



# Lappe Nordic Newsletter

May/99

Another ski season has drawn to a close with the last day skied being April 26th. Jill and Jodi Maepea each skied 5 km to record the last official ski of the season. Spring has arrived at the Ski Centre so break out the runners and enjoy the beautiful weather.

## ***NORTH AMERICAN RECORD SET AT 24-HOUR RELAY***

The 1999 Lappe Nordic Ski Club 24-Hour Relay began and ended with a bang and in between Friday's start and Saturday's 6:00pm shotgun finish, some skiing history was made. Jeff Lewis, a remarkable skier from Val Cartier, Quebec, skied 305.3 km to establish a new North American distance record for 24 hours.

Jeff, who is a member of the "Centre d'excellence de biathlon" team based just outside Quebec City, travelled to Thunder Bay to challenge the record. That record of 301 km had been set three years ago by Kerrie Abols, then a member of the National Team Development Centre - Thunder Bay.

For the first 14 hours Jeff skied strongly and comfortably and the record seemed well within his grasp. Then, as the sun warmed the 4.3 km course, trail conditions turned from hard and fast to

painfully slow. The sun quickly took its toll. With 2.5 hours left, Jeff was only 16 km short of the record but exhausted. A brief rest and some food helped restore his energy reserves. Drawing on inner strength and the support of a large crowd, Jeff skied slowly and gracefully into the record books.

Jeff, who is 26, said his next goal is to make the National Biathlon Team and compete in the 2002 Olympics in Salt Lake City. An exhausted Jeff as he was overwhelmed by the event and the support he received from the Club and other skiers. "This is one of the very best and friendliest events I've ever participated in." he said.

Jeff wasn't alone in his record setting. The Thunder Bay NTDC team consisting of Megan Mctavish, Karla Mika, Steve Bursey, Mark Tierney, Dan Roycroft, Chad Yurich, Karl Saidla, and Lee Churchill shattered the previous event team record skiing 518 km. They were pushed hard by a team of LU skiers, 'The Mighty Moose Caboose' (500.3km) and last year's defending champions 'The Lappe Seven' (486.3km).

For the first time the event welcomed American teams. Three teams of athletes

from Minnesota said they were "blown away" by the hospitality they were shown and promised to return in 2000 in greater numbers.

The annual 24 Hour Relay is now in its fifth year. It is a combined season ending ski event, 24 hr party and fund raiser for the NTDC team. The event has grown every year. Most of the 20 teams entered this year consisted of recreational skiers wanting to support the training centre athletes and enjoy one of the last good skis of the year. Awards include the much sought after 'Oldest Aggregate Age Award' and the not so prized 'Worst Wax Choice'. Both these awards were won the Reipas Athletic Club "Ikinuoret" (Ever Young) team which included 5 skiers over age 68.

### ***Juniors 1998-1999***

by Marc Metsaranta

The 1998-1999 ski season was full of much success for individual Lappe Nordic Ski Club junior skiers. Each local and out-of-town race brought many top finishes and several medals.

The older juniors - Jill Maepea, Suzanne Pantry, Riku Metsaranta and Timo Puiras - travelled in December to the World Junior Trials in Canmore, Alberta. Riku was very close to qualifying for the Canadian team to the World Junior Championships in Austria. Riku's second place finish, 5 seconds behind first, did qualify Riku for an extended Continental Cup pre-Xmas tour with the National Ski Team.

At the Ontario Team Trials for the Canada Winter Games at the Lappe Ski Center in December, Jill Maepea was one of 5 females to qualify. Suzanne Pantry was named the first alternate to this Ontario Team. Jill went on to win an individual bronze and a relay bronze at the Games held in Cornerbrook, NFLD. in February.

Although Lappe Nordic Ski Club lost the Club Championships for the first time since its inception - a streak of ten years - many individual championships were retained at the LSSD Championships held in Marathon in early February. Top three category placings were many for all junior skiers.

In March, eight junior skiers - Jill Maepea, Suzanne Pantry, Rena Bode, Riku Metsaranta, Timo Puiras, Arne Stinchcombe, Leslie Bode and Billea Dyson - travelled to the Canadian Junior Championships in Smithers, BC. With a few more skiers collecting points for top individual finishes, the Club could have retained its ranking as the top junior club in Canada. Nevertheless, the Club finished third.

Jill Maepea won three silver medals and was ranked 4th overall for her efforts in the junior women's category. Suzanne, with two 8th place finishes, ranked 7th in the same category. For her efforts Jill also was chosen to go on the US Spring Series Tour with the National Ski Team.

Riku Metsaranta won silver and bronze medals for his efforts and was ranked 5th overall in the junior men's category. Timo Puiras, for his 10th place finish in the junior men's pursuit was ranked 15th. Only top 10 finishes gained points for the overall rankings. No other Lappe skiers were ranked in any of the other categories.

In the Open Men's 3 x 7.5 km classic relay, the Lappe team of Timo, Arne and Riku finished 4th, an improvement from last year's team's 5th place finish. The Open Women's 3 x 5 km relay team of Suzanne, Leslie and Jill retained last year's 5th place finish.

Two days after returning from Smithers, a group of senior and junior skiers travelled to Onaping Falls near Sudbury for the Ontario Championships. The Lappe relay team of Arne Stinchcombe, Suzanne Pantry, Juha Metsaranta and Brian Berry won a bronze medal. Rena Bode won a bronze medal in the juvenile girls classic event. In the midget boys class Michah Dowbak came home with a silver and a bronze medal.

Junior skiers also travelled to races in Val Cartier, Quebec (the Eastern Canadian Championships), twice to Giants Ridge in Minnesota, the Hiawatha Invitational, in the Soo, and Duntroon, for the Canadian Senior Championships. Many top finishes were achieved at these events as well as at many local events.

Athletes with their coaches are set to prepare themselves for next year's challenges. Among which will finally be the Canadian Junior Championships at the Lappe Ski Center in March 2000.

### ***THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT***

by Marc Bode

THE 1998 - 1999 SKI SEASON

We had another successful year at Lappe. As most of you will recall the skiing was marginal at best until mid-December, but since then we have had great snow and the skiing is hanging on well into the middle of April.

As usual the Jackrabbit program was a great success. Many thanks to Mary-Ellen Ripley (the Big Bunny) and all of the Jackrabbit leaders and parent volunteers for the effort they put in to run this program.

Next year we would like to provide a good number of our parent volunteers and Jackrabbit leaders with a level 1 coaching course. The course, which is put on by Cross Country Canada, is part coaching theory (with a large emphasis on making the sport fun), and part skiing technique. Everyone that has taken the course has benefitted tremendously from it. We always subsidize all or a large part of the cost of attending the program. If you are interested there should be more information at the Club open house in the fall.

The Club's racers had a very good year. They were led by Tasha Betcherman who medalled at a number of National level events including the Eastern Canadian Championships in Val Cartier, Quebec. Tasha had top 10 finishes in almost every Continental Cup race that she entered. Congratulations Tasha! (editors note: Tasha won the overall female Continental Cup title this season. What a season finale!)

Our junior skiers (Jill Maepea, Timo Puiras, Riku Metsaranta, Suzanne Pantry, Leslie Bode, Billea Dyson, Allissa Pera, Catherine Bode, and Arne Stinchcombe) all had a good year. They competed at events across the country and had excellent performances including medals at some of the biggest junior races. Between them, our junior athletes had a chance to participate in the Canada Winter Games trials at Lappe in December, in Quebec (Eastern Canadian Nationals), in Canmore (Canadian Junior Trials), in Smithers, BC at the Canadian Junior Championships and at the Ontario Championships in Sudbury.

We also saw impressive results from some of our junior development skiers, Luke Pederson, Brodie Marshall, Kristjana Marshall, Misha Doback. They will be welcome additions to our junior team.

For most members the season ended with the 24 hour relay. This year 20 teams participated. The results and an article about the relay are found elsewhere

in this newsletter. The 24 hour relay has become a very big event. The number of teams and skiers participating are increasing every year.

There are two major things that happened this year which will have implications for the year 2000. First, we were selected as the host club for the year 2000 Canadian Junior Championships. This week long event should attract between 300 and 400 athletes and another 100 or so coaches (and we hope a significant number of spectators). This is the biggest event Lappe has ever hosted and we are committed to making it the best Junior Championships ever held in Canada. We are in the process of putting together a core organizing committee and by the fall will be looking for 100's of volunteers. I am hoping every Lappe Club member will help make this event a success.

The other "event" was directly related to the awarding of the Canadian Junior Championships to Lappe. Until now we have carried on as an unincorporated association. We are now going to incorporate. There were a number of reasons why this was a good move but the awarding of the Canadian Championships made it a virtual necessity. We will be looking for Federal and Provincial assistance to offset the costs associated with running the Championships and it was clear that to obtain this assistance we needed to have a formal corporate structure. At our annual meeting, we will for the first time be electing a Corporate Board of Directors rather than an "executive".

Speaking of our annual meeting it is coming up on May 17, 1999. People with fresh ideas and fresh energy are always welcome at our annual meeting and on our Board and we would be happy to have some new faces on our Board.

### ***ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING***

Lappe Nordic Ski Club's annual general meeting will be held on **Monday, May 17, 1999 at 7:00 pm** at the Ski Centre. Everyone is welcome to attend this meeting. The club is run by a group of dedicated volunteers and new recruits are always needed. We hope to have a good showing of support for the Junior Championships so come out and support the club.

### ***LAPPE JACKRABBITS***

The Lappe Jackrabbits had a successful season with 88 skiers registered. The weather cooperated most weekends and Saturday mornings were organized chaos. Unfortunately, the club was unable to run the Boxing Day Classic and the Lappe Invitational kids races due to severe windchills.

The racing rabbits had a great year under the leadership of Timo Tikka and Werner Schwar. Many of them competed in the local races with much success. The group of Rianne Ranta, Shane Maley, Mark Aho, Jeffrey Aho, Sean Petrus, Luke Pederson, and Kristjana Marshall achieved a combined total of 1690 km. Congratuations!