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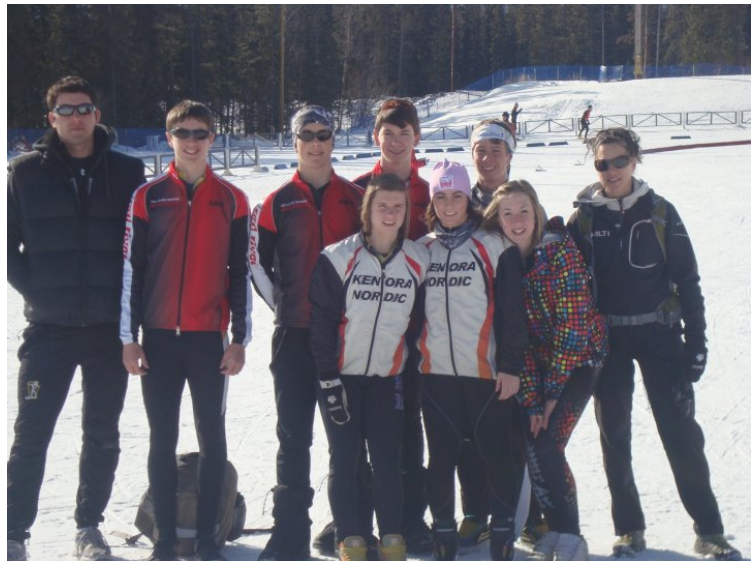
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A Cross Country Ski Nationals Report – by Corey Kolbuck

Photo Courtesy of Nadene McBride

Nationals 2010 – Whitehorse,
Yukon

This was my first Cross Country Ski Nationals. The team we brought up to the Yukon was very easy to coach and manage. Included on the team were Samantha Burkart, Manon Magnon, Jennie Hissa, Erik Charabin, Sean Carter, Alex Druwe, Jordie Baird, and Nadene McBride. Everyone quickly became very close friends and looked after each other when someone needed help. The weather was fantastic all week, warm and sunny mostly, with a few flurries that didn't last long. Day 1 was just a warm up day and to check out the course. It was a very long day because we arrived in Whitehorse at 1:30 in the morning. We all made it to our hotel, checked in and took a nap. Once everyone was up we went to the ski hill, the athletes took a look around while the coaches set up the wax room and started to prepare for the next day's race.



All the races pretty much went off without a hitch. I say pretty much because the last day someone left their races skis in the hotel room. We found this out with little time before the race start. But despite the skis being in the hotel, we were able to find them, wax them and give them to the athlete all before the start of the race.

I managed to get some skiing in while juggling coaching, waxing and taxiing the team around. I must say that the terrain in the Yukon is challenging but you don't notice it while you are gliding over the freshly groomed snow. With wide trails and rolling hills you forget that you are here for a competition. Along with the amazing trails, the hospitality from everyone was impressive. We talked with the coaches from the Development Center, who we shared the

wax room with along with grip and glide testing. Everyone was helpful and friendly even when one of our guys broke a pole on course, anyone was willing to give a pole up to help out.

I must say that this was a wonderful group that I was able to travel with and I look forward to future races with them. §

Meet a Race Team Member – by Yvette Page

Photo Courtesy of Marcel Druwe

Here are some interesting tid bits about Yvette Page, a Red River Nordic Race Team member.

My sport goals are:

- 1) to go to Canada Winter Games 2011.
- 2) to race at Nationals 2011.
- 3) to have fun and be a xc skier for life.

When I'm not training/competing, I like to:

- 1) Do stuff with friends or family.
- 2) Camp and travel, I'm going to Australia this summer and will do a bit of skiing there!
- 3) Organize events for Leadership at my school.

My favourite places to ski in Manitoba are;

Grand Beach, Birch and Bittersweet. I also really love skiing at Lappe In Thunder Bay.

My favourite movie is Pirates of the Caribbean the Curse of the Black Pearl and Horton Hears a Who.

I enjoy lots of different types of music, it really depends what I'm in the mood for. My favourite bands are the Red Hot Chili Peppers, The Rocket Summer and Jack Johnson, just to name a few.

Before a race I will;

- 1) Pre-ski the course so I know where I'm going.
- 2) Make sure I'm not tense or too Pumped up.
- 3) Stay Focused, and visualize me doing the race.

I don't really have a main Hero or Mentor, I find lots of Olympian athletes stories inspiring but I find most of the motivation I get is from people I know and ski with.

If I could rule the world I would somehow figure out how to make Winnipeg have a decent winter and make everyone wear pigtails.

The one thing people don't know about me is that I am actually an alien conspiring to take over the world, but shh it's a secret. §



Biathlon Nationals Report – by Kiernan Broda-Milian

Photo Courtesy of Marcel Druwe



On March 3 – 7, Neil Mitchell, Mack Cook, Matt Nemetchuk, Nicholas Dumontier, Erik Lockhart, Kjell Schmidt, Jessica Biggs (who won a bronze medal in the Junior Women 10km pursuit) Rachel Koroscil, and I from RRN Ski and Biathlon Club, along with Olympian Megan Imrie from Falcon Sports Club (who won a Silver in the sprint) competed in the Canadian Biathlon Championships. They were held at the Canmore Nordic Centre in Alberta. For most of these athletes this was their first national competition. Each athlete competed in four races.

The first was a sprint race, one bout (five shots) of prone shooting and one of standing, each miss meant having to ski a penalty loop. In total there were three laps.

The second was an individual race which was five laps; four shooting bouts (prone, standing, prone, standing) a one minute penalty was added for every missed target. This is the longest Biathlon race and the race in which shooting counts for the most.

The third race was a pursuit. In this race the start order was in the same order as the results from the sprint race. There was 5 seconds between each athlete and the clock starts with the first racer. In this type of race, it is possible to complete the race faster than a racer ahead of you, but still lose to him or her. There were five laps and prone, prone, standing, standing for the shooting.

The fourth race was a three person relay. It was essentially three sprint races together; the only difference was each athlete had eight shots per five targets. After three laps, the next athlete started. §

The results can be viewed at the following link;
<http://www.biathloncanada.ca/main.php?p=3972&lan=1>

2010 Manitoba Winter Games – by Nicole Dubois

Photo Courtesy of Nicole Dubois

After trials, meetings, pep rallies and waxing, the time finally came to board the bus to Portage la Prairie on Sunday, March 7th. One could feel the combination of excitement and nerves in the athletes as they loaded their enormous bags onto the bus, as some had never raced without their parents' presence, let alone competed at a multi-sport event like the Games! I felt a little nervous myself, as I had never officially been on the other side of a competition: coaching! Although both Elise Paetkau and I, both coaches for Team Gold, have been coaches within Red River Nordic for five years, neither of us had ever been official coaches at a competition. The classic race in particular would prove to be quite the initiation!

After arriving at Portage Collegiate Institute, where we slept in classrooms on mats (the coaches received air mattresses—one bonus!), all the girls of Teams Blue and Gold tried to get comfortable in our rather small room for twenty people. After the indoor Opening Ceremonies, which entertained us with various dance troupes, music, and some inevitable speeches, the athletes (and coaches!) were exhausted from a day of waiting between buses and venues! We all needed a good night's sleep for the next day's race and difficult waxing—wait, make that klistering! We arrived at the beautiful Birch Ski venue the next morning and were immediately sent to work. A bit of mayhem ensued with setting up the wax room, a coaches' meeting, getting twenty-six pairs of skis in order, wax-testing, and applying terribly messy klister, all within 1.5 hours before race start! Organizing the younger kids who had no prior experience with klister was quite the task, as klister can quickly ice up if the skis aren't kept in motion, and it's also important that skis aren't placed in soft snow! Thankfully, by designating all available hands to certain tasks the night before, the coaches and managers got everything done, although in some cases it was literally down to the last minute!

The afternoon involved clinics taught by various coaches about skate skiing (while a few poor coaches and, surprisingly, voluntary athletes were sentenced to cleaning klistered skis). With some great results and podium performances for both Teams Gold and Blue, it was great to see not only our own athletes do well, but that we also have some great competition developing within Manitoba! The following day mixed up all of the athletes in the province, as well as some coaches (both voluntary and involuntary, as Elise and I were both previously designated as



team members), for 4x1.5 km relays. The morning consisted of heats, with finals taking place in the afternoon. The top three of the A-side finals won medals, while the top three of the B-side finals won oranges and apples, also worthy rewards!

Wednesday morning we slept in, barely making the last bus to breakfast. After splitting up to watch gymnastics, hockey and volleyball, the athletes got a chance to experience the “multi-sport” aspect of the Games. Although I’m sure everyone was pretty tired, and were all eagerly looking forward to the work which awaited them at home, I am sure it was worth it for all involved, as I know it was worth it for me! I thoroughly enjoyed being a coach, preparing skis, cheering on the athletes, and getting to know all of the energetic and enthusiastic kids who will be the future of skiing in Manitoba! §

This will be the final newsletter for the season. Next season’s newsletter will start up again in the Fall.

If anyone would like to contribute to the newsletter, please contact Rob Kirchmann at kirch@mts.net