliauskas
36 km Paul Larsh
36 km Ursula Larsh
50 km Michel Chartrand
50 km Jon Tipler

51 to 75 km

51 km Marilyn Lynch
51 km Jane Minden
51 km Dave Minden
51 km Viola Burke
66 km Colleen Lynch

The Mountain – Fred Gunter

All Trails (42 km)

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Monica Habel | Joe Lynch | Rob Dawson |
| Sandra Farquhar | Jan Dawson | Brandon Wise |
| Jean Cook | Emmanuelle Gunter | Don Workman |
| Tom Cook | | |

76 to 100 km and more

85 km Stephen Burse
90 km Alan Yeates
90 km Noreen Yeates
100 km Graeme Moffat
150 km Mark Thomas (Awesome!)

The Nugget chose a different format this year. They ran an “Outdoors” page on Tuesday and the page featured “Nordic News” as well as other ski club and snowmobile reports. As writer of the “Nordic News”, I was faced with the challenge of writing the report on Sunday evening after a hard weekend of skiing, looking far ahead to the next weekend. The Thursday or Friday Nugget was definitely preferable.

Publicity Director Marilyn Lynch put together an inexpensive single sheet flyer for distribution at various tourist information sites and local hotels and motels. And the local cable TV station ran a programme on North Bay Nordic several times during the winter. Also they attended OFSAA '96 and put together a report about it.

Future Plans

The OFSAA '96 crew worked hard – perhaps too hard, for they were rewarded by Tom Cook's announcement at the AGM that North Bay Nordic would be the site of OFSAA '97!

Also at the AGM, the Club began to look seriously at plans for the future – the most significant being trail upgrading and clubhouse expansion. A list of items was circulated and the membership was asked to prioritize them to give the Board some feedback as to what projects should be tackled first.

Irene Daly retired from her long-standing position as clubhouse manager, and at the AGM she was thanked for her extensive service. Now the search was on for a replacement.

There was another large turnover on the Board with five members retiring: Alan Yeates, Lee Rice, Marilyn Lynch, Peter Puddicombe, and Dale Hall.

Recollections 1995-96

Chapter 23 1996-97 OFSAA '97 and The O.U. Championships

Board of Directors

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Paul Larsh | President |
| Guido Verillo | Treasurer |
| Joanne Vaughn | Secretary |
| Cam Hunter | Trails - Junior Racing |
| Cathie Rennie | School Liaison - Social |
| Tom Cook | Races |
| Don Farquhar | Building and Property |
| Jan Vandermeer | Newsletter – Challenge |
| Heather Chambers | Membership |

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Membership: | 916 |
| Membership revenue: | \$38 906 |
| Trail Groomers: | Jack Aiton and Peter Puddicombe |
| Busy Beaver Awards: | Doug Jess and Lee Rice |

Trails

Trails Committee

A Trails Committee comprising Paul Larsh, Dave Minden, Tom Cook, Joe Lynch, Jack Aiton, and Martin Nighbor met to develop a plan for trail development in accordance with the priorities established from last year's questionnaire. The Green Trail would be preserved for classic only skiing; the trail widening and levelling programme on the remainder of the trails would continue.

Trail Upgrading - Brown Trail

Cam Hunter took charge of the trails department and continued the trail-upgrading programme with enthusiasm. With a budget of \$17 500 for the season, \$5000 was allocated for trail work, and by mid-June, \$2100 had been spent on upgrading and chipping the Purple and Red Trails, and more work would be done on these and the Blue Trail in July. Joe Lynch supervised this work that included ditching, trail elevation, and culvert installation.

A crew of Joe Lynch, Tom Cook, Jack Aiton, Gord Hunter, and Blair Hunter installed a new bridge at the 3.5 km mark on the Blue Trail. This had been the scene of a major washout.

The Brown Trail also received some much-needed attention. From its initial years, the Brown Trail had been a rough and narrow adventure on skis, classic only, with some of the uphill sections so tight that any attempt to herringbone resulted in skis being caught up in the growth beside the trail. For many, the Brown Trail was skied only when attempting to join the "All Trails Club" (skiing all the trails in one day) or during the Personal Distance Challenge. It was generally ignored by a large part of the membership. Widening the Brown to a fifteen-foot width changed the nature of the trail. It enabled the Pisten Bulley to groom and trackset. It opened up the trail to skating, and many skiers began to get re-acquainted with a very beautiful trail with its hardwood ridges and vistas of far off hills.

Safety Session

Concerned about the safety of Club volunteers, Cam Hunter organized a safety session on Saturday, September 7. Fourteen volunteers heard some

words of wisdom from Tom Foster regarding proper clothing and safety precautions when operating chain saws and power brushers.

New Trail Map

Shoppers Drug Mart (Lakeshore) had in the previous year donated funds for the computer race clock that was first used at OFSAA '96. Now in November 1996, Bill Gaves communicated with the Board and asked how Shoppers Drug Mart could make a further contribution to OFSAA '97 and to North Bay Nordic. It was decided that a worthy project would be the construction of a large trail map that would be mounted outdoors at the access to the trails. The map would reflect an accurate survey of the trails and also provide cross sectional elevations. (We would see graphically why we were so tired after skiing!). Doug Jess took this on as a personal project, and with the assistance of Dave Rees and others, logged many hours on the trails with infrared and computer surveying equipment. The resulting large computer-generated coloured map was hung from a distinctive wood display structure that was constructed by Claude Jolin. The map was a definite plus for both OFSAA '97 and North Bay Nordic and continues to be a point of interest.



The 1997 OFSAA skiers spent much time looking at the elevations on the new Shopper's Drug Mart map

The Extended Blue Trail

The OFSAA races created, amongst other things, a new trail option at Nordic – the “Extended Blue”- the Senior Boys Individual Start race trail; it took them out the Blue, up the Green turnoff to the pipeline, along the pipeline for a few hundred metres to the gate, and then down the Pipeline Access Road to continue onto the Blue. This was arranged with the permission and cooperation of TCP and the North Bay Snowmobile Club. The distance was about 9.6 km. The new route attracted interest from a segment of the Nordic membership who wanted a skating trail longer than the Blue and some skiers began to skate up the Green and along the pipeline.

But this created a potential safety problem (conflict with high speed snowmobiles) and also drew attention to the fact that the Green Trail was reserved for classic skiing. The Board responded to this by posting signs to prohibit skating on the Green and skiing on the pipeline itself.

Building and Property

Lockers and Other Things

Demand for lockers continued to grow, and, with space in the waxing room part of the garage available, the Board decided to add thirty more. Claude Jolin did the carpentry and installation of the steel locker panels.

Permanent 20-amp wiring to Jackrabbit Lodge was also completed.

New Face in the Snack Bar – Changes Coming

The snack bar and ski rental continued to operate in the small cramped quarters in the southeast corner of the clubhouse but the 1996–97 season saw a new face behind the counter: Ann Burton replaced Irene Daly who retired the previous season. Ann brought some innovative ideas to the snack bar and started to incorporate some additional items to the menu: fresh fruit, Rice-Krispies squares, bagels and light cream cheese, and other items to give some healthier alternatives to the ubiquitous hot dog. It was also beneficial to have a snack bar attendant who had first hand knowledge of skiing equipment and the trails, in addition to knowing how to cook up a mean mess of scrumptious oatmeal cookies.

Andrew Rees was hired to look after firewood, shoveling, evening close-up, and other daily chores

The Club membership had grown about 25% since the last clubhouse expansion in 1988, and more than 200% since the clubhouse first appeared in 1978. Many Club members saw a need for a change – either a new and larger clubhouse or an expanded facility. The change rooms were very cramped on busy days, the clubhouse seating area was continually overcrowded at such events as races or the Potluck Supper or a busy Sunday afternoon, and the snack bar staff were trying to do everything in an extremely cramped environment.

Joe Lynch and Martin Nighbor teamed up to spearhead the planning for an expanded facility and presented a plan to the Board in January 1997. A Site Committee was established including Joe Lynch, Martin Nighbor, Paul Larsh, Cam Hunter, Cathie Rennie, Tom Cook, and Joanne Vaughan. They met on many occasions through the early months of 1997 mapping out the details, getting estimates, and initiating fundraising. They foresaw a 750 square foot

addition on the east end of the clubhouse on top of a full basement. For funding, they suggested that the Board earmark \$10 000 from the Board's surplus from the 1995/96 season and from the anticipated 1996/97 season. A fundraising campaign would raise the balance of the funds necessary for a planned \$25 000 to \$30 000 expenditure.

During the winter, plans were posted for the membership to view. A meeting was held to discuss the plans and members voiced opinions on the relative merits of it. One of the major points of concern was the on-going problem with the water supply and the need to have that problem corrected. Another concern was whether we should be expanding what was, at the core, a very old portable building, or moving the site of the clubhouse to another perhaps more favourable location, and building a new clubhouse from scratch. The debate continued through the winter.

At the AGM in April, the issue was debated and voted on. The decision was made to begin that summer, construction of a full basement under the existing clubhouse and of a 24' x 32' expansion. And as a condition of expansion, the water problems would be corrected.

Races

Junior Racing Team

Jan Vandermeer switched over to manage the Challenge Team, and Cam Hunter moved into the Junior Racing Team portfolio on the Board. Joe Lynch served as the treasurer and team manager while Martin and Dawna Nighbor continued their commitment to coaching, with Dawna completing her full Level II Coaching Certification.

Joe Lynch coordinated the "giant ski exchange", which was held on November 1 and 2. For the second year, the Nordic junior racers teamed up with the Laurentian downhill racers and co-hosted the event, this time at the Fur Barn. The event cleared \$1600.

The junior racers of 1996/97 included:

Juvenile Boys – Jeff Dawson, John Harding, Brian Hoetmer, David Nighbor

Junior Boys – Kelly Gilbert, Derek Jodouin, Joe Rogers

Juvenile Girls – Colleen Lynch, Kimberly Nighbor, Becky Saari

Junior Girls – Victoria Lampkin, Andrea Nighbor

School Racing Teams

With OFSAA '96 and '97, interest in high school racing was high. But the cost of involvement was sometimes too great for some students. Recognizing this, Tom Cook put forward the motion, seconded by Heather Chambers, "that Nordic donate up to two student memberships per school to a maximum of 10, for worthy applicants." The motion passed, and several student athletes did benefit from the policy that year.

Club Races

The Race Committee included Tom Cook on the Board and Chief of the Races, Dave Minden, Jane Minden, Bill Burton, and Gail Rees, with Patty Donahue heading up registration and Lee Rice with his crew keeping the parking lots under control.

Lee Rice had arranged through the MNR a Land Use Permit for the piece of land across the road from the parking lot. For \$65 per year, this gave extra parking room for the equivalent of 15 school buses or 30 cars.

The racing season began with the North Bay Nordic Ski Races on January 25 and 26 with the first day (free technique) also billed as a pre-OFSAA race. That attracted 264 racers, many of them high school athletes, while the classic technique race on Sunday had 142 competitors.

As in the previous year, excitement built through the entire winter for the hosting of OFSAA '97 and the University Championships.

OFSAA '97

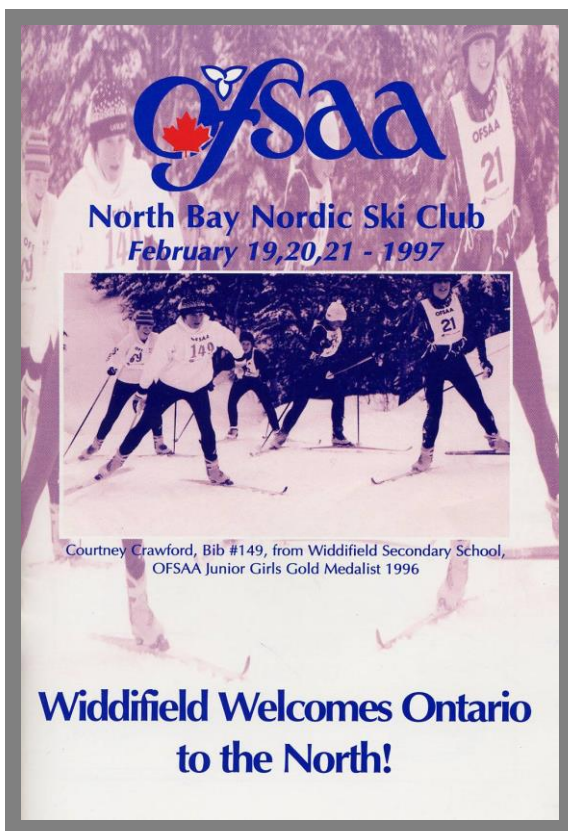
The OFSAA '97 Race Organizing Committee

A few minor changes were made to the overall production that was so successful in OFSAA '96. Doug Jess spearheaded the surveying of the trails and the construction of the Shoppers Drug Mart computer generated trail map. Dave O'Neil teamed up with George Cole to coordinate the influx of tents, Port-A-Rooms, and generators, and to manage the site. Dave Minden designed an OFSAA flag that was presented to the next OFSAA convener (Haliburton Highlands). The North Bay Nordic Junior Racing Team members (those not at high school) were recruited to be the official forerunners for the races. This added some colour and tradition to the event, as these upcoming racers were formally introduced before each race. OFSAA '97 was "the year of the fudge." In the fundraising efforts for the souvenir program, Barb Olmsted and Heather Windram received a donation of 100 tubs of fudge from The Green Store (although it was up to them and their helpers at Nordic to sell them).

OFSAA '97 was judged to be "the best OFSAA ever" by those who had been involved in OFSAA Nordics for many years. Indeed, it was, as Tom Cook exclaimed as the race progressed, a "cakewalk." At the AGM, Doug Jess presented to the Club a second plaque, this one with the distinctive OFSAA '97 logo and artwork. Dave Minden presented the copy of the OFSAA flag, commemorating North Bay Nordic' hosting of two OFSAA events.

The Race Organizing Committee for OFSAA '97

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Co-conveners and Co-Chiefs of the Race | Tom Cook and Doug Jess |
| Co-Chiefs of the Course | Dave Minden and Jane Minden |
| Chief of Registration | Linda Payne |
| Chief of Timing and Starters | Bill Burton |
| Site Coordinator | Dave O'Neil and George Cole |
| Canteen | Joe Lynch |
| Results | Sue Bimm |
| Program and Fundraising | Heather Windrem and Barb Olmsted |
| Accommodations | April Peterson |
| Coaches and OFSAA Nordic Meetings | Jean Cook |
| Awards and Social at CEC | Brian Thomas |
| Media | Peter Handley and Randy Pike |
| Parking/Traffic | Lee Rice |



Cover of the OFSAA 97 program

North Bay High School Athletes by Start Order (bib number) for individual races

Junior Girls

| | | |
|-----|------------------|------|
| 2 | Nikki Lee Renaud | ESA |
| 14 | Crystal Fryer | WSS |
| 35 | Julie Liscombe | WFSS |
| 37 | Angeline Marasse | SJSH |
| 43 | Meredith Warner | CSS |
| 47 | Laura Burke | WSS |
| 64 | Lindsay Gilbert | CSS |
| 76 | Crystal Aultman | SJSH |
| 103 | Joanne Delorme | SJSH |
| 105 | Becky Saari | CSS |
| 132 | Meghan Lee | WFSS |
| 137 | Jessica Rogers | CSS |
| 148 | Stacey Symons | SJSH |
| 159 | Irena Watson | WFSS |
| 162 | Andrea Nighbor | CSS |
| 175 | Colleen Lynch | ESA |
| 179 | Victoria Lampkin | SJSH |

Junior Boys

| | | |
|-----|-----------------|-----|
| 185 | Chris Statham | WSS |
| 199 | Scott McCallum | WSS |
| 216 | Joel Raymond | ESA |
| 228 | James Lindsay | WSS |
| 262 | Gene Marshall | CSS |
| 274 | Adrien Bealieu | WSS |
| 286 | Jeff Seguin | CSS |
| 319 | Jeff Dawson | WSS |
| 325 | Shawn Kleimaker | CSS |
| 335 | Jeff Harding | CSS |
| 348 | Andrew Sadler | WSS |

Senior Girls

| | | |
|-----|----------------------|------|
| 366 | Erin McGuinty | SJSH |
| 381 | Alison Firth-Eagland | CSS |
| 385 | Julie Ouellette | ESA |
| 391 | Sherry Beattie | WSS |
| 400 | Amanda Fallis | WSS |
| 402 | Lisa Bernas | CSS |
| 409 | Jen Brideau | WSS |
| 411 | Julie Pigden | WFSS |
| 422 | Erica Padley | WSS |
| 441 | Melanie Blanchard | SJSH |
| 445 | Shanna Lochhead | WFSS |
| 447 | Melanie Ouellette | ESA |
| 450 | Rikst Attema | CSS |
| 458 | Beth Domianczuk | SJSH |
| 461 | Andree Perron | ESA |
| 464 | Rowena Peden | CSS |
| 482 | Rebecca Nathan | WFSS |
| 486 | Sherry Sutherland | WSS |
| 502 | Meggie Goodwin | SJSH |
| 506 | Natalie Burke | WSS |
| 507 | Michelle Warren | CSS |
| 519 | Monique Ferguson | ESA |
| 527 | Jenny Dawson | WSS |
| 543 | Jocelyne Perabo | ESA |
| 548 | Becky Martin | CSS |

Senior Boys

| | | |
|-----|---------------------|------|
| 566 | Richard St. Amour | ESA |
| 578 | Martin Hurtubise | ESA |
| 581 | Mike Connacher | SJSH |
| 583 | Len Baker | WSS |
| 596 | Mike Artindale | CSS |
| 598 | Derek Jodouin | CSS |
| 608 | Keith McCallum | WSS |
| 610 | Shane Mills | WFSS |
| 624 | George Jiracek | WSS |
| 627 | Jay Liddiard | WSS |
| 628 | Chris Ridler | CSS |
| 633 | Mike South | WFSS |
| 643 | Jamie Laird | CSS |
| 647 | Andrew Smith | SJSH |
| 657 | Pierre Chemery | ESA |
| 662 | Chris Firth-Eagland | CSS |
| 664 | Jamie Bedard | SJSH |
| 665 | Ryan McIntosh | WSS |
| 689 | John Tipler | WFSS |
| 690 | Kevin O'Bright | ESA |
| 716 | Jeremie Guertin | ESA |
| 723 | Neil Sauve | CSS |
| 725 | Steve Menard | WSS |
| 734 | Paul Morin | SJSH |
| 739 | Joe Rogers | CSS |
| 755 | Eric Duschenes | ESA |
| 767 | George Manning | WSS |

AND THE VOLUNTEERS – OFSAA '97

| | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Jack Aiton | Ruth Fazzari | Hugh MacDonald | Dave Rees |
| Lorena Aiton | Des Forget | George Manning | Ed Rogers |
| Bette Allard | Chris Galema | Judy Martyn | Marianne Rogers |
| Lloyd Argo | Al Garrett | Janice Matichuk | Bob Ryckman |
| Maryvess Bolton | & CSS students | Cathy McCallum | Rob Saunders |
| Bryon Bonell | Ted Gawinski | Don McCormick | Dave Stewart |
| Mary Jane Bradford | Kelly Gilbert | Anne McRuer | Vicky Sutherland |
| Kelly Brown | Glenna Gowan | Devon Miller | William Taylor |
| Ken Brown | Ross Gowan | Bob Morton | Mark Thomas |
| Toni Brown | Emmanuelle Gunter | Gene Mullan | Diane Thompson |
| Lloyd Burke | Dick Heino | Brian Murray | Warren Thynne |
| Ann Burton | Mike Hickey | Sally Neufeld | John Toswell |
| Sue Celentano | Bob Horne | Dave Nighbor | Al Tough |
| & M. Basic students | Joan Horne | Dawna Nighbor | Suzanne Udeschini |
| Heather Chambers | John Irwin | Kim Nighbor | Mary Vasbotn |
| Ralph Campaign | Mike Jackowski | Martin Nighbor | Charlie Olmsted |
| Diane Wallace | Allison King | Nancy Olmsted | Kelly Wallace |
| Carolyn Crawford | Andrew Koski-Harja | Guy Ouellette | Francine Weigeldt |
| Courtney Crawford | Ursula Larsh | Joan Ouelette | Bryan Wolfe |
| Christine Daly | Bob Laverty | Murray Peavoy | Noreen Yeates |
| Mac Davidson | Ann Lawson | Nan Peavoy | Elmer Ypya |
| Al Devolin | Heather Lawson | Tim Phillips | |
| Jackie Devolin | Chris Lindsay | Janet Potter | |
| Patty Donahue | James Lindsay | Knowlton Potter | |
| Agnes Allies | Kelly Lynch | Ted Price | |
| Sandra Farquhar | Marilyn Lynch | Peter Puddicombe | |

Following the races and relay award ceremonies and general cleanup, the OFSAA organizers retired to the Portage for a well-deserved respite and dinner that had been organized by Tom Cook and Doug Jess. There was much reminiscing of the trials and tribulations, the unusual incidents, the spectacular race conditions, and then a hearty dinner. This was the conclusion of two full

years of effort, and now it was over. Well, almost over! With OFSAA concluded, some of us were now gearing up again for the Ontario University Championships slated for the next two days. But outside, the skies darkened, and the biggest snowfall in years began to blanket the area.

Yes – it snowed. By around 7 p.m., about 15 cm or half a foot of snow covered the ground, and it was coming down hard. And it continued all night, delaying grooming and tracksetting for the next day's races.

Jane and I drove home to Astorville that night in extremely heavy snow. There were perhaps 30 cm or a foot on the ground by then, and getting up our 200-foot driveway was a problem. We wondered how we were going to get out in the morning. Discussions on the phone with Jack led to a decision to meet at 6 a.m. for packing and tracksetting before the O.U. races. There was no sense in doing anything while the storm raged; and Environment Canada predicted that the storm would abate at dawn. Meanwhile, we continued to fine-tune the organizational details. We were up at about 4:30 a.m., and left in the pre-dawn darkness. Close to two feet or 60 cm of snow had fallen. We promptly got stuck in the driveway, got going again after a half hour delay, and fortunately the roads had been plowed. We got to Nordic just as the snowplows were clearing the parking lots – good timing. And Jack was already warming up the Pisten Bulley ready to go. My job was to pack the sides of the trails on an Alpine to make it easier for the Pisten Bulley. So around and around I went for hours. To accompany Jack in the Pisten Bulley, Jane rode shotgun.

The plan for Saturday's free technique races was for the men to do 10 km on the extended Blue and the women to do 5 km on the Red. If the racers showed up! With the heavy snow, the plan was out the window – or rather, buried under the snow. The new decision was made to open the Purple – just the one trail, and that alone took several hours.

Gradually the skies brightened; dawn turned into morning, one of those picture-postcard mornings with a mantle of heavy snow draped in the branches, the trails muffled in an eerie stillness. And, lo and behold, cars and vans began to arrive. All of the university teams had arrived in North Bay the night before – and boy, did they want to ski! And after Chief of the Race Dave Rees finally appeared after being snowed in at his house, ski they did!

The men raced three laps of the Purple; the women did two. Despite the repetitive packing, the snow was still soft, as it had not had time to freeze and set up. It was heavy slogging for skating. The afternoon relays, unfortunately, had to be cancelled, as it was not possible to prepare the start areas.

While the races were progressing on the Purple, Jack continued his masterful work on the Red, and then the Blue; and the next day's races went off without a hitch.

The most unusual thing about the Saturday O.U. Championship races was that virtually no Nordic Club members came out to ski that day due to the heavy snow. If it were not for the race, the Club would have been deserted. However, it was a terrific and exhilarating experience to put on these races for a very enthusiastic, friendly, and appreciative group of university racers. The camaraderie was high, and the university athletes and their coaches heaped much praise on the Race Organizing Committee. And Dave Rees, chief of the

competition, organized a fun banquet on Saturday evening at Best Western for the O.U. awards.

The OUAA Nordic Skiing Championship Race Organizing Committee

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Committee Chair | Vito Castiglione (Nipissing University Athletics) |
| Chief of Competition | Dave Rees |
| Chief of Course | Dave Minden |
| Chief of Timing | Tom Cook |
| Chief of Start/Finish | Bill Burton |
| Competition Secretary | Jean Bristow |
| Technical Delegate | Diane Thomson |

The Ontario University – North Bay Nordic racers:

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Kevin Denston | Lakehead |
| Mark Thomas | Nipissing |
| Andrew Rees | Nipissing |
| Jon Rogers | U of T |
| Steve Baxter | Nipissing |
| Heather Lawson | Ottawa |
| Stephanie Rees | Nipissing |
| Kelly Wallace | Guelph |

There are many benefits to the Club from hosting events such as OFSAA and the OU Championships. First of all, the events are for the athletes, to provide a venue for cross-country ski racing. These athletes, including many North Bay Nordic skiers and students, benefit from a well-organized and fair competition. Secondly, the Club membership benefits for it provides members with an opportunity to pitch in and to help make it a success, to make a difference. Thirdly, the Club benefits financially and materially. Unfortunately, this is the only argument that sinks in with many Club members who see race days as infringements on their ski time. When the dust had settled and treasurer Guido Verillo had compiled the financial statements, OFSAA and the OUs in 1997 contributed \$6787 to Club revenues, and the Club had gained an impressive computer-generated trail map, thanks to Shoppers Drug Mart Lakeshore and Doug Jess' efforts.

.....And Other Things

Jackrabbit

Cathy King took over the reins of the Jackrabbit Ski League. One initiative that was implemented was a "Ski Bunny" session for children aged 4 to 6. It was a 1-hour session running from 1 to 2 p.m.

Interest in Saturday sessions appeared to wane with only 6 skiers registered, but the Sunday session drew a hefty 78 skiers, so Sunday afternoons continued to be a busy time at Nordic. Twenty-plus leaders competently and enthusiastically led their charges around and about the Nordic trails.

Fred Gunter

In the summer of 1996, Fred Gunter passed away during a tennis match, tennis being another of Fred's passions. Fred was a founding Club member, Board member (1980/81, 82, and 1982/83), a ready and willing volunteer, and an

enthusiastic Masters competitor in both local and distant races. The Board established a donation fund in memory of Fred; and personal friends erected a small plaque high above the cliffs overlooking High Lake. Unfortunately, vandals have made it difficult to maintain this site; but we will remember Fred's jovial personality nonetheless.

There is another "memorial" to Fred out on the trails at a place some know as "Fred's Trough." It is a wet area located on the return portion of the Green Trail, after the Lookout and Grunt Hill, and after the long twisting downhill that leads to the sharp left turn where the trail now parallels the pipeline. Before the pipeline was twinned, this sharp turn was about 50 m further from where it is now. There is a small creek there, and one day, skiing with Dave Rees, Fred stopped for a drink. He slipped and went in head first for a little more water than he wanted!

Social Events

Like the previous season, amidst the excitement and hoopla of major race organization, life went on quite normally in the ski world of North Bay Nordic. The annual Open House took place December 8. Cathie Rennie continued socializing and organizing the annual Potluck Supper in January and the Easter Egg Hunt in March; while the Lynches and friends flipped flapjacks at the Pancake Breakfast.

Personal Distance Challenge – March 8 1997

| <u>To 25 km</u> | | <u>26 to 50 km</u> | | <u>51 to 75 km</u> | |
|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 15 km | Martina Pfister | 26 km | Patrick Pfister | 51 km | Heather Alexander |
| 15 km | Stefanie Pfister | 30 km | Kayla Turner | 51 km | Sarah Priebe |
| 21 km | Don Workman | 30 km | Patty Donahue | 51 km | Kelly Lynch |
| 22 km | Nathalie Wipprecht | 30.5 km | John Wipprecht | 51 km | Marilyn Lynch |
| 23 km | Melanie Wipprecht | 42 km | Al Tough | 53 km | Joe Lynch |
| 23 km | Brenda Walsh | 50 km | Michel Chartrand | 62 km | Colleen Lynch |

Newsletters

Jan Vandermeer published some artistically creative newsletters and experimented with a new delivery method. In lieu of the more expensive Canada Post, Jan engaged a local delivery person (Jim Oman) to hand deliver the newsletters where the membership was most concentrated in North Bay at 26 cents each.

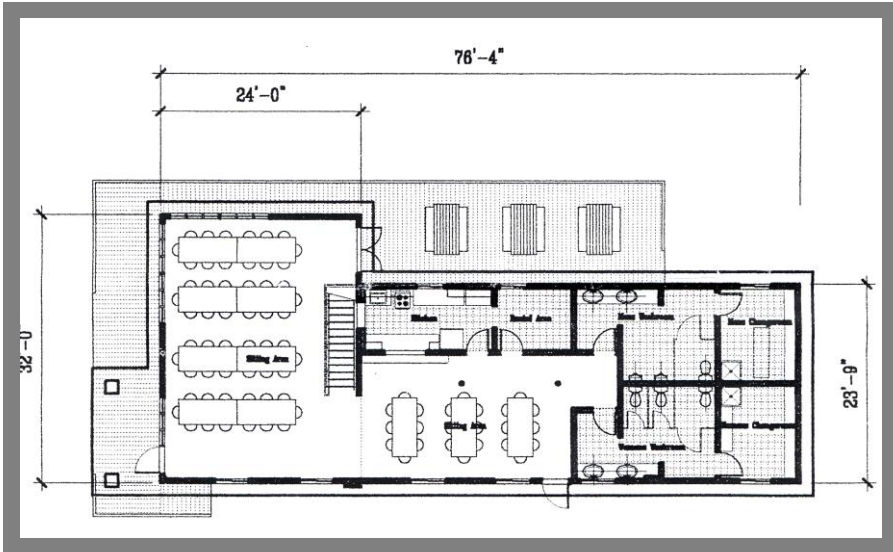
Instruction

Stephanie Rees took on the task of providing ski lessons on a private basis.

Future Plans

The AGM held on Friday April 11 focused on the major expansion plan formulated by Joe Lynch and Martin Nighbor. After much spirited discussion and formal vote, the go-ahead was given to re-design and expand the clubhouse. Special attention would be given to the water supply and septic system, the clubhouse building would be jacked up, and a full basement would be constructed beneath it. Change rooms and washrooms would be expanded at the west end of the building, and a 24' x 32' addition would be constructed on the

east side. The kitchen, snack bar and ski rentals would be in the middle on the south side.



The plan for clubhouse expansion presented and accepted at the April 1997 AGM

Another motion at the April 1997 AGM dealt with the thorny issue of classical vs. skate technique on the trails. With skating allowed on the inner trails, there was some significant demand for skating to extend to the Brown and Blue Trails. The Brown had been widened sufficiently. The Blue Trail was becoming a preferred race trail, and OFSAA had extended skating up to the pipeline (although only for a few days). During races, the Gold Trail was open to skating and was also a two-way trail to give spectators and coaches access to the trails. This motion was carried:

"The following trails are for classic skiing only: Gold and Green. Skating is permitted on the Yellow, Purple, Red and Blue Trails. When so designated by the Board, skating will be allowed on the Brown, Blue Extension, and on the Gold. The Blue Trail Extension is specified as that segment of trail between the Blue-Green cut-off and the pipeline on the outward loop."

Paul Larsh, who served as President for two of the most exciting years at Nordic with the acquisition of the Pisten Bulley and the two OFSAA years, commented that "although we are not swimming in funds the Club has managed to remain solvent and debt-free. We as a Board have done our best to maintain the Club as a volunteer, pay-as-you-go venture. Frankly, I believe that has been the secret of our success to date and I trust that philosophy will continue to prevail."

Retiring from the Board were Joanne Vaughn and Heather Chambers.

Recollections 1996-97

Chapter 24 1997-98 Phase 1 Clubhouse Expansion & El Nino Ice

Board of Directors

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Emmanuelle Gunter | President |
| Guido Verillo | Treasurer |
| Noreen Yeates | Secretary |
| Tom Cook | Trails - Races |
| Don Farquhar | Building and Property |
| Cathie Rennie | School Liaison - Social |
| Jan Vandermeer | Newsletter |
| Joe Lynch | Publicity - Junior Racing Team |
| Cam Hunter | Membership |
| Paul Larsh | Past President |

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Membership Rates: | Single \$70 (\$85); Student \$40 (\$55); Family \$140 (\$165) |
| Membership: | 929 |
| Membership Revenue: | \$38 479 |

Trails

Tom Cook coordinated the summer trail work and fall brushing activity. Bill Aultman was hired to do some much-needed supplementary work on the Brown Trail, widening narrow spots and doing more levelling. It is not until the skiers get onto the trails that we see where the problem areas are, where classical skiers might be thrown off by a curve banked the wrong way, or where skaters might be encroaching on the classic tracks. Another area worked on was the wet area under the cliffs on the Blue. We were starting to learn some techniques in the trail building department, and Bill Aultman brought in the concept of ditching on the side of the trail and, using the excavated material, raising the level of the trail bed. This results in a trail that is "high and dry". That's the theory. Sometimes it takes a few kicks at the can to get it right.

For trail brushing in the fall, the Club rented a "brush hog" from Ray Gordon, and Andrew Rees was hired to navigate the inner trails, brushing out a 15-foot width and concentrating on "back-brushing" well back of the sides of the trails. A "brush hog" is like a "whipper-snipper" only bigger, uglier, and meaner. It is a wheeled contraption running off a tractor's power takeoff. It has a metal cover about 3 feet in diameter, and under the cover a chain spins very quickly, taking down raspberry canes, small saplings and anything else in its way. Andrew did such a great job brushing the trails with the brush-hog that Tom Cook recommended that the process be repeated next season. (It is unfortunate that this recommendation was not followed through in subsequent years.)

More wood chipping took place with the second annual "wood chipping bee". Columbia Forest Products donated the loads of chips and part of the trucking costs. Fifty-five volunteers took part on the Saturday – Sunday event spreading the chips at various locations on the Purple and Brown Trails. Then, hundreds of cross-country runners in a variety of school races packed down the trails. With the upgrading of the Brown Trail, it (either alone or in combination with other trails) became a favourite for cross-country running organizers for the longer events. Also, the bridge on the Red Trail was re-built. Volunteer crews again formed to do "their section" of the Green Trail, completing everything before the first snowfall.

It was a weird winter for weather. Skiing did start early, and Jack had all trails except the Green packed (but not trackset) for the November 22-23 weekend. But poor snow throughout the winter prohibited the Pisten Bulley from venturing out onto the Green Trail. And severe ice storms closed the Club several times during the winter. This was the year of **THE ICE STORM** that ravaged eastern Ontario and Quebec causing widespread havoc and devastation to cities such as Ottawa and to many forested areas. Nordic was closed from Monday January 5 until mid-week when Jack was able to start tilling the innermost trails. It took until Thursday January 8 to get the Yellow and Purple Trails open. The Gold, Red, and Blue Trails followed on Friday; but it was not until Sunday that the Green was opened. Scores of volunteers helped to clear branches and debris from the trails, especially out on the Green where ice-laden branches were bent over the trail, obstructing any kind of travel.

During the season, Jack Aiton put on a one-man show grooming and track-setting. Over the winter, he spent 300 hours on the Pisten Bulley, especially in February, when tilling was done almost constantly. Greg Gilbert and Neil Bielby were on stand-by if necessary. It was a difficult El Nino winter, characterized by low snow, ice storms, and untimely rain.

Building and Property

The planned expansion of the clubhouse was the big news for the summer of '97. The plan went through the necessary approval stages, and work commenced in the summer of 1997. The original plan was modified as many plans are, and the end result was our present clubhouse, with change-rooms and toilet facilities in the basement, and snack bar and ski rental at the west end of the clubhouse.

But before construction began, some de-construction had to occur. The cedar deck, woodshed (at the rear southwest corner) and the water pump (it was under the crawl space under the original men's washroom) all had to be removed. Then, the entire building was raised on jacks so that excavation of the basement could take place.



Project leader Claude Jolin, right, instructs Tom Cook (centre) to put down coffee mug and invert broom!

Footings were poured, and foundation blocks were laid to a full 13-block height to build the basement walls. In addition, the floor joists were strengthened, and a bearing wall and steel post were installed. The basement was wired, insulated, and dry-walled. The basement men's and women's change rooms were in place, but the fixtures and the connecting staircase were not installed. All of this proceeded in July under the careful management of expert builder Claude Jolin. The balance of the work would be done in the summer of 1998.

During the winter of 1997/98, the cedar deck lay under a blanket of snow near the ski racks and a rudimentary staircase gave access to the slightly higher clubhouse building.

The cost of the clubhouse expansion was predicted to be in the \$25 000 to \$30 000 range. When the concrete dust and wood chips had settled, the financial statement indicates that Phase 1 of the expansion project cost \$30 772. The Club contributed \$20 000 (\$10 000 from each of 1996 and 1997 surpluses) with the balance made up from donations (\$5820), a yard sale held at the Lynches (\$825), and \$4500 from Shoppers Drug Mart. Phase 2 would continue the following year.

.....And Other Things

Social Events

Cathie Rennie laid out the traditional events. The Open House, which officially unveiled Phase 1 of the expanded clubhouse, took place on December 6. Bigwood Sporting Goods occupied Jackrabbit Lodge where Ed Rogers had new skis and equipment on display. The Potluck Supper and moonlight ski took place on Saturday January 10, the last in the original upper level of the clubhouse. And the moonlight ski that night was under a bright almost-full moon, and many skiers enjoyed the après-dinner ski. The annual Pancake Breakfast was held on an exceptionally cold stay-under-the-covers morning and the attendance was low.

A Steak And Ski Valentine's Dinner was also held in February to raise funds for the clubhouse expansion project, and raised just under \$900.

And the annual Easter Egg Hunt attracted over 40 egg hunters on a very warm Sunday, March 10.

Jackrabbit and Challenge

Cathy King again led the Jackrabbit programme, while Joe Lynch and coach Jenny Dawson looked after the challenging Challenge team. Jackrabbit Leaders were Rowena Peden, Sanders Peden, Jocelyn Perabo, Renee Filion, Stefane Filion, Marc Andre Filion, Cathy Harding, Derek Jodouin, Sherry Sutherland, Courtney Crawford, Laura Burke, and Natalie Burke; with assistants Jean Michel Filion, Sarah Priebe, Heather Ryman, and Megan Payne.

One organizational change was made. The Saturday 10 a.m. session was shifted to 1 p.m. so that both sessions might benefit from the warmer afternoon temperature. Often, the Saturday morning sessions were quite cool and numbers were dropping in previous years.

A large contingent of South River skiers, led by Tom Tekavcic, joined the Jackrabbit programme. Several years previously, Tom had attempted to promote a Jackrabbit programme and skiing in the South River area, but the dominance of "sledding" (snowmobiling) in the area made it difficult to find a suitable location.

The Jackrabbit numbers swelled to 100 and the influx of South River skiers became a regular welcomed weekend event.

First Pizza Hut Kids' Camp

Joe Lynch organized the first version of this mid-March event (March 15). The purpose was to keep younger skiers coming out to Nordic for an organized event when otherwise they are missing sometimes-exceptional ski conditions. For skiers aged 14 and under, the day featured warm-up skiing, time trials on the Yellow and Purple Trails, fun relay races, and certificates for all. At only \$5 per skier to a maximum of \$10 per family, it was basically a free ski programme with a pizza lunch – or a free pizza lunch with an inexpensive day of skiing.

Instruction

Carol Farintosh, with CANSI Level I experience, took over the challenge of providing instruction and lessons and offered a series of group and private lessons in both skate and classical technique.

Martin Nighbor also provided several all day clinics in advanced skate technique (December 27 and 28), classic technique (January 3), and novice skate technique (January 17). All of the proceeds from these clinics went to the Junior Racing Team.

Rotary Skiarama

The annual fundraiser for challenged children was held on Sunday, February 15.

Wildlife

Bert Marsden over the years has related many encounters with wildlife – from wolf, moose, and deer to the smaller pine martins, fisher, porcupine, and beaver. Many are surprised to encounter beaver while out skiing, but when their stored food larder gets low, especially in late winter, they become active and go out searching for some tasty poplar or birch.

One particular beaver (a three-footed victim of some earlier attempt at trapping) resided in the beaver lodge on the small pond just before the Brown Trail turnoff. Eric Potter had a “close encounter” with this guy; and a few days later, Eric and Jane Minden were skiing by the same spot, and had to jam on the brakes when the same beaver limped across the trail dragging a small tree. Many skiers were fortunate to see this particular resident of our trails.

MNR biologists Vicky Bernstein and Stan Vasiauskas confirmed that the large nests in the trees on the big pond out on the Green Trail were indeed Great Blue Heron nests. The number of nests on this pond has increased over the years. In late spring, Jane and I hiked in to this spot while out running the trails and observed several Great Blue Herons flying about and tending to their nests.

Participation

The established Nordic traditions continued: the Green, Blue, and All-Trails Clubs continued to attract an enthusiastic mix of skiers. The Personal Distance Challenge was held on March 7 under difficult (sloppy) ski conditions. The Potluck Supper for participants made it all worthwhile!

Personal Distance Challenge – March 7 1998

| | |
|---------|-------------------|
| 6.3 km | Sara Taun |
| 11.1 km | Jenn Taun |
| 24 km | Stan Vasiliauskas |
| 24 km | Vicky Bernstein |
| 42 km | John Wipprecht |
| 60 km | Michel Chartrand |
| 80.6 km | Kevin Denston |

Races

Junior Racing Team

Coaches Martin and Dawna Nighbor had a large contingent of racers. The team of 15, in their new blazing red jackets, included: (Juvenile Girls) Heather Alexander, Kimberly Nighbor, Colleen Lynch and Becky Saari; (Juvenile Boys) Blair Hunter, Jeff Seguin, David Nighbor, John Harding; (Junior Girls) Lindsay Gilbert, Jessica Rogers, Andrea Nighbor, and Victoria Lampkin; (Junior Boys) Brian Hoetmer and Jeff Dawson; and (Junior Men) Kelly Gilbert.

The junior racers had a distinguishing season and five of the squad qualified for the Canadian Juniors at Val Cartier. They were Andrea Nighbor (Junior Girls), Kim Nighbor, David Nighbor, Jeff Seguin, Colleen Lynch, and Heather Alexander (all Juveniles). The big news coming out of that event was the Gold medal winning relay team of Andrea Nighbor, Kim Nighbor, and Heather Alexander.



North Bay Nordic Junior Racing Team, 1997 – 1998

John Harding, Blair Hunter, Andrea Nighbor, Colleen Lynch, Brian Hoetmer, Victoria Lampkin, Kimberly Nighbor
Martin Nighbor (c), Jeff Dawson, Jeff Seguin, David Nighbor, Kelly Gilbert, Heather Alexander, Dawna Nighbor (c)
Absent: Jessica Rogers, Becki Saari

The Nipissing University Lakers

Five “veteran” Club racers had now advanced to the university level and Stephanie Rees, Andrew Rees, Eric Potter, Steven Baxter, and Jon Pitt (under coach Dave Rees) were now teamed up representing Nipissing University. For the second consecutive year, North Bay Nordic would host the Ontario University Championships in association with our North Bay Nordic Races, and Dave Rees would be Chief of the Competition.

Eric Potter was having a banner year on the race circuit and just missed out on a chance to be part of the national cross-country squad heading to Nagano for the 1998 Winter Games. Competing at National Championship and Olympic qualifying races at Canmore, he finished 7th in both the 10 km classical and the 15 km pursuit, and was a mere 20 seconds out of the 6 man team. Stephen Bursey also skied well in these events, finishing 22nd overall.

Club Races

The annual North Bay Nordic Ski Races were shifted from its customary end of January weekend to February 21 and 22 so that we could piggyback the OU Championships with our own races. The Race Committee included Dave Rees, Dave Minden, Jane Minden, Tom Cook, Jean Bristow, and Bill Burton. And a huge contingent of volunteers helped make the event a success.

In a revised format, the North Bay Nordic race events were held in the morning and the Ontario University races were held in the afternoon. This necessitated having two separate crews of controllers and marshals and other volunteers.

Ontario University – North Bay Nordic racers:

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Eric Potter | Nipissing |
| Stephen Bursey | Lakehead |
| Andrew Rees | Nipissing |
| Joe Rogers | U of T |
| Stephanie Rees | Nipissing |
| Heather Lawson | Ottawa |
| Kelly Wallace | Guelph |

It was noted that had it not been for the University Championships, the North Bay Nordic Races would not have been that well attended. Of the 160 competitors, 110 were university team skiers. Thus, only 50 filled the age categories from tiny pre-atoms to the Masters ranks. This had also been observed across the North. Consequently, the profits from the race weekend were not substantial. A good chunk of the profits were going to Sports-Stats for their computer timing, and we began to wonder if we could get our own system and reduce the costs.

Tom Cook recommended that, in addition to a Club-maintained computer system, we should also be searching for a new set of racing bibs, more involvement from the Jackrabbit skiers, and some new members on the Race Committee.

North Bay Nordic hosted several elementary school and high schools events including NDA on February 12 and NOSSA (co-hosted with Widdifield) on February 16. Nordic also hosted one of the NOD Spring Series races on March 16. Eighty racers took part under ideal conditions in an event that featured exciting mass start free technique races.

Future Plans

The major items on the agenda were to finish the details of the building expansion in the summer of 1998 (Phase 2) and to continue the upgrading of the trails, which was giving us earlier skiing and better skiing. As work on the inner trails was having its positive results, we started to look at the Green Trail. It was taking too long to get the Green Trail open.

Retiring from the Board were Tom Cook, Don Farquhar, Jan Vandermeer, and Paul Larsh.

Recollections 1997-98

Chapter 25 1998-99 Phase 2 Clubhouse Expansion

Board of Directors

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Emmanuelle Gunter | President |
| Guido Verillo | Treasurer |
| Noreen Yeates | Secretary |
| Michel Chartrand | Trails |
| Cathie Rennie | Social - School Liaison |
| Carol Farintosh | Publicity & Newsletter |
| Jean Bristow | Races |
| Joe Lynch | Building and Property |
| Cam Hunter | Membership |

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Membership: | 853 |
| Membership Rates: | Single \$80 (\$95); Student \$40 (\$55); Family \$160 (\$185) |
| 1998/99 "Profit": | \$20 000 |
| Busy Beaver Award: | Cathy King |

I retired after 30 years of teaching in June of 1998 and looked forward to a different kind of ski season. I was surprised by the activity of the Club during the week. In the mornings, there is a slow but steady procession of individual skiers coming in to use the trails starting even before the clubhouse opens. This builds steadily through the morning. In early afternoon, the "seniors group" makes its almost daily appearance: Joan and Bob Horne, Rolf and Mary Vassbotn, and Betty Allard as a group; and others such as Shirley Bass, Rod and Gloria Kelusky, Toni and Ken Brown, and - a large assortment of recently retired teacher such as the Garretts, Cooks, and others. On many weekdays, school groups are bused in, and pandemonium reigns as the youngsters are fitted with their equipment and they head enthusiastically out to the trails. Then the high school racing teams start to make their appearance around 3:30, and the clubhouse again jumps to a different tune – this one competitive – as athletes from different schools share the change-rooms, clubhouse, and trails - something unique compared to other school sports teams.

Trails

Trail Work

Summer trail work continued. Major activity occurred on the Blue Trail on the loop off the Pipeline Access Road (the first time that this section had been back hoed). Michel Chartrand also began the step-by-step assault on the Green Trail to widen and level it to a point that the Pisten Bulley could groom the Green earlier in the season. The first section that received some attention was from the second pipeline crossing back to the big pond, a very wet and rough area. A couple of hundred metres were also done on the Lookout side of the second pipeline crossing.

The positive results of trail upgrading plus the acquisition of the Pisten Bully were recognized. It was a variable winter with not much snow and frequent spells of warm weather. Michel Chartrand noted that many clubs in the area had very marginal seasons but that our trails had held up quite well.

New Boy On The Machines

Tom Cook, who also retired from teaching in 1998, joined Jack Aiton as an official member of the trail grooming staff. This lessened the personal load on Jack's shoulders and also increased the man-hours spent on the Green Trail, where a two-man operation works better and more safely. At the April AGM, Michel Chartrand made special presentations to Jack and Lorena Aiton for their hard work and contributions to the Club.

Building and Property

Phase 2 of the clubhouse expansion project continued. Claude Jolin, Joe Lynch and crew completed the many outstanding details during the spring and summer.

Upstairs, the original change rooms were dismantled, partitions were removed, and the new snack bar and ski rental areas were formed. Water lines were re-routed to the kitchen sink and to the downstairs area. The original snack bar and ski rental areas were dismantled, opening up the upper area, and a staircase was constructed joining the upper and lower levels. Five large thermal windows were added.

Downstairs, the change rooms were completed with the installation of toilets, sinks, and mirrors.

Outside, the cedar deck was re-attached, and stairs were created to provide a more convenient and safer outdoor route from the lower to upper level. In addition to the many volunteers who contributed time and, therefore, kept the costs lower, there were many "corporate sponsors" who assisted in the clubhouse expansion.

Corporate Sponsors for Clubhouse Expansion

Shoppers Drug Mart – Lakeshore
Boart-Longyear
Port-A-Room
Carryall Builders
Lakeview Builders
Rainbow Concrete
Warren Equipment
Ray Gordon Equipment
M & M Meats.

The Volunteers

| | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Martin Nighbor | Cathy Seguin | Florence Hunter |
| Cathie Rennie | Brenda Walsh | Steve Watson |
| Jack Aiton | Greg Gilbert | Al Tough |
| Al Garrett | Knowlton Potter | Janet Potter |
| Colleen Lynch | Marilyn Lynch | Kelly Lynch |
| Brian Hoetmer | Victoria Lampkin | Patty Donahue |
| Michel Chartrand | Marc Levesque | Rob Dawson |
| Don Farintosh | Rick Calhoun | Chris Lindsay |
| Gary Gardner | Jack Green | Ron McMillan |
| Mary Jane Bradford | Emmanuelle Gunter | Eugene Perabo |
| Jan Vandermeer | Tom Cook | Perry Kirkey |
| Linda Kirkey | Paul Larsh | Katie Larsh |
| John Sinclair | Ralph Champaign | Bill Burton |
| Doug Jess | | |

& Widdifield Construction Class

The cost of Phase 2 of the clubhouse expansion was \$13 396 (originally estimated at \$13 859). The costs were covered by a further infusion of \$10 000 from the Nordic Board and \$8 615 from fund-raising efforts. The total cost of the project was thus \$48 735.

But there was no rest for the weary! Now the focus switched to the garage, where Jack and his crews had been labouring since 1995 under cramped conditions. Despite the best of planning when the garage was built in 1991, four years before the Pisten Bulley was purchased, the room allowed for it was not quite sufficient. The back end of the machine (tiller and tracksetter) could not be extended and lowered onto the floor, so it was difficult to work on the hydraulic system and even to walk around it, as Jack's shins could testify. So the plan was developed to build an addition on the east side of the garage. Funds would come from the Club's Capital Fund (\$10 000) and from fundraising efforts. The plan was to have a crew of students from Ecole Secondaire Algonquin (ECA) do the framing in the spring of 1999 as a practical component of a construction course.

Fundraising started during the winter of 1998-99 with the second annual Steak And Ski Dinner. Florence Hunter organized the kitchen crews while Jack Aiton kept his hands warm organizing the main events on the barbecues. When the smoke had cleared and some 70 hungry skiers fed, the net revenue was \$1156.24. Also, there were silent auctions for two paintings by Jeanine Fallon. These were displayed for several weeks in the clubhouse. The two paintings, titled "Solitude" and "The Lookout", captured images from our ski trails. The new owner of "The Lookout" donated it back to the Club, where it hangs on the clubhouse wall. Also, a spring yard sale was held at the Lynches in May.

For the 1998-99 season, Ann Burton came back to "man" the snack bar operation, ably assisted by Linda Hughes. A part-time student was also hired to assist on weekend afternoons and other heavy days. In response to some timely suggestions made by Ann Burton the year before (and in response to some visits by the Health Inspector), a few badly needed improvements were made. For example, the refrigerator was given a freon boost to improve its efficiency, and the aging stove was replaced by a newer one. An addition to the operation was a Coke machine that dispensed juices as well as carbonated soft drinks. This took a bit of pressure off the snack bar staff and freed up space in the over-worked refrigerator. For dealing with chores such as filling wood boxes and closing up on weekend nights, Joe Lynch set up a volunteer schedule whereby every Board member assumed these duties for one weekend or more during the season. Joe also set up a very detailed job description for the snack bar employees.

The ski rental outlet had proven over many years to be a successful addition to the Club's operation, but over time the equipment was being outdated especially with the newer and better Salomon binding system. When the Club's complement of boots disappeared, the easy decision was made to upgrade the entire system with the newer style of boot and binding.

Races

Junior Racing Team

Seven of the crew, 7 out of the 35 skiers from Ontario, competed at the Canadian National Junior Championships at the Bugley Valley Nordic Centre, 208

Smithers, B.C. They were John Harding, Jeff Seguin, Colleen Lynch, Heather Alexander, and David, Kim, and Andrea Nighbor. All skied well and each came home with a medal, capturing 2 gold, 1 silver, and two bronze medals. The gold medals came from Kimberly Nighbor, (5 km classic) and Heather, Colleen, and Kim in the 3 x 5 km girls' relay. David won silver in the 7.5 km free technique. Bronze medals came from Jeff, John, and David in the 3 x 5 km relay, and Andrea Nighbor's contribution in the girls' relay with Emily Hayman (Sault) and Leslie Bode (Thunder Bay). There were also three fourth-place finishes and several in the top-10. It was the most successful showing of North Bay Nordic skiers at the Canadians.



North Bay Nordic Junior Racing Team 1998-1999
 (back left) David Nighbor, Colleen Lynch, Jeff Seguin, Andrew Bernas
 John Harding, Dawna Nighbor (coach), Becky Saari, Sarah Priebe, Martin Nighbor (coach)
 Heather Alexander, Kim Nighbor, Jacqui Clark, Andrea Nighbor
 Absent: Jeff Dawson, Blair Hunter



1999 Canadian Junior National Medallists

Jeff Seguin, Heather Alexander, Andrea Nighbor, Kim Nighbor, David Nighbor, Colleen Lynch, John Harding,
Martin Nighbor (coach)

The NOD Spring Series races were discontinued in favour of a series of "Ontario Cup" races. These would culminate at the Ontario Championships and Ontario Masters Championships March 19 to 21 at Onaping Falls.

Martin and Dawna Nighbor continued their yearlong coaching duties with the assistance of Joe and Marilyn Lynch who organized the snack bars at the cross-country running meets, Cathy Seguin who organized the fund raising, and Don Priebe who organized the ski exchange.

Breaking off ties with the Laurentian Ski Racers, the ski exchange was held for the first time at the clubhouse. Bigwood Sporting Goods was a major contributor of equipment. With two floor levels available there was plenty of room, and the sale was well attended.

Club Races

The annual North Bay Nordic Ski Races were held on January 30 and 31 with an Ontario University qualifying race. Saturday's races attracted an additional 80+ racers from high schools from North Bay, Sudbury, Parry Sound, and Muskoka. A total of 104 university team racers competed over the two days. In all, 203 skiers registered for the Saturday classical races and 289 for the free technique races on Sunday. With costs for Sportstats timing shared with Nipissing, the races brought in substantial revenue to the Club. The Race Committee of Tom Cook, Dave Minden, Jane Minden, Dave Rees, and Jean Bristow were again assisted by scores of volunteers from set-up crew to take-down crew who must take credit for a smooth well-run event. It's no wonder that racers love coming to North Bay Nordic!

The Volunteers:

Stadium set-up: Jane Minden, Tom Cook, Jack Aiton, Ralph Champaign, Al Garrett, Al Tough, Kevin Tough, Elmer Ypya, Perry Kirkey, Linda Kirkey

Course Grooming and Tracksetting – Jack Aiton and Dave Minden

Bib Sorting – Shirley Pommier and Monica Habel

Registration – Patty Donahue, Jean Cook, Bernie Penney

Parking and Weatherboard – (from Nip. U.) Andrew Cooper, Christa Reynolds

Announcing – Natalie Burke, Tom Cook, Shirley Pommier

Forerunners and Closers – Al Garrett, Anne Garrett, Al Tough

Starters – Cathie Rennie, Brenda Walsh, Joe Lynch, Michel Chartrand, John Cobb, Diane Wallace

Course Controllers – Jane Minden, Ralph Champaign, Al Devolin, Ross Gowan, Glenna Gowan, Dick Denston, Bud McMartin, Lloyd Burke, Gary Jodouin, Greg Gilbert, Denise Mantha, Elmer Ypya

Feed Station – Lois Filion, Ed Rogers, Marianne Rogers

Timers – Knowlton Potter, Bill Burton, Chris Lindsay, Francine Wiegelt, Diane Wallace, Dave Betz

Bib Collection – Carolyn Crawford

Awards – Emmanuelle Gunter, Jane Minden, Joe Lynch, Michel Chartrand

Clean up – Elmer Ypya, Tom Cook, Jane Minden, Carolyn Crawford, Mike Lawson

First Aid – North Bay Ambulance Association

.....And Other Things

Publicity

Carol Farintosh assumed the role of “Nordic News” writer, but her role was unfortunately short-lived. After many years of publishing the Club’s “Nordic News”, the North Bay Nugget, under new management, decided to pull the plug and discontinue this service. It was not so much that they made this decision that was irritating; it was the way they did it. There was no warning – no communication. They just stopped printing the article even while Carol was continuing to send them in. The good news was that there would be another change in ownership and a new publisher the following year, and “Nordic News” would eventually be re-instated.

Carol also initiated discussions with Bernie Penney (Penney and Company) to design a new brochure for the Club. During the winter, Bernie designed a new Club logo, designed the new brochure, and negotiated some financial donations from Pinewood Park Inn and Bigwood.

Jan Vandermeer continued with his professional newsletter production company. The three-column per page production was highlighted by graphics and interesting design layouts.

www.onlink.net/nbnsc

North Bay Nordic joined the modern techno-age with the establishment of the Nordic website. Don and Carol Farintosh established the site that was free of charge through Ontario Northland’s “Onlink”.

Instruction

Paul Harding led two very successful skate and classic technique clinics and noted the demand for a more instruction for adults at the Club.

Jackrabbit

Cathy King again directed the Jackrabbits. The Saturday session was cancelled this season, and the Sunday sessions were held from 1:30 to 3:30 from January 3 to February 28.

Social Events

The annual Open House took place November 29, with Bigwood Sporting Goods again contributing draw prizes and a display of new ski equipment in Jackrabbit Lodge. The Pancake Breakfast was incorporated into North Bay's Winter Carnival and attracted some non-skiing guests to the Club. The event netted the Club \$60. The Easter Egg Hunt took place March 7 along with the final day of Jackrabbit. The Personal Distance Challenge and Potluck were held Saturday March 6; and the Pizza Hut Fun Day wrapped up organized activities on March 13.

Personal Distance Challenge – March 6 1999

| | | | | | |
|---------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|------------------|
| 17.6 km | Ann Burton | 42 km | Bill Burton | 52 km | John Wipprecht |
| 30 km | Blair Hunter | 42 km | Marilyn Lynch | 60 km | Joe Lynch |
| 30 km | Melanie Wipprecht | 42 km | Al Tough | 84 km | Michel Chartrand |
| 31 km | Alan Garrett | 42 km | Stan Vasiliauskas | | |
| 31 km | Anne Garrett | | | | |

Future Plans

With fundraising ongoing for the garage expansion, plans were being finalized for a summer building bee.

The Club committed to hosting the Canadian Masters Championships in 1999-2000. We last hosted that event in the frigid winter of 1992, and we hoped that everyone who raced at that event would have a short memory.

Also, there were plans to hold a Level I Officials clinic in November with a Level 2 clinic the following year. This was good news to the Race Organizing Committee members who were starting to look for some replacements.

At the April AGM, Joe Lynch distributed for comment a new 5-year plan that had been put together by Joe Lynch, Tom Cook and others. The plan focused on systematic trail widening to 6 m; the establishment of a trail grooming fund with up to \$10 000 annual contributions; expansion of the garage; and lighting of the innermost trails for night skiing. At a previous Board meeting in April 1999, a motion was passed (Joe Lynch, Guido Verillo) "that the NBNSC apply for a grant from Trillium Foundation for lighting of the trails." The application was organized and submitted in late 1999.

Retiring from the Board were Guido Verillo, Cathie Rennie, Carol Farintosh, and Cam Hunter.

Recollections 1998-99

Chapter 26 1999-2000 Canadian Masters Meltdown

Board of Directors

Emmanuelle Gunter
Marc Lacasse
John Wipprecht
Noreen Yeates
Michel Chartrand
Randy Hancock
Jean Bristow
Joe Lynch
Dawna Nighbor

President
Vice President – NOD Rep
Treasurer
Secretary
Trails
Membership
Races
Building and Property
Instruction - Junior Racing Team

Jan Vandermeer

Newsletter

Membership:
Membership Rates:

739+
Single \$80 (95); Student \$40 (55); Senior \$70 (80)
Family \$160 (185)

Ten Day Pass:
Membership revenue:
Meltdown March 4 to 7:
Busy Beaver Award:

\$60
\$35 828
Over 60 cm of snow lost
Perry and Linda Kirkey

Trails

Mile Post 75

When you reach age 75
You start thinking of the past
You think of all the things you've done
And start wishing it could last.

But time just waits for no one
It sure can pass you by
You'll wonder where the years have gone
They sure know how to fly

I'll swear they make those ski trails
A little longer every year
And those down hills so much faster
At least that's how they appear.

But if your skis aren't broken
And your poles are o.k. too,
Get out there on those ski trails
It's the best thing you can do.

Bert Marsden 2000

Summer Trail Work

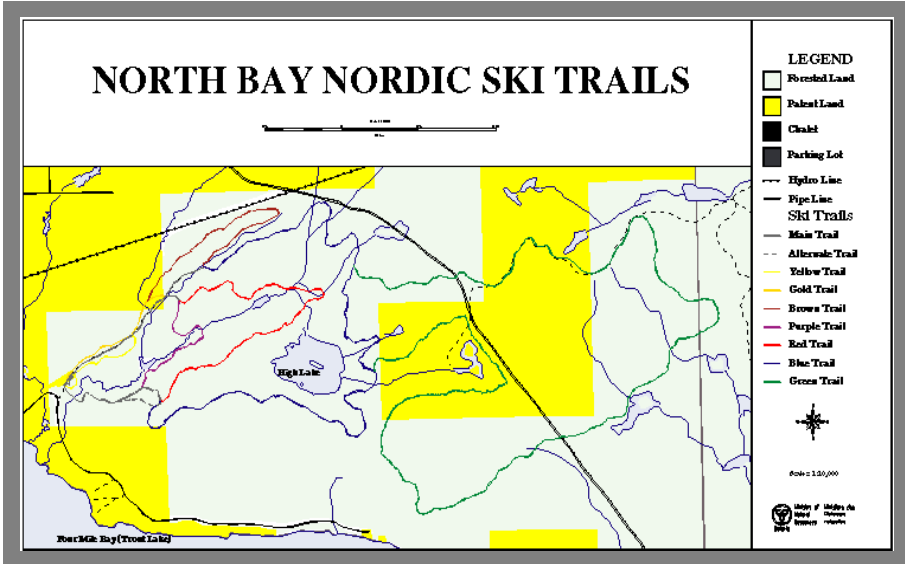
Trail upgrading continued on several fronts. One subtle change in overall strategy related to a new vision for the Nordic trails – to make them suitable for “multi-purpose” trails. With the growth in cross-country running at Nordic, trail work had the dual focus of making the trails suitable for running as well as giving us early skiing and grooming with the Pisten Bulley. With the innermost trails becoming quite suitable for running, attention began to expand outward to the Blue Trail and especially the bottleneck of Porcupine Hill and the low wet section under the cliffs.

Several sections of trail were visited by machinery in the summer. The section from the Pipeline Access Road to Porcupine Hill was widened, and the rough and rocky section along the plateau was levelled. In addition, Michel Chartrand arranged for many bales of hay to be brought in during the fall to fill in remaining dips and holes. The long Blue downhill was widened again with particular emphasis on Munro’s Corner. The result was a wider, gentler turn making it even more fun than it was before. You could rocket down and be assured of a good ride around the corner. If you needed to bail out and put on the brakes with one or both skis out of the tracks, there was plenty of room to do so. If you were skating, a fancy bit of footwork worked well as there was plenty of room for step turns. And the Brown Trail, with a donation from Molson’s Local Heroes, was widened from the picnic table all the way down to the hill just before the Gold Trail comes in. There was also extensive chipping done on the Brown Trail.

Michel Chartrand also continued work on the Green where the general long-term strategy was to progress outwards from what was already done. On the Green Trail going backwards, the backhoe worked on the section from the gate at the top of the Pipeline Access Road backwards for over a kilometre. This section was very low and wet since the pipeline crew had constructed it when the pipeline was twinned. By ditching and raising the trail bed, the trail would be higher and drier. Trail work was done up to the sharp turn near “Fred’s Trough.” The Molson Local Heroes programme was an interesting and different method of obtaining some funding for trail development. Normally the Club itself would make a formal application, as it has on many occasions to Wintario or other government funding sources. But in this case, the application had to be made by “individuals of adult drinking age,” and the result had to be of benefit to adults, not the usual youth sports activities. Our Nordic “local heroes” were Jack Aiton, Tom Cook, Joe Lynch and Michel Chartrand – all traditional supporters of Molson’s products. Joe put together the paperwork and submitted the application for \$1870 in funding. The plan was for six volunteers with chainsaws to widen the Brown (five days of work), four volunteers working with Bill Aultman on his backhoe to remove boulders and widen the trail, thirty volunteers to spread wood chips over two days, and four posted metal signs. But Molson’s came through with only \$1000, so the work was scaled back a bit. Bill Aultman did spend nine hours on the trail, and the result was a widened and leveled section on the Brown; one sign was posted at the entrance to the Brown Trail. The sign says, “Thank you to our Molson’s local heroes,” but does not mention Jack, Tom, Joe, and Michel.

New Map

A new map appeared at North Bay Nordic thanks to the efforts of Don Farintosh. Borrowing a GPS (Global Positioning System) device from the MNR, Don hiked and biked all of the trails during the fall of 1999 and then downloaded the data into the Geographical Information System (GIS), which converted all of the numerical data into map form. Merging this map with other MNR mapping databases (including waterways and Crown and private lands) resulted in a distinctive new map. The darker gray sections (yellow on the full-colour copy) are patent (private) land.



GPS generated map of the Nordic trails. The darker gray L-shaped private land is owned by the City of North Bay.

Green Trail Run

The annual Green Trail (mud) Run attracted 55 runners on October 31. Some did the Blue; some did 15 km of the Green (cutting off the rough downhill to the Lookout and the Grunt Hill); a few hardy souls did the whole thing.

A Stormy Beginning

The 1999-2000 season started off with a teasing early November snowstorm that ended up being a disastrous introduction to the season. A fierce November gale swept through the area on November 3 dumping about 30 cm of heavy snow and ice over a wide area. Laden with a heavy snow load and under the relentless pressure of gale force winds, many trees fell and tangles of branches bowed in over the trails, obstructing any progress. Deer hunters in the North Bay region were stranded for days, as bush trails were made impassable. On our Nordic trails, there was an average of a major windfall every 200 metres, not to mention the thousands of branches that littered the trails, and it took several weeks of work to clear them. Chain saw wizards included Perry and Linda Kirkey, Tom Cook, Ralph Champaign, Jack Aiton, Joe Lynch, Claude Jolin, and Al Tough.

Trail Damage and Land Use Conflict

The history of cross-country skiing is always intertwined with conflicts over how large tracts of crown land are to be used. Generally, cross-country skiing must be a single-use activity on the trails. During the winter, machines such as snowmobiles, ATVs, and 4x4 trucks can turn a groomed ski trail into a disaster zone. Even humans on foot or snowshoe, can (to a lesser degree) disturb the surface of the trail making it more difficult to ski, especially if the damage is done in above zero conditions, and the footsteps freeze in. And it is simply not safe to mix other activities with skiing.

Since the pipeline and Pipeline Access Road were constructed, there have been occasional snowmobile incursions onto our trails despite our signage and despite efforts by local snowmobiling clubs to get snowmobilers onto their own groomed trail system. And it must be said that over the years, the frequency of these events has decreased. Also, the next trail grooming will quickly erase the work of the snowmobile that chewed up the set tracks. While the incursions of snowmobiles may have decreased somewhat, there has been a growing frequency of use by ATVs and trucks in the off-season and they can do much more harm to the trails.

In December of 1999, a muddy and wet time of the year, several incidents occurred. First, it was reported that ATVs and dirt bikes were on the trails. Then Jack Aiton witnessed a 6-wheel "Argo" vehicle on the Blue. He knew the individual and sent him a letter asking him to refrain from doing so again. On another occasion, Tom Cook observed that a large stretch of the Blue Trail where it passes near the pipeline was badly damaged, probably by a 4x4 pick-up truck.

These events prompted the Board to purchase No Trespassing signs that would be posted at access points on the trails. In addition, the Board began a process to apply to the MNR to extend the Club's 6-month Land Use Permit (LUP). A full-year permit would not be possible, but the MNR suggested an 11-month term that would give the Club more tenure and a bit more weight in dealing with "trespassers." With our current 6-month LUP, we have "ownership" of the trails only from November to April.

Also, letters were distributed to area residents. The letter invited them to continue using the trails in non-mechanized ways, but indicated that those on machines such as ATVs and trucks would be charged with trespassing.

This issue continued into the next season. But in two related developments, the Club became aware of the demand from some fishermen to have the MNR build an all-season road into High Lake for trout fishing, and of the possible expansion of Mattawa River Provincial Park. The expansion could occupy the land that we ski on. This was publicized in the summer of 1999 as part of the Lands for Life – Ontario's Living Legacy (overseen by Bob Gray) that would see many provincial parks created or expanded.

On Thursday, April 20, 2000, several Club members met informally with Will Kershaw, Parks Planner from Sudbury. (Will Kershaw and Maureen Kershaw are both active in cross-country skiing at Onaping Falls and with Cross Country Ontario, and are the parents of elite junior skier Devon Kershaw.) Present at the meeting with Will Kershaw and an assistant were Joe and Marilyn Lynch – Joe had set up the meeting, Dave and Jane Minden, Jack Aiton, Dave Rees, and Jean Bristow. The meeting preceded official publicized events that would occur in

future months after the planning process had been completed. Kershaw explained that this was not a “takeover” of North Bay Nordic by the MNR, that North Bay Nordic would carry on much as before but with some sort of contractual arrangement with Mattawa River Provincial Park. The issue is ongoing.

New Signs on Trails

Trail signage was modified. Bigwood Sporting Goods made a generous donation to fund the coloured, metal (porcupine-proof) kilometre signs. These signs show the number of kilometres to return to the clubhouse. Jack Aiton and Tom Cook did the nuts and bolts work during the winter, fastening the signs to metal posts. The posts had been positioned very accurately based on the data from the surveying of the trails in 1997 although there is an unusual anomaly with the placement of the 1 km signs at the end of the Red and Blue Trails. No system of trail measurement is perfect.

Trails boss Michel Chartrand had a student at ESA paint two colourful caution signs for the Green Trail – at Broken Leg Hill and the bumpy ride down to the Lookout. These signs provided interesting reading on the trail, for the faster you were skiing downhill, the harder it was to read the entire sign in one pass – especially “la version francais”; so it became a personal challenge to read as much as possible while skiing by!

Race Preparations

In preparation for the Canadian Masters Championships and Ontario Championships, some interesting work was done at the Brown turnoff. The plan for some of the races was to have the racers ski the Brown backwards (like the school cross-country runners) and then turn sharply left onto the Blue Trail. There is a downhill leading to this intersection, and if conditions were fast, it would be an interesting “technical turn.” It might also put a lot of skiers into the ditch at the side of the Blue Trail. During the winter, loads of hay bales were transported by the Pisten Bulley to this point and were laid along side the trail to provide some banking of the trail and for safety. The Brown was skied in reverse from February 7 to February 12 for the NOSSA races, and again in early March before the Club’s races. But all of the preparations for the Canadian Masters went for naught as the races were scrubbed during the March meltdown.

Mild Winter

Despite some all too frequent rain, there was sufficient snow to have the bulk of the trail system in good condition for most of the winter. The Green Trail never got past “fair conditions” even in February when conditions are usually at their best. And the March meltdown put a damper on the race festivities in late winter.

Statistics from 1999 and 2000 comparing the number of days that the Club was open, and the revenue from trail passes and rentals are interesting. In 1999, the Club was open 86 days, but this dropped by 34% to 57 days in 2000. Yet, the trail pass revenue dropped only slightly (\$9881 to \$9750), and rentals actually increased from \$2282 to \$2477.

Will There Be Light?

Following the 1999 AGM, the Board formally adopted the 5-year plan in January 2000. One of the projects listed was for the installation of trail lighting, and in December 1999, the Club submitted its first application for a Trillium grant. The Ontario Trillium Foundation was established in 1996 for the purpose of distributing the \$180 million annual proceeds from gaming (lottery tickets, slots) to charitable and non-profit organizations. Joe Lynch, working with Trails Director Michel Chartrand, compiled the necessary documentation for the multi-paged detailed government-sponsored grant application. If successful, they would be installed in the fall of 2000. The initial plan sought funding for 14 poles with sodium vapour lights, all supplied by underground cable on the Main and Yellow Trails. Bill Thompson provided an estimate of just under \$23 000 for the project. However, the Trillium Foundation awarded a grant of \$14 000 in March 2000, and the project was scaled back somewhat. The revised project would see 10 poles installed for a cost of \$19 550; the Club would pick up the remaining \$4600 from general funds. Planning continued, and the hope was for the project to be completed in the fall of 2000.

Building and Property

Garage Expansion

Plans were formalized for the addition to the garage. It would create a separate area for the Alpines and provide more room for the Pisten Bulley. One of the major problems that Jack had encountered was that it was necessary to drop the entire rear end of the machine (the tiller) in order to close the door. A 20-foot extension on the garage would cure that. The work was done in October with the help of a builder from Redbridge and some student involvement. The Redbridge builder did the footings, concrete block work and cement floor. Then, assisted by Michel Chartrand and construction teacher Marc Levesque, students from a Grade 12 construction course at Algonquin were given the opportunity for some real work experience. The group of eight students built the walls in sections at school, and these were transported out to the Club. Over a period of three days, and under the supervision of Marc Levesque, they did the general framing of the new part of the building. This included the walls, and installation of Kent trusses. Jack Aiton and Tom Cook oversaw the rest of the construction project. A crew consisting of Jack, Tom, Michel, Marc Levesque, and Perry Kirkey laid the roof sheathing. Knowlton Potter joined in to assist with the shingling. Jack and Tom looked after the siding, trim, and doors. The total cost was \$12 209.51, offset by \$5417 in personal donations and Wingate (\$3000) and funds from the capital fund. A garage sale hosted by the Lynches brought in another \$200.

The result was a much more spacious and safer work environment. The Alpines had their own separate space. The Pisten Bulley was never happier!

Trail Groomer Reserve Fund Created

Although the general financial operations of the Club and any organization are quite mundane and routine, there are certain events and details that stand out. One such detail occurred in January 2000 when the Club, following the 5-year plan, made the commitment to set aside \$7500 from the 1998/99 season and \$10 000 from the operating fund annually for the Trail

Groomer Reserve Fund. This would be for the replacement or for major repair of the Pisten Bulley. When the Pisten Bulley was purchased in 1995, it was then a 10-year old machine. Five years later, the Club membership would not tolerate going backwards to “pre-Pisten Bulley days”. Thus there was a need to have a fund established for the eventual purchase of a new machine.

The Pisten Bulley is presently in very good shape. Some major components (tracks, hydraulic hoses and motors) have been replaced. But the Mercedes-Benz engine is sound, and with the customary annual maintenance and expected hydraulic parts replacements, the Pisten Bulley has many years of service left. The dream, though, is to eventually have a higher-powered machine that can have a renovator working at the front end.

Parking Lot and Access

The increased use of the Club in the fall was having an impact on the parking lot. Formerly a hay field, the area could withstand winter traffic, but droves of school buses in the fall (bringing students for running events) would turn the parking lot into a mucky quagmire.

Bill Aultman did some grading to level out the tire ruts and also spread several loads of gravel on the upper parking lot.

Also, new steps were built to provide easier access to and from the parking lot.

Property Rental

North Bay Nordic moved formally into the facility rental business when Joe Lynch set up an official price list for groups who might wish to use the facilities. This was not really new as in past years groups such as the YMCA had rented the Club for summer activities. Using the Club in 2000 was the North Bay Cycling group who staged the Mattawa to North Bay mountain bike race. They used the Club grounds and building for a weekend in August 2000, paying \$200 to the Club.

.....And Other Things

Jackrabbit and Challenge

Cathy King again organized the 9-week Jackrabbit programme. It ran from early January to February 27, although the final barbecue and awards day had to be postponed to March 5 due to rain. Jackrabbit leaders were Jean Michel Fillion, Marc Fillion, Emily Weiskopf, Victoria Lampkin, Jessica Penney, Maegan Hoetmer, John Harding, Laura Burke, Leigh Watson, Mel Jodouin, Amanda Mc Lachlan, Craig Watson, Heather Ryman, Nick King, and Joshua King.

Paul Harding led the Challenge programme.

Snack Bar

Ann Burton and Linda Hughes were the regulars behind the snack bar; and on busy weekends, Dan Amyotte assisted. It was unfortunate that our snack bar and clubhouse managers and assistants resigned their positions at the end of the season.

Social

The traditional Nordic events continued and included the Open House on November 28, the Potluck Supper on January 23, Pancake Brunch and ski on February 12. Due to the March meltdown just before the Canadian Masters race week, the Personal Distance Challenge and Potluck on March 4, and the Easter Egg Hunt on March 5 were cancelled.

A special Y2K New Year's Eve party was planned but cancelled (perhaps a bit too hastily) due to apparent lack of interest. The Steak-and-ski dinner had to be cancelled due to the Junior Racing Team's scheduling difficulties.

North Bay Nordic participated for the second year in the Canadian Cancer Society's "Glide and Slide" day that promoted all of the ski venues in the area at the same time as raising money for cancer research. The annual Rotary Skiarama was held on February 23, raising a total of \$52 000 in total area from snowmobilers and skiers. Although there is no record of the amount that North Bay Nordic contributed, Skiarama commemorated on a plaque the fact that since 1985, Nordic had brought in a total of \$30 000, an average of about \$2000 per year.

Publicity

The Club got back into the Nugget sports pages as a result of new ownership and a new publisher, Paul McCuaig. During the winter, I approached the Nugget and set up a meeting with their new chief and sports editor Jim Hutchison. Fortunately, our request to resurrect the "Nordic News" matched their very positive desire to re-establish many similar community-based news items. So "Nordic News" returned, shared on alternating weeks by Dave Minden and Joe Lynch.

Prior to the 2000 race events, Joe Lynch headed a committee that presented a formal request to City Hall for some support. In a presentation to City Council, Joe outlined the contribution of the Club to the local economy and to local amateur and school sports. And he pointed out that City Hall had never contributed in any way to North Bay Nordic's successful history and development. The request was for substantial billboard advertising at entrances to North Bay. These would note that North Bay Nordic was the centre of cross-country skiing in the region. We did not get the billboards, but we did get the recognition and some good publicity in the corridors of City Hall as Mayor Jack Burrows proclaimed that March 6 to 12 would be "Cross-country ski week" in North Bay, in recognition of the races we were hosting.

Highway signage was altered due to the government's adoption of the TODS (Tourism Oriented Directional Signs). Gone were the traditional white fingerboard signs. In were the new blue signs. Ours were located on Highway 63 and at the turn onto Northshore. These signs were not inexpensive – over \$225 for just two years on a rental basis.

On January 8, Ed Rogers arranged for a Soloman and Peltonen ski and boot demo day. This gave skiers an opportunity to try on boots and the latest in classic and skate skis.

The new Nordic brochure was printed and delivered to tourist information sites across the province. This new-look brochure was a work of art created by Bernie and Linda Penney, owners of Penney and Company. In

addition to taking the stunning photographs that were used in the brochure, Bernie also coordinated the funding for the project by Bigwood Sporting Goods and Pinewood Park.

Club Survey

Dawna Nighbor attempted to get a feel for the wishes of the membership with a survey in the October newsletter. Although there were only 19 responses, the trends did indicate a strong need for programmes like Jackrabbit, for some sort of weekly training programme for adults, and for half-day sessions in skill development, in classic technique.

Instruction

Responding to some of the instructional needs of our skiers, Mark Thomas took on the role of Club instructor. He offered a series of instructional sessions for groups (\$50 per skier for 6 sessions) in beginner classical and novice to advanced skate technique. Private lessons were available at \$15 per hour.

Races

School Races

Chippewa coach Knowlton Potter established Tuesdays as Time Trial Day. This was open to all skiers, not just high school racing teams. Nordic hosted NDA races on Friday February 11, and then NOSSA on Thursday February 17. The senior boys used the newly created reverse Brown and Red combination.

Junior Racing Team

Coaches Martin and Dawna Nighbor, now both qualified as Level 1 Technical Course Conductors, continued with the development of the Club's junior racers. Many others assisted. Joe and Marilyn Lynch with the help of Sandra Farquhar and Linda Kirkey manned the snack bars at cross-country running meets to raise money. Cathy Seguin led the sponsorship drive. Don and Sue Priebe and Marilyn Lynch organized the annual ski exchange on November 13 at the clubhouse. Don Priebe also donated an entire line of ski waxes. Larry Sheppard helped out with strength training. And Kiwanis sponsored their new red outfits.

Several members from the previous year's team (the #2 ranked team in Ontario) were recognized for their effort and results. Andrea and Kimberly Nighbor were named to the Ontario Racing Team for Continental Cup races. And joining the Ontario Development Team were Heather Alexander, Colleen Lynch, David Nighbor, and Jeff Seguin.

The team was honoured by a fall visit from Marty Hall and Alain Parent from the National Team. They congratulated the team for its results and spoke about what it takes to compete at the international level.

A strong contingent represented North Bay Nordic on the Ontario team that competed at the Canadian Juniors at Lappe Nordic (about the only place with any snow). They were Heather Alexander, Gord Hunter, Andrea Nighbor, Kim Nighbor, David Nighbor, and Jeff Seguin.

Following the Canadian Juniors, the North Bay Nordic Junior Racing Team was declared the top team in Ontario.



Junior Racing Team 1999-2000

Martin Nighbor, Kim Nighbor, Rachel Lochhead, Andrea Nighbor, Heather Alexander, Sarah Priebe, Dawna Nighbor
 Kelly Lynch, David Nighbor, Jeff Seguin, Colleen Lynch
 Missing: Gord Hunter, Valerie Hunter, Becky Saari, Geoffrey Delean

**Thanks for your support
 North Bay Ski Club**

**North Bay Nordic Ski Club's
 Junior National Ontario Champions, 1999 - 2000**

Back row, left to right: David Nighbor, Rachel Lochhead, Heather Alexander, Kimberley Nighbor, Andrea Nighbor, Front row: Jeff Seguin, Martin Nighbor (coach), Gord Hunter

Officials Clinic

Jean Bristow organized a combined Level 1 and Level 2 Officials clinic for November 5 and 6. Led by Technical Delegate Al White of Orangeville, the course attracted 13 participants. It was hoped that there would be an infusion of new qualified officials to run Nordic's races and, in the long term, the prospect of hosting the Canadian Juniors.

Club Races

Through the winter, excitement grew again as North Bay Nordic got set to host a major race - the Canadian Masters Championships and the Ontario Championships. It is unclear exactly how we got ourselves into this predicament. Some say it was based on a misunderstanding – that Tom Cook's request for information about hosting a future Canadian Juniors was twisted into an acceptance to host the Canadian Masters. But there was a record in the April, 1999 Board minutes that Tom had talked to Jack White about the possibility of hosting the Canadian Masters, but nothing was finalized. Nevertheless, it was unusual that it was posted officially on the CCC website that we were to host the race before we actually knew about it.

Thinking that a weekend event could combine several events, we also agreed to host the Ontario Championships, as we would do the same with our own North Bay Nordic races. But then the negotiations with Jack White (President of the Canadian Masters) indicated that things were going to get a lot more complicated. The Masters wanted a multi-day affair with more than just the typical two-race weekend. After weeks of e-mail correspondence and negotiation between Chief of the Race Tom Cook and both the Canadian Masters and Cross Country Ontario, the schedule was finalized.

| | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Tuesday | March 7 | Canadian Masters | 10 km classical |
| Thursday | March 9 | Canadian Masters | 10 km free technique |
| Friday | March 10 | Canadian Masters | 4 x 2 km relay |
| Saturday | March 11 | Canadian Masters | 30 km (classical and free) |
| | | Ontario Championships | free technique races |
| Sunday | March 12 | Ontario Championships | classical races |

The Canadian Masters would include lunches after the races, social events, and a banquet on Saturday. For the roughly 100 Masters skiers who would be traveling from across Canada, we wanted to showcase our facility – and make up for the frigid Canadian Masters of 1992. It couldn't be that cold in March!

The primary Race Committee for the Canadian Masters included Tom Cook (Chief of the Competition), Brian Thomas (Chief of the Course), Bill Burton (Chief of Start and Timing) with Sport-Stats, and Jean Bristow (Race Secretary). For the Ontario Championships, Dave Minden resumed the role of Chief of the Course and other positions were the same.

Major sponsors for the event, all arranged by Tom Cook, were KPMG, Columbia Paper, Merrill Lynch, Pinewood Park Inn (race headquarters), Port-A-Room, Penney and Co., and Bigwood Sporting Goods. The generous \$3000 contribution from Merrill Lynch paid for the 200 new stretch pullover bibs that have been a great addition to the racing equipment the Club has accumulated over the years.

The plans were finalized. The race entries started to appear. The course setup crews put up the fencing, flags, banners, and advertising signage. Included in that was a festive looking array of all the provincial flags which gave a very colourful look to the start-finish area. And then the rain fell. And it got warmer. The snow started to disappear. We prayed for a miracle. Racers started to arrive. It wasn't warm anymore – it was hot! A bit of a miracle arrived in the form of a parade orange city dump trucks (arranged by Tom Cook and Cathy Seguin at City Hall) that hauled snow for hours from the airport on Monday, March 8. Jack, on the Pisten Bulley, plowed it onto the field to make a strip for the finish and lap lanes, and at the start area. And if all else failed, a crew of a dozen true believers, armed with shovels and rakes, spent several hours on the Yellow Trail pulling in what snow was left from the bush onto the trail. Maybe the Yellow Trail would be all we had left.

Brian Thomas, Jane and I skied the Blue backwards looking for any indication that the Blue could be used. When we got to the sunny exposed areas near High Lake, we knew that it was a wipeout as there were just too many areas that were bare. The Red was in better shape and, with some shoveling, was our only hope.

The 10 km classical race on Tuesday morning was two laps around the Red. The Chief of the Course, Brian Thomas, stationed crews at various points on the trail. Their job was to shovel anything white onto the trail. As a participant, I recall that the first lap was actually on snow; the second lap though, things were getting very dirty, and the snow was becoming transparent with dirt and rocks showing underneath. The race was a success – but that was it for North Bay Nordic.

During the lunch and social, Tom Cook made the fateful announcement. Barrie Storey and Timiskaming Nordic would take over as host venue of the races as they had good snow. Our volunteers would, where possible, assist the Timiskaming crew in continuing the organization of the races.

Thus began several days of driving between North Bay and Cobalt. The Friday relays were cancelled. Most of the Masters racers headed up to Timiskaming Nordic for a day of skiing in cooler temperatures. Quite a few left their accommodation at Pinewood Park Inn in favour of something closer, but many did stay. And the Saturday evening banquet and awards ceremony was a well-attended and fun event. The Ontario Championships also were very successful and went very smoothly.

Besides being unable to showcase North Bay Nordic and our trails (remember the 1992 frigid Canadian Masters when cold weather cancelled one day of racing and modified the other), we also lost some of our anticipated profit. Total income for the entire week of racing was \$16 776.26. Total expenses (which included \$4425 – half of the entry fees paid to Timiskaming Nordic) were \$14 358.99. So a tidy profit of \$2417 would have been over \$6600 if the weather had co-operated. But the Club did gain some physical resources as a legacy from the event. The new collection of stretch bibs was a welcome addition. And Saturn North Bay (Peter and Lynda Mosely-Williams) made a generous donation of \$500 that paid for the new race weatherboard. They committed to a two-year donation for their Saturn sign to appear on the weatherboard.

A week later, it snowed. We had good skiing into late March.

Timiskaming Nordic was very appreciative of the work and organization of the North Bay Nordic Race Committee and its volunteers. Temiskaming Nordic put together a framed collage of photos and a letter of appreciation that now hangs in our clubhouse.

Future Plans

Trail upgrading would continue on the Green Trail. The next section would be from the Lookout up the Grunt Hill. Also the steep uphill on the Red would be widened.

And Nordic's builders had their eyes on Jackrabbit Lodge that was in need of a major facelift – definitely a lift!

Retiring from the Board were Emmanuelle Gunter, Noreen Yeates, Jean Bristow, Joe Lynch.

Recollections 1999-2000

Chapter 27 2000-2001 A Season Of Changes and Light

Board of Directors

| | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Marc Lacasse | President - NOD - Publicity |
| John Wipprecht | Treasurer |
| Kathy Murray* | Secretary - School Liaison |
| Michel Chartrand | Trails |
| Kevin Denston | Newsletter - Social |
| Dawna Nighbor | Junior Racing Team |
| Mark Thomas | Races - Instruction |
| Don Farintosh | Building and Property |
| Randy Hancock | Membership |

*Lynn Ingham initially joined the Board of Directors but due to difficulties in getting to meetings resigned in September. In October, Kathy Murray agreed to join the Board, and she assumed the role of Secretary.

The addition of Kevin Denston and Mark Thomas represented a passing of the torch to the next generation of skiers. Both sons of veteran Club members (Dick and Gayle Denston, and Brian and Brenda Thomas) Kevin and Mark were members of Jackrabbit and skied competitively with their high schools and the Nordic Junior Racing Team

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Membership: | 831+ |
| Membership Fees: | Single \$80 (95); Student \$40 (55); Senior \$70 (80); Family \$160 (185) |
| Poles & lights erected: | 10 |
| Trillium Grant for lights: | \$18 628 |
| Membership revenue: | \$42 172 |
| Total Assets: | \$160 391 |
| Busy Beaver Award: | Dave Minden |

Trails

Green Trail Work

Trail boss Michel Chartrand continued the commitment to the upgrading of the Green Trail. Going backwards or counterclockwise from the top of the Pipeline Access Road, the next stage was from the sharp turn at "Fred's trough" backwards up the long twisting downhill. This section was widened and levelled to a point near the crest of the "Grunt Hill." We started to recognize the steadily decreasing number of kilometres that needed to be done on the Green, and whether it was the better trail bed underneath or better snow on top, Michel reported in early January that there seemed to be more skiers using the Green Trail.

Additional work was done on the Red and Blue. The steep Red uphill was widened, and a culvert was installed where previously a small creek was prone to course across the trail. On the Blue, ditching was done to raise the trail bed even more on the section after Porcupine Hill, below the cliffs. Chip day resulted in more loads of chips being spread at key points on the inner trails.

Land Use Conflict

The application by the Club to extend the 6-month LUP to 11 months did not pan out as hoped. The MNR advised local residents and “stakeholders” of this request, and, unfortunately, it drew a response from a small minority (North Bay Anglers and Hunters - NBAH, and ATV users) who questioned why the MNR would give preferred status to North Bay Nordic, to give us single use tenure to the trails and the lands contained by them.

A strategy was developed whereby Joe Lynch and Marc Lacasse would meet with NBAH to attempt to alleviate their concern. (They would be allowed to cross our trails and access High Lake.) The issue was not resolved. After discussions between Marc Lacasse and Phil Hall at the MNR, the attempt to secure an 11-month LUP was dropped.

The more pressing issue, one that would probably deal with the very same concern of motorized vehicles on our trails, was the proposed Mattawa River Park expansion that might include the Nordic trail system. It would become critical to maintain tenure within the new park structure.

Cross-Country Running

Michel Chartrand organized the September Memorial Run that raised \$200 for the Terry Fox Foundation. The Green Trail Run was held on October 29 and was followed by a pancake lunch courtesy of the Lynches and Marilyn’s excellent pancake recipe. Seven school cross-country events added approximately \$1000 to Club revenues.

Mountain Biking and Insurance Liability

Over the last several years the popularity of mountain or trail biking had grown, and the Nordic trails had improved. More frequently, bike riders were touring the Nordic trails and other trails in the area, the Pipeline Access Road, and the pipeline itself. The position of the Club was neutral although local race organizers had used North Bay Nordic as the terminus of the Mattawa to North Bay race. Also there was some concern that bike wheels might in some conditions cause rutting and water drainage problems that could affect skiing. The prospect of some sort of partnership with the North Bay Mountain Biking Club arose in October 2000 and discussion turned to the Club’s liability considering the fact that in the “off-season” we have no real ownership of the trails when mountain biking is occurring. After some investigation, it was decided that North Bay Nordic simply could not afford the high premiums that would be required if we got involved officially with mountain biking

There Will Be Light!

The trail lighting project was in limbo for several months as some difficulties were encountered in obtaining the materials. Finally, ten 35-foot pressure-treated poles appeared in the fall, and, before the snowflakes descended, Bill Thompson was able to start trenching for the electrical supply and excavating the holes for the poles.

The final cost of the project was \$18 628, down slightly from the projected \$19 550. The Trillium portion was \$14 000, the balance from Club funds. The lights were turned on for the first test on October 24, 2000. Some of

us were concerned that the mounds of dirt on the Main Trail would interfere with any early snow, but the trail was put back together in early November. For the first season of having a lighted trail, the Board decided to have the Club open five nights per week (Monday to Friday) from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. with the snack bar and ski rentals open. As fall progressed into early winter, skiers began to take advantage of the opportunities for evening skiing. Although the number of skiers was not high, the Board felt that it was important to let things progress and to give time for skiers to adjust to the new possibility of night skiing.

Early December snow allowed for the system to be tested in real winter conditions, and it was quickly determined that there were some serious “dark spots” on the trail. It had been hoped that the lights placed on the Main Trail would cast sufficient illumination onto the Yellow Trail and last half of the Gold, but because of the trees blocking the light, this did not work out as planned. There were some very dark sections on the outer loop of the Yellow where it is over 50 metres away from the Main Trail. This did add a bit of excitement to skiing, as our “night eyes” did not quite have time to adjust to the change in lighting. The Gold Trail, which is closer to the Main Trail, also had some very dark areas, especially on the “very steep” downhill halfway back. Skiers who had never experienced night skiing soon learned how conditions change at night. The glide was very good (too good at times!); the trail became much narrower than you would like; and those gentle downhills seemed to be tilted even more. You skied with your ankles and knees more than your eyes, for your lower extremities were conveying information to your brain. “Was that a bump?”

The lights were “officially” turned on at 7 p.m. December 14 with a small “turn on the lights” ceremony. The first Club event to take advantage of the lights was Mark Thomas’ fun relay race on a cool December 30 evening, the first leg of the Nordic Cup Series of races. Because of some dark spots on the trails, Gail and Stephanie Rees constructed candle lanterns, and placed them at strategic places.

During the winter, to illuminate the darker sections of the Yellow, Michel Chartrand and Joe Lynch laid some additional wiring along the snow and wired up some temporary floodlights. This interim solution helped somewhat.

In January 2001, the decision was made to apply to Trillium for further funding to finish the project (especially now that we knew more lighting was required in definite areas). The special January 21 meeting at Nordic considered the options. Present were Marc Lacasse, John Wipprecht, Don Farintosh, Randy Hancock, Michel Chartrand, Emmanuelle Gunter, Mark Thomas, Dawna Nighbor, Kathy Murray, Joe Lynch, and Tom Cook. John Wipprecht outlined the key points related to Trillium, that every organization has a \$75 000 lifetime limit and that Trillium meets every six weeks to consider requests of up to \$25 000. Michel Chartrand listed the three main parts to the plan: first, finish the Yellow for safer night skiing; second, complete the last half of the Gold (from the Yellow turnoff) with seven poles and ten lighting fixtures; and third, extend the lighting up the Main Trail and the full Gold Trail with eight poles and ten light fixtures. The installation, if approved, would be in the off-season. The plan was accepted and after estimates were compiled, an application for a Trillium grant of \$24 500 was submitted. This would allow for completion of the Yellow and last half of the Gold Trails. (Further work on extending lighting to the full Gold Trail would require the purchase of a \$46 000 transformer and \$17 000 for poles and lights.)

Skiing at the Nordic

When you're skiing at the Nordic
You're skiing at the best
I'm sure that you'll enjoy yourself
Even if you're just a guest.

If you're into colours
We have lots of them for you,
We've got yellow, purple, red, and brown,
We've got golden, green, and blue.

The golden is for seniors
To help them pass their day,
The yellow's for beginners,
The purple lets you play.

The red is quite a workout
With all its ups and downs
If you'd like a little speed
Be sure to try the brown.

The blue appeals to everyone,
It's scenic and it's fast
Next we have the green trail
And I've left it for the last.

The green is kind of special
At least it is for me,
If you enjoy your solitude,
This is the one to ski.

Wildlife still abounds there
And you're sure to see a few
When you think you're almost finished
You're right back on the blue.

So pick the trail that suits you best
And have yourself a day
You're skiing at the Nordic
Now what more can I say.

Bert Marsden – 2001

Building and Property

Jackrabbit Lodge

After the building blitzes of the previous years, the only other building left to work on was Jackrabbit Lodge. What was formerly the Club's equipment garage but now the Jackrabbit refuge and race registration site was now sinking slowly into the ground as the poplar poles it was sitting on were starting to rot away. The solution was straightforward and engineered by Claude Jolin. The building was raised so that a better foundation could be laid underneath. A base of six-by-six pressure treated timbers and 1" crushed stone created a secure bed for the building, and that should last for many years. The siding would be re-done the following year.

Change in Management

A behind-the-scenes change in the Building and Property portfolio initiated a significant change in the management of the Club. Until this year, the Board member in charge of "Building and Property" had also inherited the management of the snack bar, ski rental facility, and the clubhouse staff. Over the years, this area of responsibility had grown exponentially, and Don Farintosh was the first person to point out that this was too much for one Director. Don argued that the responsibilities of Building and Property should cover only the management and maintenance of the property as the "Head of Maintenance" might do at some building, school, or other institution. Thus, management of personnel was turned over to the team of president and treasurer. And because important details such as season opening or closing due to weather also included the trails director, it evolved that the Trails Director would be included with this team. These changes would be reflected in changes to the Club by-laws the following year.

Health and Safety

Health and insurance inspectors made their presence felt and made several recommendations during the season. Some of the issues that Don dealt with were the need for a better functioning refrigerator that would keep the temperature constant, a protective railing around the woodstove, and skiers leaving waxing irons turned on in the waxing room. Water testing consistently showed good results. Don also coordinated the annual rituals of the annual fall cleanup, shoveling the snow off the roof to prevent backup and leakage down the inside walls, and the spring cleanup after the AGM.

.....And Other Things

Jackrabbit

Andrew Koski-Harja took over the Jackrabbit programme with the assistance of Laura Denston. Not only was the Jackrabbit leader new, CCC brought in a revamped Jackrabbit programme. There were many delays in providing programme materials and even the badges for the final awards day, so Andrew was faced with many difficulties in his first year. But the programme was a success with 84 young skiers learning the art of kicking and gliding. Andrew arranged for Martin Nighbor to conduct a Level 1 Technical course for his

leaders; and Jackrabbit Instructors Craig Fettes, Megan Hoetmer, Melanie Jodouin, Jessica Penney, and Craig Watson earned this first part of their Level 1 Coaching certification. Other Jackrabbit leaders were Aaron Fallon, Jean Michel (Phil) Fillion, Harmony Kulikauskas, Karla Svensson, and Leah Watson. In their bright new yellow vests, the leaders and their young charges provided a bright and lively bit of excitement to the trails every Saturday and Sunday afternoon.

Challenge

Sarah Priebe took over the reins as coach of this lively group of skiers in the grade 5 to 8 range. The Challenge programme offered something in between Jackrabbit (for skiers aged 7 to 13) and the Development Team with its stronger emphasis on competition.

Instruction

Mark Thomas again offered a blend of group and private lessons and took advantage of the opportunity that night skiing presented. This revived an old tradition of night lessons that had been common under the lights at Thompson Park in the mid-1970s and later at Pinewood Park. Night lessons are advantageous for adults who might have a very busy weekend schedule, and also for those who might not prefer the “exposure” in daytime lessons. Some novice skiers are very insecure and prefer lessons in a darker more private atmosphere.

Night Activities

Several initiatives were taken to publicize night skiing and to attract skiers to the Club on weeknights. Thursday evening was named “Family Fun Night” and featured a variety of activities – mainly centred around a bonfire on the field with roasted marshmallows and free cider in the snack bar. These proved to be quite popular. Some also took advantage of having a light supper at the Club, followed or preceded by skiing under the lights. “Toonie Tuesday” attempted to attract novice skiers for an inexpensive hour and a half lesson (7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.) and this also showed some success. Joe Lynch arranged for several veteran Club members to provide the instruction on a volunteer basis. With Mark Thomas’ evening lessons and Nordic events such as the Steak And Ski Dinner and Potluck Supper, Club members began to adjust to this new era in Nordic’s development.

Night use of the trails was monitored with a sign-in sheet to record how many were skiing the trails. Many nights were very quiet, but it appeared that when there was some organized event or activity numbers increased.

Social

The Open House on December 3 coincided with the official opening of the ski season as early snow provided better than fair conditions. The Club was officially open seven days a week from then on. The Potluck Supper (January 14), Pancake Brunch, and Personal Distance Challenge and Potluck (March 10), and Easter Egg Hunt (March 11) provided the usual festive moments for the calorie challenged.

Personal Distance Challenge – March 10 2001

| | | | | | |
|-------|--------------------|-------|---------------|--------|------------------|
| 19 km | Keegan Smith | 51 km | Marilyn Lynch | 61 km | John Wipprecht |
| 30 km | Nathalie Wipprecht | 52 km | Murray Tough | 62 km | Mark Clout |
| 42 km | Anne Garrett | 52 km | Al Tough | 62 km | Dave Schroeder |
| 42 km | Janet Potter | 53 km | Dale Brouse | 68 km | Paul Lacasse |
| 43 km | Melanie Wipprecht | | | 81 km | Kevin Denston |
| 45 km | Alan Garrett | | | 100 km | Michel Chartrand |

And New Faces at the Snack Bar

Three new faces appeared behind the Nordic snack bar – three to reflect the need for more staff to handle the longer working hours. President Marc Lacasse and Treasurer John Wipprecht coordinated the interviews and hiring of the new staff. The newcomers were Cindy Brouse (wife of Widdifield coach Bryan Brouse), Vicky Smith (local caterer), and Patti Graham (who with her husband pilot Bob had lived in Thunder Bay and skied at Kamview Nordic). While the new staff maintained the tradition of excellent Nordic oatmeal cookies, they made several additions to the menu such as a variety of sandwiches; and as a bonus, Vicky provided the food at the year-end AGM.

Financial Ups and Downs

By December 31, after one month of operations, Treasurer John Wipprecht reported that revenues had approached one half of the total revenues of the preceding year. The Club was in a very financially sound situation. It would be very easy to meet the commitment of the \$10 000 outlay to the New Groomer Fund.

In mid-February though, the Pisten Bulley decided to take a break from winter's demands and rest a bit out on the Blue Trail. The problem was a broken seal on a primary hydraulic pump. As Jack Aiton describes it, this main right drive pump controlled the tracks, the front plow, and the raising and lowering of the back end. Simply put, no pump – no Pisten Bulley!



“I’ve never been so cold!” Jack Aiton and Ralph Champaign at the tent

A tent-like structure of 2x4s and tarpaulins was set up to protect the machine from the elements where it was parked on the Pipeline Access Road at the turn back onto our trail. The pump had to be removed (no simple task working outdoors in sub-zero temperatures), brought in for repair at CHV Hydraulics, and then taken back out for installation. The machine was down for eleven days and in that time Jack and Tom reverted back to sole use of the Alpines. (Never sell the Alpines!)

The crew that worked diligently on the construction of the “tent” and repair were Jack Aiton, Tom Cook, Ralph Champaign, and Neil Bielby. The cost of the repair was \$3790 to put a new seal in the pump; and that put a bit of a dent into the \$20 000 trails budget.

This was also a difficult year financially due to the early start. Treasurer John Wipprecht pointed out the paradox that in a longer season, revenues remain fairly stable but costs go up. (The reverse is also true: the Club makes substantial profit in short seasons with poor skiing.) With this in mind, John cautioned to be prudent with expenses such as the newsletter. Efforts were made to reduce costs by promoting the newsletter distribution by e-mail. Since then, many Club members have opted for “free” electronic mailing of the newsletter.

But even with a large Pisten Bulley repair bill and high expenses over the season, John crunched the numbers and found a way to put \$10 000 into the groomer reserve fund with a bit of room to spare.

Rotary Skiarama

Tom Cook took over the Nordic side of the Rotary fundraiser for challenged children. It took place at the Nordic trails on Sunday February 11. Tom challenged Nordic Club members to out-do non-members and to surpass a goal of \$2000. A hefty \$3800 was added to the Rotary funds for this worthy cause.

Publicity

The Publicity Committee of Marc Lacasse, Joe Lynch, and Dave Minden worked on a variety of items. The “Nordic News” article continued in the Nugget, written in alternate weeks by Joe Lynch and Dave Minden. The North Bay Nordic brochure was modified. The last printing had been exhausted, and it was felt that this was a good opportunity to adjust the brochure to reflect recent changes (lighted trails and new programmes such as the Development team). Ed and Marianne Rogers (Bigwood Sporting Goods) and Tom Mason, new manager at the Clarion Resort – Pinewood Park, generously donated \$500 each for the \$1000 cost of reprinting 5000 brochures at Penney and Company.

Discussions with Clarion – Pinewood resulted in other agreements. Tom Mason would do some in-house advertising of the Nordic trails and include Nordic in his ski packages. If required, Pinewood would be the race headquarters for a major race. And Nordic supplied Pinewood with a limited number of day-passes at a rate of 20 for \$100, aimed especially at Air Canada pilots who might need some recreation while waiting in North Bay for their next flight out. They had initially requested a “corporate membership” with several membership buttons; this was denied as it was outside the scope of the Club’s bylaws.

Another publicity and public relations initiative was to create and post trail condition descriptions. In newspaper reports and on the Trail Conditions Board in the clubhouse, we had for many year used the common descriptive terms “Excellent, Good, Fair, and Poor” to describe the current snow and trail conditions; but everyone had different concepts of what these terms meant. In discussions with Michel Chartrand we came up with interpretations to clarify these meanings. For classical technique, “Excellent” meant that a skier could stay in frozen-in freshly set tracks 100% of the time. “Good” indicated worn out tracks especially on downhill curves. “Fair” indicated bumpy, uneven trails with worn out or icy tracks that might be difficult for novice skiers. “Poor” reflected that obstacles presented hazards on the trails and demanded extreme caution. And “Closed”, simply meant, “closed “ (period!), due to extreme hazards or for a special event such as a race.

* * * * *

And a venture into the field of public speaking had an unexpected result. New Rotarian Tom Cook was on the prowl for someone to speak at a Monday Rotary meeting on behalf of North Bay Nordic to give some exposure to the Club, to tell them what we were doing as a successful ski club in the area. (We had for many years been associated with Rotary in the hosting of Skiarama; and Rotary and Nordic had many common members; but the average Rotarian knew little about us). The job fell to Joe Lynch and me to address the Rotarians on January 22. Joe spoke about the benefits that our Club had on the local economy and on school sports and tourism, while I spoke about the diversity of the Club in its membership, programmes, activities, and natural environment. I was quite surprised at the response to this presentation; and when Shirley Bass and Jackie Goulet suggested immediately afterwards that I write a history of the Club, I started a journey that is still ongoing.

* * * * *

Races

School Races

High school races were again held on the Nordic trails – NDA on February 15 and NOSSA on February 19. The Brown Trail was reversed for recreational skiing from February 4 to 19 to give Club members the option of an extra workout.

Club Races

Mark Thomas initiated the Nordic Cup races - a series of Club races intended to attract a cross-section of skiers. The concept included the formation of 4-member teams that would have one skier from each of four age categories: 6 to 12, 13 to 19, 20 to 40, and 40 plus. Mark composed a points system that would be based on finishing times at the Early Bird Relay (December 30), the North Bay Nordic Ski Races (January 27, 28 – in either of the two races), and the Loppet (February 4). The accumulated points for the teams would then be used to determine the starting times for the final event on March 3, a reverse pursuit relay. The concept was excellent; the initial participation of six teams was great;

the “drop-out rate” was unfortunate – as several teams could not maintain the group commitment to come out for the events. But it was fun for those that took part. The first Nordic Cup winning team members (reduced to a three-skier team) were Carol Farintosh, Andree Morneau, and Brenton Farintosh.

Michel Chartrand kept the sprinters buzzing with Wednesday evening sprints. A system was set up whereby after four sprints, skiers would be seeded so that skiers would compete against comparable skiers.

New Race Organizers

Mark Thomas took over the reins as Chief of the Competitions with Andrew Koski-Harja assuming the role of Chief of the Course for the North Bay Nordic Races. Tom Cook looked after the Stadium area set-up, Bill Burton and Knowlton Potter continued to look after the outside timing systems, and Gail Rees, after a several-year absence, stepped back into the luxury of Claude’s Cabane and resumed the duties of “Chief of Electronic Timing and Calculations.” It was decided that although “Sportstats” electronic timing was good to have for major races the Club could do the job quite well on its own and save some money (\$600 per race). Gail’s secret was to use Microsoft Excel’s capability to subtract times from one column to the next. Thus, it could deal with an individual skier’s start time, finish time, and then calculate the elapsed race time for each racer. It was then a simple task to re-order the list from first to last. The system worked well with results being produced promptly after the last racer for each age category had completed the race. Gail also handled the calculations for the Early Bird Relay and Nordic Cup race series.

Development Team

A new group, the Development Team, appeared on the Nordic trails under the leadership of Don Farintosh and assisted by Jan Vandermeer. The purpose of the Development Team (for skiers aged nine to thirteen) was to combine skill development with emphasis on fun competition. It would complement the Jackrabbit, Challenge, and Junior Racing Team programs, and would serve as a “B Team” for aspiring junior racers. The program got underway on October 29 with weekly two-hour dryland training sessions. Those who took part in the Nordic Cup series had good results in relays, the North Bay Nordic Races and Loppet. Several of the group raced at the 2001 Ontario Midget Championships at Onaping Falls, Windy Lake.

Members of the first Development Team were Zaille Apramian, Erin Calhoun, Liam Calhoun, Brenton Farintosh, Adam Henschel, Erica Hoetmer, Sonja Kaminski, Jy Lawrence, Carlie Penney, Robyn Rodger, Mackenzie Rodger, Skye Rudachyk, Maya Tekavcic, Robert Trenker, Kayla Turner, Jonathon Winter, and Bethany Wood.

Junior Racing Team

Veteran coaches Donna and Martin Nighbor welcomed Tom Tekavcic as an assistant coach and his South River area skiers. Also assisting were Joe and Marilyn Lynch who ran the cross-country running meet snack bars, and organized the ski exchange on November 11; and Bill and Sylvania Alexander who organized the Steak And Ski fundraiser.

Named to the Ontario Development Team were Gord Hunter, Rachel Lochhead, David Nighbor, Heather Alexander, Kim Nighbor, Andrea Nighbor, and Jeff Seguin. David and Andrea were also named to the Ontario Elite Racing Team.

Six members of the team competed at the Canadian Juniors at Val Cartier. They were Andrea, Kim, and David Nighbor, Jeff Seguin, Heather Alexander, and Gord Hunter. And with them, Dawna Nighbor served as one of the three head Ontario coaches with Martin as an assistant coach.

After the dust had settled and the points counted, the North Bay Nordic Junior Racing Team was declared the Number One team in Ontario.

Also during the winter, both David and Jeff were named to the Canadian Junior European Tour Team. David elected to stay and ski locally while Jeff participated in his first taste of international competition.



**North Bay Nordic Racing Team, 2000 - 2001
Ontario Cup Club Champions**

Back: Paul Lacasse, Becky Saari, Kim Nighbor, Heather Alexander, David Nighbor
Middle: Dawna Nighbor, Tavis Apramian, Jonathon Saari, Melanie Wipprecht, Martin Nighbor
Front: Kelly Lynch, Linnea Rudachyk, Jeff Seguin, Tom Tekavcic, Jesse Winter
Missing: Valerie Hunter, Gord Hunter, Andrea Nighbor, Colleen Lynch

At the university level, North Bay Nordic Junior grad Stephen Burse (Lakehead) skied with the Canadian University team at the World University Championships.

Future Plans

Continuing work on the Green Trail would eventually result in a longer season for one of our premier attractions.

The Pisten Bulley Reserve Fund was growing but slowly and the possibility of the increasing frequency of breakdowns was of concern to some. To

more speedily achieve the goal of a higher reserve fund, it was decided to increase the membership fees for 2001-02 with a surcharge. The family membership would increase by \$20 and the other memberships would increase by \$10. This was part of the budget presented at the spring AGM, setting the precedent for budget presentations at that time.

For the required additional trail lights, it was hoped that the \$24 500 Trillium grant would come through in the summer or fall.

Leaving the Board were Kathy Murray, Michel Chartrand, and Dawna Nighbor.

At the AGM I made three proposals that had been previously accepted by the Board and which were positively received at the AGM. They were (1) to re-write the Club's by-laws, which needed updating to reflect current conditions and to include a tenth Board member and an "Historian"; (2) to write a History of the North Bay Nordic Ski Club; and (3) to set up a volunteer system whereby volunteers would assist new skiers at Nordic.

Friends of Nordic

In the late winter of 2000-2001, I came up with the idea of creating a group that would be called "Friends of Nordic." This idea had several sources. First, I was aware (as a member) of "Friends of Algonquin Park," which is responsible for printing park literature and maps, and funding a variety of projects. Second, I had encountered a group called "Friends of Lake Louise" while downhill skiing out west in 1989. They met skiers who were new to the area and served as "guides" to ski with a small group and familiarize them with the mountain. There are many "Friends" groups across Canada and in Ontario. Third, I had on many occasions stopped on the trails to assist skiers who were having some difficulty. This has been a practice repeated many times by numerous Nordic Club members over the years. One memorable event stood out. On a mild February Friday afternoon, two young Oriental women appeared at the Club, both obviously new to Nordic and to Nordic skiing. After a brief conversation, I found out that they were from Ottawa, were in North Bay for their daughters' ringette tournament and had found North Bay Nordic on the City of North Bay website and its link to the Nordic website. They were looking for some fun recreation that they had not accessed in their own hometown of Ottawa. I spent an hour with them guiding them around the Yellow Trail. In this time, I showed them the basics of classical skiing: weight shift without poles, a kick and glide, and the general progression to using poles. And even the Yellow Trail needs some basic downhill and uphill skills, especially at the end of the trail.

Putting these ideas together, I came up with the idea of forming a group of volunteers to provide basic instruction and guidance to new skiers. On one particular jaunt around the Green with the Garretts and Potters, I ran the idea past them, and they seemed enthusiastic and positive enough that I continued the development of the system. I then presented the idea to the Board for approval, which I got, and then announced the formation of the "Friends of Nordic" at the AGM. But a concept is just that – a concept. A solid crew of volunteers was needed to bring the concept to reality.

Recollections 2000-2001

Chapter 28 2001-2002 Bert Marsden's 76

Board of Directors

| | |
|----------------|----------------------------------|
| Marc Lacasse | President |
| Marilyn Lynch | Vice President – Publicity |
| John Wipprecht | Treasurer |
| Dale Brouse | Trails |
| Kevin Denston | Newsletter |
| Mark Thomas | Races – NOD Rep |
| Don Farintosh | Building and Property |
| Randy Hancock | Membership |
| Martin Nighbor | Junior Racing Team - Instruction |
| ***** | |
| Kathy Murray* | Secretary |

*After resigning from the Board at the previous year's AGM, Kathy Murray volunteered to serve as the Club's recording secretary. Then in December, after a tragic house fire, Kathy had to abandon this voluntary work. Marilyn Lynch took over the role of secretary.

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Membership: | 796 |
| Membership Rates: | Single \$100 (115); Student \$50 (65); Senior \$90 (100) Family \$190 (215) These rates included a Pisten Bulley surcharge of \$20 (family) or \$10 (other rates) |
| Locker rental: | \$55 |
| Membership Revenue: | \$43 061 |
| Profit from Club races: | \$5377 |
| Busy Beaver Award: | Andrew Koski-Harja |

Trails

Fall Activities and Cross-Country Running

Dale Brouse took over the trails portfolio with a level of enthusiasm matching that of his predecessor Michel Chartrand. Wood chipping day on September 15 brought out close to three dozen drivers, shovelers, and rakers who spread chips at key areas on the inner and Blue Trails. The September 9 Memorial Cross-Country Run (organized by Mark Thomas and Kevin Denston) was held under extremely hot and humid conditions, and the Red Trail was a challenging race trail for the event. The Green Trail Run on October 14 attracted about 40 runners and was held under wet and sloppy conditions due to the extensive fall rain. The soggy and muddy runners appreciated the excellent pancake brunch that followed, courtesy of the Lynches. Nordic was again the site of numerous school running events, and runners faced some very challenging conditions. For fall brushing, Dale organized seven team leaders to brush selected sections on the Green Trail

Lost and Found

An unusual event occurred one late September afternoon. A fourth grade school group arrived for a training run, not an unusual occurrence, and 29 students headed out on the trails. With them were their teacher and two parent supervisors. Jack Aiton and Dale Brouse observed this as they were doing some

equipment work on the machines in the garage. An hour or so later, a very frantic young female teacher approached Jack with the news – “Some of our runners are lost!” Only seven students were at the bus! The runners had been told to stay on the Purple and Brown Trails, but obviously they had strayed.

Jack had his 4-wheeler ATV and immediately sped out on the trails while Dale went to get his. Two youngsters were found quickly near the Purple/Red intersection, and Jack brought them back in. The next time out, Jack took the distraught teacher with him on the ATV, leaving the two parent supervisors to supervise the kids at the Club. They found three boys on the Blue near the Pipeline Access Road. He left the teacher with them to start walking them in as Jack continued searching.

Late afternoons in fall cool off quickly and with the skies darkening, the search became more urgent. At the clubhouse, activities were heating up. The police had been summoned, school officials and parents alerted, and they were appearing at the Club - anxious, concerned, and irate. As night started to fall, the potential seriousness of the situation intensified for the Nordic trails connect to the pipeline and other more remote trails.

At that point, Lorena called Jack on his cell phone to inform him that two students had wound up on Northshore Road at the Smiths and that their parents had been called to come and get them. Jack, wisely, put a hold on that – this was not the time to have the kids leaving without the whole group being accounted for. They should be taken to the clubhouse instead. Jack then decided to take a look down the Pipeline Access Road below our trail system and promptly found eleven more! Herding them back up to join the group of three and the teacher, Dale Brouse arrived in his truck in timely fashion and took the fourteen kids back in.

There were still three more to be found. Heading up to the pipeline, ready to start searching further out on our trails, Jack received a phone call and heard that other searchers, Dick and Cathy Smith, had found them and brought them in.

All twenty-nine students were finally accounted for. One particularly angry parent had to be calmed down. One very upset teacher had learned a lesson about controlling young students on the trails. (The press had a bit of a field day!) One particular letter to the editor thanked Jack and Dale for their prompt actions in finding the lost kids.

During the winter, the Board decided to leave the large directional trail signs up during the off-season, and it was decided to replace them with permanent metal signs.

Trail Work

The summer trail work focused on one of the most difficult stretches on the Green Trail, from the Lookout to the top of the Grunt Hill. On the edge of the escarpment, this section featured interesting twists, rolls, climbs and drops that often threw the wayward Alpine driver into the bush and caused Jack much grief on the Pisten Bulley. The first taste some of us had on this newly levelled trail section was on the Green Trail Run when the trail was a broad expanse of muck. But after the deep snows in January allowed us to ski the Green – what a treat! The kilometre and a half climb from the Lookout to the Grunt Hill was still difficult but almost enjoyable.

Trillium Foundation Grant – More Lights This Year & Future Plans

In October 2001, Trillium notified the Club that it would receive \$20 000 in funding for continuation of the trail lighting project. Rotary had donated \$1000, and so a few thousand dollars of Club funds would be needed to meet the expected \$24 500 outlay. However, the final cost ended up much less at \$21 484.78, so the outlay from the Club's funds was actually only \$484.78. Donations of \$423 further reduced this, and the Building Fund ended up with a comfortable balance of over \$1400. Bill Thompson again did the trenching and laying of the underground cable and the pole installation. By mid-November, the bulk of the work, plus load testing by an electrician, had been done. By the end of November, the trenches had been filled, the trails smoothed over and wood chips applied. The lighting on the Yellow and last half of the Gold was completed.

President Marc Lacasse hosted the official opening of the lights on the evening of January 10, 2002 – the first Family Fun Night. In attendance were Trillium Selection Committee member Dr. Bernie Goldfarb, a representative from Mike Harris' constituency office, and about forty Club members, but unfortunately there was no skiing that night due to unseasonable rain.

With the lights operating, there was much discussion among Club members and at the Board level about scheduling of night skiing. Opinions ranged from every night to just a few nights, including or not including weekends, with regular staff, student part-time staff, or no staff at all. Many argued that if we have lights for night skiing, they should be used extensively. Others maintained that too many nights with few skiers represented an unwarranted drain on the Club's finances. The final Board decision was to have the trails and clubhouse open and staffed from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings. Thursday evenings again tended to be heaviest used with Family Fun Night bonfires and cider in the clubhouse attracting a regular crowd. During the season, a half-price Wednesday was started to encourage more non-members to Nordic for night skiing.

With the trail lighting completed thoughts moved to applying for more Trillium funding for a variety of projects. Trillium representative Lorna Ryan advised that an application should be submitted in early March.

A meeting was held on January 31, 2002, to discuss the current major problem areas on the trails for which funding could rectify. Members attending were Knowlton Potter, Jani Potter, Perry Kirkey, Linda Kirkey, Jack Aiton, Marilyn Lynch, Joe Lynch, John Wipprecht, Mark Thomas, Martin Neighbor, Dale Brouse, Bill Burton, and Don Farintosh. The identified problems were many and varied: water on the trails, late start on the Green, lack of machinery to haul culverts and materials, bridge disrepair, need for a flat instruction area, need for ramps over the pipelines, and need for a sprint racing trail.

These were compiled into an application for a \$25 000 Trillium grant application for the quick completion of Green Trail upgrading and other trail projects. It was submitted around March 25, 2002.

Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation – Northern Trails Program – Application

In January, it was learned that there might also be 50% funding available for the purchase of a new snowgrooming machine. It had been concluded that a

machine with a higher horsepower than the Pisten Bulley 130 would accommodate a front-end renovator. Marc Lacasse and Dale Brouse amassed the information for a \$100 000 grant to enable the Club to make this purchase. The amount would be matched by Club funds - from the growing Pisten Bulley reserve fund and from donations if necessary.

At the April AGM, a formal motion was made (Emmanuelle Gunter / Eugene Perabo) "that the NBNSC take measures to find the balance of the amount needed to purchase a new groomer up to \$95 000."

More Stormy Weather

After a late beginning to the season, a March gale swept through the region and closed the Club on Saturday, March 8. A crew composed of Jack Aiton, Neil Bielby, Tom Cook, and Michel Chartrand spent a combined 40 man-hours clearing the trails of debris, broken branches and felled trees. Jack was able to use the Pisten Bulley and get the inner trails trackset for the Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, March 9. The Personal Distance Challenge was cancelled but given the go-ahead on an individual basis. Skiers could do their challenge distance and pay \$2 to have their name engraved on the annual Distance Challenge plaque.

New Alpine

Jack Aiton and Dale Brouse had their ears to the ground and heard of an Alpine snowmachine on sale (from Bell) in Peterborough. Bombardier had ceased manufacturing the Alpine several years before, and their spare parts were becoming scarce. It would be advantageous to have another machine in the stable – for parts if not for actual use. It was purchased in December for \$950 with only 220 km on it. A bit of rust from road salt was easily cured by Jack and Dale who gave it a touch of paint in the right places. It ended up being the #1 Alpine on the trails. We now had a fleet of three Alpines to complement the Pisten Bulley.

Discovery Routes

Discovery Routes and Jack Pine Hill announced plans to develop on the escarpment a multi-purpose trail from the Education Centre to Jack Pine Hill to North Bay Nordic. North Bay Nordic was invited to be part of this trail initiative, and Dave Minden was asked to be the Club liaison with Discovery Routes. The Board decided to remain publicly neutral. With reservations about Jack Pine Hill getting into the cross-country skiing business, a "multi-purpose" trail leading to Nordic might not be very beneficial. By being involved with Discovery Routes, we would be part of their advertising promotions.

Building and Property

One project that must have been a fun one for those involved was the "re-planting" of the wooden outhouse that had arrived in the fall of 1983. It had resided for many years in the back corner of the upper parking lot, the unfortunate depository for garbage bags and other refuse, and little used for its intended purpose. The outhouse was given a new lease on life as it was moved

down the initial part of the Main Trail to a point near the race start area. It is now in a very handy spot for use by anyone heading out onto the trails.

The safety of the clubhouse environment was enhanced with the addition of the wrought iron railing around the woodstove - finally, a place to hang wet gloves, mitts, and toques. Coordinated by Don Farintosh, the Popp family and G & P Welding designed, constructed, and donated the fixture.

Finishing off the work on Jackrabbit Lodge, new steel siding was applied to the exterior to match the other Club buildings. Other projects included raking the roof clear of snow to prevent water leakage from ice dams, door lock repairs, light fixture installation, regular water testing, and annual clean-up days in fall and spring. Spring cleaners included Murray Woods, Debbie Woods, Bethany Woods, Doug Winter, Jesse Winter, Joe Lynch, Marilyn Lynch, Melanie Wipprecht, Lynn Ingham, Tavis Apramian, Kevin Denston, Lisa Mellow, Bruce Nevison, and Al Garrett.

What smells?

The “mysterious odour” in the basement, especially in the women’s change room moved from behind-the-scenes whispers and comments, and finally was mentioned in the 2002 newsletter. After several years of concern since the clubhouse was expanded, it must be noted that the Board remained very passive in its approach to solving the problem. Hopefully a more proactive approach will be taken to solve this. It is an embarrassing situation to have visitors to the Club experience the septic system and sewage smell, and it is unhealthy and unpleasant for Club members.

.....And Other Things

Snack Bar Staffing

Patti Graham retired from the snack bar staff in order to do more skiing. Joining Vicky Smith and Cindy Brouse was Shannon Burnett. John Wipprecht and Marc Lacasse coordinated the staffing and management of the clubhouse and staff, with Dale Brouse’s input for the untimely closures due to bad weather.

A new addition (at John Wipprecht’s suggestion) was the purchase of a brand new cash register for \$750. This would replace the annual rental fee of \$409. Thus before two years, the new machine would pay for itself. It had greater capability and would also be available for Club functions such as the ski exchange and cross-country running events.

Kilometres for Kids

Tom Cook and his fellow Rotarians brought a different look to the annual Rotary Skiarama fundraiser. Due to changes made at the Skiarama administration level – funds raised would not necessarily stay in the local community – the local North Bay Rotarians decided to start something new. It was called Kilometres for Kids. Money raised would stay in the North Bay area and would be administered to needy challenged children.

A new look behind the scenes was mirrored by a new look at Nordic as well. Tom Cook, with Jack Aiton’s assistance, scouted out a snowshoe trail that wound across the Nordic inner trails, up beside the creek to cross the Purple just after the bridge, and then following the base of the ridge, to a point near the Red

Trail uphill. Participants on ski and snowshoe raised \$4200 for Rotary. Non-members received the traditional free day-pass and snack.

The snowshoe trail received some positive interest and was used on several occasions afterwards until warm weather melted the ice bridges across the creek. There was concern though that snowshoe trails that crossed the ski trails could lure snowshoers onto the trails themselves. Discussion about a future “multi-purpose trail” continued.

Friends of Nordic

The Friends of Nordic had a very successful inaugural season. Late snow arrival delayed any serious thought about skiing until late December, and the group of Friends met on January 8, 2002 for a first and only organizational session. The very next day, Linda Kirkey was the first ever volunteer Friend on duty; and throughout the season, a Friend was there every afternoon from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., rain or snow or shine. On the 65 days that the Club was open - we were officially closed for 4 days, but that did not stop Eugene Perabo on one occasion from escorting and guiding a Club member around the Blue Trail under pretty adverse conditions – Friends worked with and assisted 122 skiers, all dutifully noted in the daily log book. Thanks to some timely funding from the Board (\$150) and a generous contribution from Bigwood Sporting Goods, we had three vests printed with the Friends of Nordic and Bigwood logos. The Friend on duty wore the vest for better visibility and identification. Vicky catered an end-of-season wrap-up meeting.

The twenty-six Friends of Nordic 2001-2002 were: Shirley Bass, Bill Burton, Ralph Champaign, Jean Cook, Al Garrett, Anne Garrett, Greg Gilbert, Jack Green, Paul Harding, Joan Horne, Linda Kirkey, Perry Kirkey, Marc LaCasse, John Marshall, Bud McMartin, Dave Minden, Jane Minden, Dave Morrisette, Eugene Perabo, Jani Potter, Brian Thomas, Al Tough, Mary Vassbotn, Rolf Vassbotn, Don Wheeler, and Marion Wheeler.

Mid-season injuries forced two Friends out of action. Anne Garrett broke her wrist when she fell after one of her skis stuck to some masking tape on the trail; and John Marshall had some knee problems. Other Friends filled in as required.

Plans for the 2002-2003 season included a change to a 2-hour afternoon duty time (1 p.m. to 3 p.m.), as this was the heaviest demand time, and heavier concentration on weekends and when school groups visited. There was a recognized need to deal with school groups that needed instruction before they headed out to the trails.

Social Events

The traditional events continued. The Open House was held on November 25, but unlike the previous year there was no skiing to be had. Skiing would not get underway and the clubhouse would not open until the day after Christmas. The annual Potluck Supper was held on January 19, and was organized by Kevin Denston and crew. The junior racers hosted the Steak And Ski on the evening of February 9. The pancake brunch and ski took place on Saturday, February 17, hosted by the Lynches and their crew of cooks. March events included the Personal Distance Challenge and Potluck on March 9 (rained out on that day but held over the next week) and Easter Egg Hunt on March 10.

Personal Distance Challenge – 2002

10.4 km Simonne Clout

18 km Jake Schroeder

65 km Mark Clout

65 km Dave Schroeder

Jackrabbit and Challenge

Andrew Koski-Harja, with Laura assisting, headed up the Jackrabbit and Challenge programs. Andrew took on the task as coach of the 10 Challenge skiers.

The 66 Jackrabbits lit up the trails every Sunday afternoon as they were led around the inner trails practicing their burgeoning skiing skills. Proficient and enthusiastic leaders were Aaron Fallon, Meagan Hoetmer, Melanie Jodouin, Jessica Penney, Karla Svensson, Nathan Taylor, Craig Watson, and Leah Watson.

Several Jackrabbit skiers participated in the North Bay Nordic Races and earned a variety of speed stickers. They were Adam Birosh, Christie Davidson, Jenna Davidson, Max Giesler, Heather Payne, Sarah Payne, Graeme Russell, Taylor Russell, Chloe Tekavcic, Ezekiel Williams, and Jesse Williams. It was good to see Jackrabbit skiers encouraged to participate in Club races.

With pressures from work and family, Andrew found it necessary to step down as Jackrabbit leader at the end of the season. In parting, Andrew made a good recommendation for children-sized ski racks, which would cure the scattering of skis on the snow outside the clubhouse.

Adult Masters Instruction

The original plan was to have a fully certified NCCP coach or CANSI instructor take on the task of providing lessons to adults. But what resulted was an interesting mix of Club members helping and teaching other Club members in an organized group setting.

The idea started in the spring of 2001 with Jan Vandermeer's formation of a masters training group that would train in a variety of ways for the 2002 World Masters Championships in Quebec City. This had included some dryland training sessions – group runs, bike rides, and a daylong clinic, led by CCO Coach Larry Sinclair, that included instruction on roller skis and dryland training on the Nordic trails.

Continuing during the winter, Jan Vandermeer and Tom Cook devised a series of adult lessons on skate and classical skiing on Saturday afternoons. The initial aim was to do "technique improvement" to already proficient skiers. But word of mouth and advertising attracted a wider variety of skiers who entered the lessons, and they were modified to include both novice and intermediate level skiers. Tom Cook, Jan Vandermeer, Bruce Nevison and Dave Minden served as voluntary instructors in varying degrees, which made the sessions more relaxed than importing an "instructor." And for \$25 for a total of ten lessons, the price was better than a bargain.

Over twenty skiers paid for the series (not all were present for all lessons), and several hundred dollars went to the Pisten Bulley Fund. And interestingly, very few eventually went to the Canadian Masters – Emmanuelle Gunter and Bruce Nevison being the only Nordic representatives.

Publicity and Newsletters

Dave Minden continued to churn out the weekly reports to the Nugget in the “Nordic News” articles. Don Farintosh continued to manage the Nordic website in its third year.

Kevin Denston put the newsletters together, ably assisted by friends and relations Lisa Mellow, Andrew Koski-Harja, and Laura (Denston) Koski-Harja. They demonstrated that old saying: families that do newsletters together stay together!

Extra publicity was attained from the Lung Association. They auctioned off a Nordic membership as part of their Festival of Trees auction fundraiser.

At the instigation of Tom Cook, Nugget reporter Liz Cowan paid a visit to the Club in late winter to interview the “seniors group” for the Vintage Times section of the Nugget. The article and front-page photo appeared on Thursday, March 28, unfortunately after the season was practically finished. Featured in the article were Bert Marsden, Joan and Bob Horne, Shirley Bass, Marg Van Toen, Bette Allard, and Mary Vassbotn. It was a great plug for both Nordic and a great gang of dedicated skiers.

John Wipprecht's Big Raffle

John Wipprecht organized the raffle that brought a kayak and mountain bike into the clubhouse for display during the winter. Andre Leblanc of North Bay Canoe and Kayak approached John with the suggestion of a promotion in which NBC&K would donate either a canoe or kayak as the 1st grand prize of a raffle. Kathy Murray graciously donated a bright yellow mountain bike (which she had won herself and was not using), and Nordic put up a free membership for the 2002-03 season. During the season, tickets were sold at the snack bar and by a few Club members, and the draw was held at the AGM. Ticket sales generated \$483. Don McCallum won the \$1200 kayak; Bob Horne's son (Bob, from Waterloo) won the \$500 mountain bike; and Laura Koski-Harja won the 2002-2003 Family Membership (\$200 value). John Wipprecht was so enamoured with the joys of running a raffle that he vowed that he would step aside so that others could have the pleasure.

New Club By-laws

During the winter, the By-laws Committee of Marc Lacasse and Dave Minden overhauled the Club's by-laws. After presentation of the “final draft” to the Board, and many suggestions, comments, and revisions, a “final-final draft” proposal was posted at the clubhouse. The proposed changes were then debated at a Special General Meeting in March 2002 with further changes made and a “final-final-final” version was accepted.

Many of the changes were of a minor nature (re-numbering the sequence of topics, for example). But several other changes profoundly affected the structure of the Club and election of directors. Suggested by Marc Lacasse, most of these changes reflected recent changes in the Club administration and current practices and needs.

Election of 10 (up from 9) Directors would be for a three-year term, and an election would take place if needed for new Board members only. A second election for a revamped Executive would then occur. The Executive would

consist of President (for a one year term), Treasurer, and Trails Director. This group would actively arrange the management of the clubhouse staff, snack bar, and ski rental facility, and would determine opening and closing of the trails. Also, at the AGM, the treasurer would submit the budget for the following season, necessitating Board members to submit their own budgets. The by-laws revision was a long process that was well received by the Board and the membership.

Races

Club Races

Mark Thomas organized the second version of the Nordic Cup race series. Teams were reduced to three members and could be comprised of any variation of sex, age, and race category. The races included the Early Bird Relay on Sunday, January 6, the Loppet on Sunday, February 10, and a reverse pursuit relay on Saturday March 2, which was followed by a barbecue. Points accrued in the first two events determined the seeding for the last event that would, theoretically, equalize any imbalance on any teams. It was a fun series of events for the five teams of participants, and it encouraged some to be involved in the Loppet. Unfortunately, the numbers dwindled during the season, and it was difficult to maintain team commitment. Such is the nature of cross-country skiers. The winners of the 2002 Nordic Cup were the team of Andrew Koski-Harja, Kevin Denston, and Marc Lacasse (subbing in for Erin Calhoun).

The primary Race Committee of Mark Thomas, Andrew Koski-Harja, Tom Cook, Bill Burton, and Gail Rees organized two superlative events, the North Bay Nordic Ski Races and the Loppet. The regular scores of volunteers helped to make the each event a success.

The new sound system purchased by Mark was a sound addition to the Race Committee's hardware and added another dimension to the race events. Now a play-by-play announcer could call the bib numbers of racers skiing through the lap lane or finish area. The proposed laser timing system was judged to be too costly, and the idea was abandoned for Gail Rees' manual "Microsoft Excel system."

One downside to the year's racing was the diminished numbers. Had it not been for the heavy representation of university racers (the North Bay Nordic Races were a qualifying event for them), the weekend would have attracted barely 50 entrants. Very few were coming from northern ski clubs, and the younger age categories were not well filled. The Loppet also experienced another lower-than-hoped-for turnout, although the conditions were excellent for the event.

Nipissing Lakers

For the second season, Mark Thomas took on the role as coach of the Nipissing University Racers and had many new faces on the team to complement returnees such as Victoria Lampkin and Jon Pitt. Back to university was Andrew Koski-Harja pursuing an Education degree; and many rookies joined the team with little experience. Mark was busy instructing basic ski skills to his enthusiastic skiers.

Development Team

The second year of the Development Team saw good interest from a group of young skiers with aspirations to join the Junior Racing Team. The Development Team was structured for skiers aged 10 to 13 and included dryland training sessions every second Sunday from October 28 through November and December until there was sufficient snow cover. The nine regular Sunday sessions ran from January 6 to March 3. Development Team coach Don Farintosh was assisted by Doug Winter. Ex-Junior Racer and Nipissing Laker Victoria Lampkin led the instruction for many of the sessions. Mark Thomas and Jan Vandermeer also instructed in some sessions.

The twelve Year 2 Development Team skiers were Zale Apramian, Erin Calhoun, Liam Calhoun, Brenton Farintosh, Taylor Graham, Adam Henschel, Sonia Kaminski, Jy Lawrence, Mackenzie Rodger, Maya Tekavcic, Kayla Turner, and Jonathon Winter.

The Development Team skiers competed at several races and loppets at North Bay Nordic, Temiskaming Nordic, Onaping Falls, and Highlands Nordic.

Junior Racing Team

The annual ski exchange on November 9 and 10 was again hosted at Nordic and organized by the Lynches. Bill and Sylvia Alexander again organized the Steak And Ski fundraiser in February. At \$20 per person with personal service by the junior racers, the Steak And Ski was again a huge success. And Martin and Dawna Nighbor, assisted by Level 2 certified Tom Tekavcic, managed and coached the racing team.



Back left: Dawna Nighbor, Carlie Penney, Martin Nighbor, Bethany Woods, Kelly Lynch
Tavis Apramian, Heather Alexander, David Nighbor, Tiffany Duncan, Ava Rudachyk, Tom Tekavcic
Front left: Melanie Wipprecht, Kim Nighbor, Linnea Rudachyk, Jesse Winter

For the 2001-02 season, six members of the 2000-01 team were named to the Ontario Development Team: Gord Hunter, Jeff Seguin, Heather Alexander, Kim Nighbor, Andrea Nighbor, and David Nighbor. David was also named to the Ontario Elite Winter Racing Team for several Continental Cup races. In addition, David was part of the 4-man Junior National Team and Jeff Seguin joined the National Training Centre in Thunder Bay (at Lappe).

David Nighbor, Kim Nighbor, Heather Alexander, Jeff Seguin, and Colleen Lynch qualified for the Canadian Juniors. Kim was sidelined due to severe asthma attacks, but the others skied to personal best results. David was named top Junior Boy in Canada as a result of his three gold and one bronze medal haul at the Junior Nationals.

AGM Highlights

The by-law changes were put into effect at the April AGM. John Wipprecht submitted a detailed budget for the 2002-03 season. The first newly structured Executive was elected: Kevin Denston (President), Peter Bass (Treasurer), and Dale Brouse (Trails). For the first time since the spring of 1984, there was an election for President. But this time, it was by the entire membership present at the AGM, not just the Board of Directors. Marilyn Lynch and Kevin Denston stood for election after which Kevin was declared President for the 2002-03 season.

Three other events highlighted the AGM. The first was a presentation by Dale Brouse to Jack Aiton – a mini Pisten Bulley – to thank Jack for the extensive work he had done for the Club. The second was the presentation by Al and Anne Garrett to Bert Marsden. On March 17, 2002, Bert reached his goal of 76 Greens. By season's end, he had logged five more for a total of 81. At the April AGM, Anne and Al presented Bert and the Club with a framed printed version of Bert's most recent poem with a lovely photograph of Bert taken just after his 76th Green. And the third was Vicky's fine food fare enjoyed by all.

MY ULTIMATE GOAL

In golf they say you score well
If you can shoot your age,
I guess there's times I've done this
But that's a different page.

This year I set myself a goal
While skiing on the green
76 times around the loop
Or is this just a dream?

Winter had trouble starting
And it made it hard to ski,
Rocks and water everywhere
And some were hard to see.

Then Mother Nature dealt her hand
And sent us lots of snow,
The skiing just got better
Every time I'd go.

Jack and his crew deserve credit
For the work they do out here,
They make skiing such a pleasure
And my goal became so clear.

Now that I have reached it
There's one thing I've been told,
Each year gets a little harder
If only we didn't grow old.

Bert Marsden, 2002

Beckie Scott

Attention focused on the 2002 Winter Olympics at Salt Lake City and the cross-country events at Soldier's Hollow. History was made when Canadian Beckie Scott won bronze in the 10 km same day pursuit. At the conclusion of the 5 km classical leg, Beckie was ready to start the 5 km free technique pursuit in 6th place, 18 seconds behind the leader. In a thrilling sprint finish, Beckie won the bronze medal, the second North American and first Canadian ever to medal at the Olympics. Drug testing later showed that the two Russian women Olga Danilova and Larissa Lazutina had been cheating. The gold was stripped from Danilova, and Beckie's medal was upgraded to silver. It may yet turn to gold.

Future Plans

In March, Dale Brouse toured the trails, camera in hand, taking photos of the existing large trail signs. These would be replaced with permanent all-season metal signs that would be of benefit to off-season trail users. (No more lost runners!)

During the winter, Kevin Denston put together a suggestion box for members' comments. Suggestions were for the lights to be on without the clubhouse being staffed, for a list of skiers and phone numbers who were looking for a ski partner during the week, and to continue double tracksetting the Green Trail. These and related issues would be looked at by the next Board of Directors.

And at the AGM, promises were made to rectify the malodorous air in the basement change rooms. Other proposed projects included a new sub-floor upstairs, and new vinyl baseboards and painting downstairs, the purchase of more rental skis (junior sizes), applying gravel to improve the parking lot, and purchase of a water tank to alleviate demand for water on high use days.

Retiring from the Board were Marc Lacasse, John Wipprecht, Randy Hancock, and Martin Nighbor.

Recollections 2001-2002

Chapter 29 2002-2003 A Work In Progress

The history of North Bay Nordic continues to unfold. Hopefully, it will never end, and the joys of cross-country skiing will be enjoyed by many in future years.

Board of Directors

Executive

Kevin Denston

Dale Brouse

Peter Bass

President

Trails

Treasurer

Mark Thomas

Linda Penney

Marilyn Lynch

Don Farintosh

Sue Priebe

Steve Shore

Dave Morrisette

Races

Junior Racing Team

Publicity - Social

Building and Property

School Liaison

Newsletter

Membership

Trails

Trillium Foundation Grant - Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Grant Applications

It was learned in June 2002 that the Trillium Grant application for \$25000 for trail work had been approved – but not all at once. There would be \$12500 received this year and again next year. Over the two years, the \$25 000 from Trillium would have to be matched by Club revenues of the same amount.

Unfortunately, the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund sent a letter indicating that they had ceased funding for trail grooming equipment, and so the possibility of a quick purchase of a more powerful snowgrooming machine was put on hold. However, the Pisten Bulley was overhauled during the summer and judged to be in excellent working condition.

New Trail Signs

Dale Brouse coordinated the manufacture of brightly coloured all-weather metal trail signs that would stay up all year and help to prevent trail users from getting lost. And as part of the fundraising for the Trillium trail work, an initiative was made to incorporate advertising on these signs. Advertising for a two-year period was sold to Clarion, Bigwood Sporting Goods, Penney and Co., Dale's Construction, Northern Honda, Average Joe's, Fionn McCool's, and Jack and Lorena Aiton. Saturn continued its sponsorship of the weatherboard with a \$500 contribution for two years.

Trail Work

Summer trail work resulted in major work on the Blue and Green Trails. First, a new trail was cut roughly parallel to the pipeline from a point on the Green Trail, just before the first pipeline crossing, to the Pipeline Access Road near the gate. This would provide a longer classical or skating alternative to the Blue Trail. While not yet officially measured, the length of the Blue Trail Extension seemed to be approximately 9 km, a bit less than the OFSAA Senior Boys race trail used in 1996 and 1997. The major advantage was that skiers who wanted to ski this

route did not now have to travel on the pipeline snowmachine trail. After some discussion, the trail was officially dubbed “The Blue Trail Extension.”

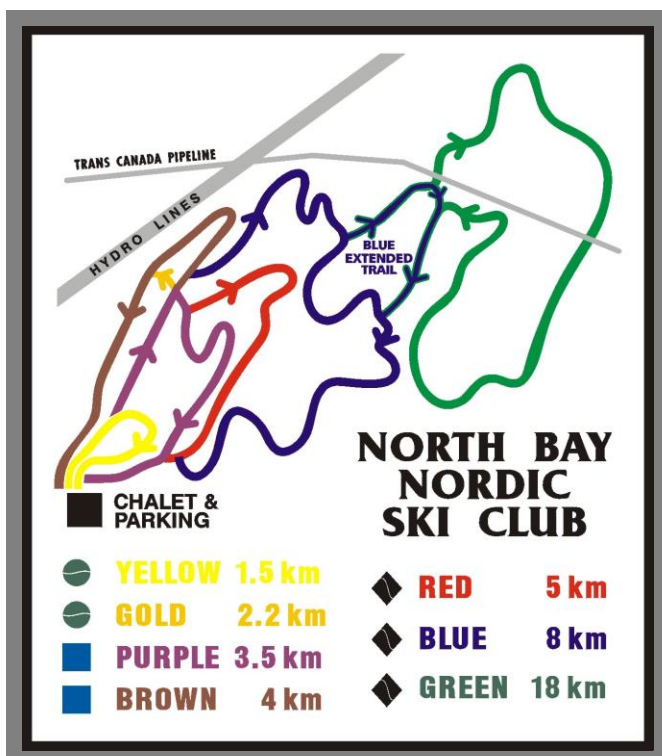
Also, a new short section was created to replace the original first pipeline crossing on the Green Trail. This new, safer, and drier crossing, which is close to the gate at the top of the Pipeline Access Road, adds several hundred metres to the Green Trail, now closer to 18 km.

The Blue/Brown intersection received some attention with widening and wood chipping. This was done in the event that a race trail would be configured using the Brown backwards, turning sharply onto the Blue. That was the plan for the Canadian Masters, but poor weather forced the cancellation of the event. And another very rough section of the Green Trail was widened and smoothed. Gone were the sometimes horrific and terrifying bumps on the downhill to the Lookout – bumps that early in the season and on icy days made the trail unskiable. As the Green Trail was widened, the Pisten Bulley was able to access it earlier, and more skiers were encouraged to ski this beautiful trail.

At the wood-chipping day in September, loads of chips were again spread at designated spots on the Main Trail and inner trails.

And Another New Map

A new trail map showing the new Extended Blue Trail was printed and placed at the Main Intersection. The new map also indicated the new length of the Green Trail – 18 km – as a result of the new section at the first pipeline crossing. Dale Brouse coordinated the printing by Signs by Hibbard.



Map at Main Intersection featured Blue Trail Extension and 18 km Green Trail
The 3.5 km Purple should read 3 km

Cross-Country Running

School cross-country running events were held in ideal weather conditions in a warm and dry fall. The Barons meet, organized by Michel Chartrand, attracted over 2000 runners for the races. NDA races and a variety of public school races also occurred.

The Green Trail Run was held on a cool but pleasant October 27, attracting about 30 runners. Surprisingly, the trail was snow-covered in many spots and also leaf-covered as many of the trees were still shedding their leaves.

Mattawa River Park Expansion

The MNR released the boundaries of the proposed Mattawa River Park expansion. The Park would include virtually all of the Nordic trails (except private land on the Green and Blue trails) right up to the edge of the Club's property (parking lot, field, and clubhouse). Initial indications from the MNR are that North Bay Nordic would retain tenure on the trail system and would continue on as we have. The only significant difference would be that we would deal with Ontario Parks instead of the MNR for such issues as Land Use Permits and trail expansion.

Building and Property

Several items discussed the previous year were accomplished. Loads of gravel spread on the main parking lot gave it a fresh and level appearance. It never looked so good.

A large pressure tank was installed with the aim of having a large reserve of water on hand. The basement received a fresh coat of paint. But the smell continued!

.....And Other Things

Publicity

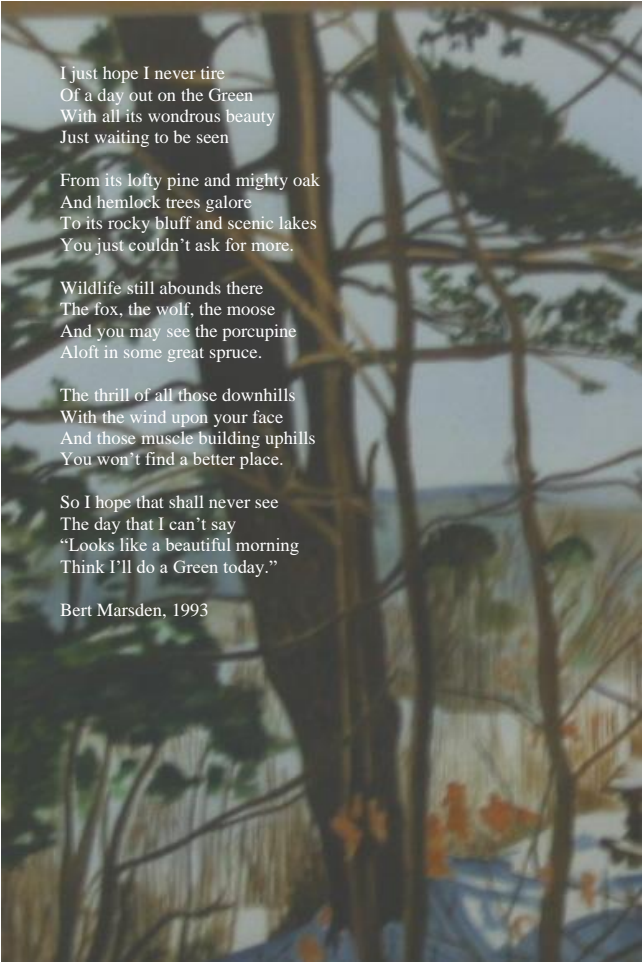
www.onlink.net/nbncs

Jane Minden took over the role of web-master (web-head) and re-designed the electronic look of the Club.

Races

A record \$2700 was earned from the ski exchange that was again held at the Nordic clubhouse. It was organized by Liz (Bradley) Rudachyk.

To be continued.....See you on the trails!



I just hope I never tire
Of a day out on the Green
With all its wondrous beauty
Just waiting to be seen

From its lofty pine and mighty oak
And hemlock trees galore
To its rocky bluff and scenic lakes
You just couldn't ask for more.

Wildlife still abounds there
The fox, the wolf, the moose
And you may see the porcupine
Aloft in some great spruce.

The thrill of all those downhill
With the wind upon your face
And those muscle building uphill
You won't find a better place.

So I hope that shall never see
The day that I can't say
"Looks like a beautiful morning
Think I'll do a Green today."

Bert Marsden, 1993