



# Making Trax

The Official Newsletter of the Soo Finnish Nordic Ski Club  
Website: [www.soofinnishnordic.com](http://www.soofinnishnordic.com) NOTE! ADDRESS CHANGE!  
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February 2002

## Mabel Lake Tour Coming March 3!

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Looking for a change in scenery? Rather ski to a destination than around the normal loops? Hesitating to put the "COUNTRY" into your "CROSS COUNTRY" skiing? Come experience the beauty of Algoma "back country" skiing with the safety and enjoyment of a patrolled trail and two refreshment stops. The Mabel Lake Trail, well tracked for this hosted event, provides an intermediate challenge for middle distance skiers. The tour starts from the [Sugar Shack](#) and winds through scenic hardwoods over rolling terrain following portions of the Pinder and Crystal Creek trail systems. From the Mabel Lake cut-off, the trail descends into the flatter lowlands of the picturesque Crystal Creek Valley. Following, and eventually crossing Crystal Creek, the trail then rises through hardwood-covered hills before descending onto Mabel Lake at 9.5 kilometers. Hot drinks and snacks will be provided first in the Crystal Creek Valley (for those wanting to avoid more challenging sections near Mabel Lake, or to shorten the ski) and again at the trail's end on Mabel Lake. The return ski offers participants the choice of backtracking to rejoin the Crystal Creek trail, or exploring new terrain by following (or if conditions permit, creek skiing) Crystal Creek back to



### Editorial Deadlines

Keep those cards and letters coming! Without the news supplied by club members, there won't be a newsletter! Deadline for the March newsletter is March 20. Needed: stories, technical tips, race team results, photos from members, social events, etc. Email submissions to: [caliburn@sympatico.ca](mailto:caliburn@sympatico.ca)

Paul Pothier wants to remind us that the Mabel Lake Tour is coming up FAST! Registration forms can be found at the S.T.A.R. desk at Hiawatha Lodge. You can return your registration to the STAR desk at Hiawatha or mail it to Paul Pothier (69 Ontario Ave., Sault Ste. Marie, On. P6B 1E2). The fee for SFNSC members is \$9.00 per child (12 and under) and \$12.00 per adult if your registration is received by Feb. 27. After that date the cost goes up incrementally. Non-SFNSC members pay \$12.00 per child and \$15.00 per adult before Feb. 27, and the cost rises after that. The entire 21 km. trip will be via classic technique. The group start will be at 12:00 p.m. (noon) and individual starts can occur up to 1 p.m. The Sugar Shack will be the rallying point both before and after the loppet. Post-loppet social and food will be at the Sugar Shack. See you there!

### **PASTA DINNER FUNDRAISER FOR RACE TEAM!**

The Race Team members are planning a Pasta Dinner as a fundraiser this year; no selling chocolate bars! Be sure to mark your calendars!

**DATE:** Saturday, March 2, 2002

**LOCATION:** Westminster Presbyterian Church, Memorial Hall, Brock St. (where we have our Ski Swaps)

**TIME:** 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

**COST:**

Adults:	\$8.00
Children 6-10 yrs:	\$4.00
Children under 5	FREE

**MENU:** Pasta, meatballs, salad, bread, dessert

**HOW TO GET TICKETS:** Starting January 26, tickets will be available at Jackrabbit Lessons from Vera McCron and/or Gloria Mears, or any member of the race team. Or you can call Vera at 949-7142.

Please note! The dinner will begin to be served at 5 p.m. but you can arrive later and still get a great meal. The food will be served at the front of the hall and people will come up to be served (i.e. buffet-style). There will be tickets available at the door, but it's best to get them ahead of time to give the cook an idea of how much pasta to make (I have trouble enough figuring that out for the four people in my family!). All race team members have tickets to sell, so if you're getting hungry just by reading this, phone somebody on the race team and get your tickets NOW!

### Biathlon Update Feb. '02 - By Coach Sarah Stocker

This year, Soo Finnish joined forces with the 2310 Army Cadets to boost biathletes Patrick Gallant, Matthew McLeod, Andrew Stocker, Alex Witty into competitive action. Early in Dec. the cadets joined the SFNSC training sessions that they could attend. Range access being as critical to the team as ski practice, the cadets often missed Sat. skiing to shoot at Brande's gravel pit. Dennis Paradine helped to modify the training program to accommodate the biathletes' need to raise their general fitness level, and as a result, they spent most of the pre-Christmas period ski walking. Once on snow the biathletes began to combine technique basics and lots of fundamental zone 1 level training, largely without poles. Peter Uhlig and Paul Barbeau presented a helpful waxing clinic to get the team off on the right track in caring for their skis and enhancing their performance with the wax that the club provided. Just prior to the end of Dec. the team was able to begin doing some of the intervals that Soo Finnish athletes were using to increase their speed and strength. Suddenly the biathletes who'd been champing at the bit to go faster developed an appreciation for *moderate* pacing!

The team's first competition of the season was the Northern Zone races outside of Sudbury at the Crane Hill Rod and Gun Club on Jan. 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. On the whole the team was happy with its results, despite the challenges of skimpy snow, and the high numbers of novice skiers that made for slower going. In the individual male 8 km competition, with a field of 85 mixed seniors (15 yrs. old as of Mar.) and juniors, our biathletes placed third, twelfth, fifteenth and eighteenth, with Alex Witty and Matt McLeod qualifying for the Regional (i.e. Provincial) competition. The relay team of Gallant, McLeod and Witty placed third out of seventeen male teams.

On Feb. 16 the team members returned to Crane Hill where they were fortunate enough to see both Matthew McLeod and Alex Witty qualify for the Nationals, which are to be held Mar. 2- 9 in Val Cartier. Matt placed third overall and was the first place junior, while Alex placed sixth overall. Both biathletes skied better, and pushed themselves harder than ever before. At this competition both competitors were able to use Anschutz rifles, and the team also saw its best shooting results to date. While the shooting is progressing, only at the competitions has the team been able to combine skiing and shooting this year. Major Pierre Breckenridge has secured the sponsorship of the Sault Rod and Gun Club to allow for use of their range and ski trail, so the team plans to be using those facilities next season. This will make it possible for the biathletes to ski and shoot during their training sessions. The team also recognizes the need to get more competition experience for all of its biathletes and plans to address it as soon as possible.



### **Duke of Windsor**

SPORTS SHOP

**X-country skis, clothes,  
outdoor gear**

**WAXING TIP FOR REALLY COLD WEATHER**

**By Paul Barbeau**

During very cold conditions, the proper glide wax is very critical. Bases should be prepped with a hard wax, then covered with a layer of graphite (especially in low humidity). After scraping and brushing, a layer of cold (usually green) wax is applied. It is essential that the ski bases are scraped properly. Look down the base of the ski; you should be able to spot the excess wax with proper lighting. Skis that are not flat require extra time to ensure that the wax in the low spots is taken care of. The skis are then brushed to remove all the wax from the structure. The skis can be brushed again after the bases are fully cooled. Hardeners can also be ironed on top of the wax. This technique worked very well at the Ontario Cup races in Marathon, where cold conditions were in place for the Saturday races. Hopefully it will also prove to be useful to our members who scoff at temperatures below -15 degrees C!.

**SFNSC Race Team Off to Three Championships!**

**WOW! Our race team is coming up to three great events to end the main part of our race season.....**

**Emily Hayman, Matt McCron, Viktoria Koskenoja, Sarah Cuddy and Mike Fadock are off to Nationals in Canmore, Alberta. Leaving March 1, they will return March 11. They will be joined by Adam Kates and Chad Yurich, and coached by Dennis Paradine and Bob Fadock.**

**Matt McLeod and Alex Witty are travelling to the National Cadet Biathlon Championships in Val Cartier, P.Q. They will be racing from March 3 to March 7.**

**Nick Uhlig, Neil Greenwood, Matt Cuddy and Johnny Harvey are going to the Ontario Winter Games in Duntroon/Collingwood from March 6 to March 8.**

**Good luck to everyone, the club is rooting for you! Any historians out there? Is this the first time that our club has sent three contingents of athletes to three separate championships?**

### **RACE TEAM GARAGE SALE!**

**The race team found that last year's garage sale was so successful that they are willing to host yet another one this year. The planned date is sometime in the spring, but we are giving advance notice now so that you can save up (find?) some prime sale items in your garage/basement/under your bed, wherever. This is your big chance to de-clutter, club members! If any club members (or friends and relations) wish to donate items towards this worthwhile endeavour, please contact Vera McCron (949-7142) to arrange for pick-up or drop-off of donated items.**

### **Young Drivers Needed!**

**Our Driving School has made an offer to SFNSC members that is hard to refuse! Our Driving School has agreed that for every SFNSC referral they receive (that is, an SFNSC member refers a new client to the driving school), the club will receive a \$10.00 donation from Our Driving School. What a great incentive! As everybody knows, the best advertising is by word-of-mouth, so spread the word to all your about-to-be drivers. Tell them that they ought to take their lessons with Our Driving School and while they are there, to mention that an SFNSC member referred them. Any student who comes in to take the course and says the words "Soo Finnish" in a sentence about who referred them will qualify for a donation to the club.**

### **Participation—That's What It's All About**

**Submitted By Doug Cuddy**

**Two weeks ago, I accompanied about 20 members of SFNSC to the Ontario Cup races in Duntroon, hosted by Highlands Nordic Ski Club (about 10 km. south of Collingwood). Accompanying us was Rachelle Barbeau. Rachelle's dad, Paul, is the race team's wax technician. Her mom joined us on this trip as a chaperone. Rachelle's parents try to involve Rachelle (who has Down's syndrome) in as many things as possible that "normal" kids do, including participating in ski races. Rachelle had been pre-registered for the 3.5 km. classic race in Duntroon. Her younger brother, Andrew, was skiing the same distance. Distance is not a problem for Rachelle, but because she has poor vision and balance, she normally races with younger kids who typically race on a flatter course than the older age categories.**

**The 3.5 km classic at Highlands was anything but flat and there was no way that Rachelle could safely manage the steep descents. Upon discovering this, Rachelle's parents asked the organizers to withdraw her from the competition. The organizers then took up the challenge. Without fanfare, Rachelle left the start gate at her scheduled time and crossed the finish line without mishap, and with a BIG GRIN on her face (see page 6!). The club had, on very short notice, opened up other trails and stationed marshals at the turns who watched for Rachelle's bib number. They then steered her onto the detours that bypassed all of the hilly parts of the course. Rachelle, along with most other participants, did not know that she had skied a different course than the other 12-13 year olds.**

**At the awards ceremony about 2 hours later, there was a special award given by the organizers to the person present who had contributed that something extra to the sport of XC skiing that weekend. Rachelle proudly received her gold medal with her characteristic grin to the applause of all 200 people present - not all of whom had dry eyes!**

**I was truly moved by how the organizers - all volunteers - went out of their way at the last minute to ensure that one little girl who wanted to participate, could.**

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**RACE TEAM MEMBERS HAVING A GREAT TIME AT THE ONTARIO CUP RACES IN MARATHON!**

