

# ***The Inside Track***

**A newsletter for members of the Porcupine Ski Runners**



## **President's Message**

*~Neal McNair*

This winter brought us some strange weather with a shallow snow base and a few periods of rain which required some trail closures. On the plus side, we had mostly mild temperatures and thanks to our dedicated groomers, the trails were in beautiful shape despite the lack of snow. We were able to ski from early December to early April, giving us four months of mostly fantastic conditions and temperatures.

After seeing a big drop in membership last season, the club has rebounded nicely with 941 members this year. Along with the increase in members came increases in Jackrabbit participation and school group use. These two programs are critical to introducing the sport to a new generation and it is great to see them thriving.

On a personal note, I am coming to the end of my 2-year term as club president. In that time I have learned a great deal about the various aspects of club operations, and along with that has come a greater appreciation for the amount of work that our volunteers put in to keep things running smoothly at PSR all year round. We are always looking for new people to get involved in assisting with club operations. If you value this club, I encourage you to come out to our AGM on June 6<sup>th</sup> and learn how you can contribute to its continued success.

See you on the trails!

## **Porcupine Ski Runners Annual General Meeting**

Tuesday, June 6, 2017 @ 7:00PM

Porcupine Ski Runners

All members are invited to attend.

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## **Spring Issue**

**May 2017**

*The Inside Track* is distributed to the members of Porcupine Ski Runners to keep them informed about club activities. There are two newsletters issued each season.

Thank you to those who contributed reports and information. Suggestions and comments from members are always appreciated.

Editor: Jennifer Bonsall

Box 250  
Schumacher, ON  
P0N 1G0  
[www.porcupineskirunners.com](http://www.porcupineskirunners.com)



## Facilities

~Alan Heino

In our seventh season with the new chalet, we continued to support many events in our facilities. The two largest events held this year were 2017 OFSAA Nordic Skiing Championship, February 27-March 1, and the PSR Annual Loppet held on March 19<sup>th</sup>.

The OFSAA championships brought in 565 competitors along with a large delegation of coaches and volunteers. Needless to say the chalet was very busy for the three day event. It was very successful, and proved again that our facilities are as good as any in the country.

The Annual PSR Loppet attracted approximately 100 participants this year. Our chalet was particularly busy with the participants, their families & friends during lunch, and especially during the prize presentations which was held outside under favourable seasonal temperatures.

This year, the rental room opened for business on the weekend of December 17<sup>th</sup> and maintained expanded weekday rental room hours from 3-7 PM, as well as full day rental room hours on weekends. Equipment rentals have continued to grow in popularity and allowed many people to experience our trails for the first time, whether cross-country skiing (classic or skating), or snowshoeing. This year we saw a very good response to our Christmas holiday promotion of reduced day and rental fees from December 27 to January 6.

In summary, we saw increased revenues until the season closure on April 1<sup>st</sup>: more than 25% higher day rental equipment revenues and over 40% higher day fee revenues as compared to the past two seasons. Hopefully, many of this year's rental equipment users will consider purchasing memberships next year.

I would like to thank the members of our Facilities committee: Gerry McNair, Gerry Perreault, Ray Denis, and Jim Bielek, as well as all of our staff for their contributions in managing the facilities in a first class manner.

## Equipment and Trails

~Gerry Perreault

This was another challenging winter for the trail crews. However with Ray Denis' dedication, even at the start of the season, we were able to ski on good trails. Ray had help from Rob White, Gerry Perreault, Denis Brûlé and Germain Lauzier. The Fun Park was mostly maintained by Dave Vodusek and Rhys Lucas.

December was off to a good start then in mid-January, for almost 10 days we enjoyed spring like skiing. Unfortunately we did have a few days that we had to close due to rain and icy conditions.

Final closure of the trails came early as the base was pretty well just ice due to the frequent rain and mild weather. On May 1<sup>st</sup> there were still some areas with ice.

The new Loppet Loop appears to be very popular. We are looking at the possibility of better access for those who do not like hills.

The end of season equipment checks are now completed. The larger units registered only a little over 110 hours of operation which is the lowest we've ever had. Most winters it is double that amount. We have sold the old 1984 Alpine skidoo because it is more or less obsolete and parts were becoming unavailable. This unit will be replaced with an Alpina Sherpa which will improve our fleet in the coming season along with an extra track setter that we are buying for one of the Ginzu groomers.

For the summer season we are already spreading additional wood waste and will concentrate mainly on the inner trails followed by the Jr. Olympic. We are also going to install additional culverts on certain sections of trails to help prevent erosion caused by run off of ground water.

The trail lights are still in need of upgrading and we will continue that work during the summer months.

Enjoy your summer and remember that we will need you come September and October.



## Membership

~Neal McNair

Last year I had to report on a drop in membership of 323 members, which was not fun to do. I also expressed optimism that our numbers would rebound this season, and I am pleased to report that they did, with an increase of 171 members, for a total of 941. While still below our traditional 1,000 member benchmark, I think this is a good number that we can try to maintain and build on. In the chart below you can see a breakdown of where these gains in memberships occurred. I like the fact that some of the biggest gains came from younger skiers and families with children. That bodes well for the future of XC skiing in Timmins.

Snowshoe memberships also saw a big increase. Snowshoeing is a great activity and one that PSR is pleased to support and promote. We also encourage all our snowshoe members to give skiing a try next season.

With an increase in membership comes many new members. The key is to now retain those members for next season. Our question to you is what do you want to see at PSR? More events, groups, lessons? Let us know what will keep you as a member and what you think will help bring in new members.

## Personnel & Family Day at PSR

~Alan Heino

This season, in addition to Brent Cleverdon working as our lead maintenance worker/rental room attendant, he also successfully assumed more responsibilities. This worked out well, as Brent's additional duties included: assisting with recruiting part-time staff (students), training and supervising our students, participating in the process for

scheduling and tracking school and group bookings, and working on the day to day dealings with schools and groups. Reagan Deschamps returned to PSR as one of our rental room attendants along with Ryan Deschamps as a new hire in the same capacity. Both Reagan and Ryan did a fine job working on weekends in the rental room, as well as selected weekday evenings to assist Brent with our After-school programs. As well, Caleb McNair and Kristen Kornell both did a good job as our gatekeepers.

Throughout the season, with the help of volunteers and staff, PSR held numerous events and activities: Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations (OFSSA) Nordic Skiing Championship, PSR Annual Loppet, Jackrabbits program, Daytime and After-school programs, and the Family Day promotion. To this effect, interested members wanting to lend a helping hand are always appreciated. On that note, I would like to extend many thanks to Neal McNair, Christine Dorion and Gerry McNair for helping with the operation of the rental room as needed during the season.

Once again this year, PSR hosted its annual Family Day promotion – “Half Price Rentals/Day Fees”. The superb weather experienced on Monday February 20<sup>th</sup> helped with a very successful turnout for this day-long event. I would like to take this time to thank: Greg Deyne, Jim Bielek, Sharon Bielek, Richard Warriner and Allan MacDonald who volunteered their time to make our Family Day promotion such a success.

In closing, I would like to take this time to thank the board/committee members for assisting me in my roles, as well as thank the PSR staff for their full cooperation throughout the season.

**MEMBERSHIP BREAKDOWN 2016 – 2017: 941 MEMBERS**

Category	# memberships		# of members		% change	% of total memberships
	2016-17	2015-16	2016-17	2015-16		
Family with kids	93	82	364	315	+15.5%	38.7%
Family, 2 adults	62	57	124	114	+8.8%	13.2%
Family, 2 seniors	19	12	38	24	+58.1%	4.0%
Adult	186	163	186	163	+14.1%	19.8%
Senior	54	55	54	55	-1.8%	5.7%
Student	79	60	79	60	+31.7%	8.4%
Family Snowshoe	13	6	40	16	+150%	4.3%
Adult Snowshoe	34	10	34	10	+240%	3.6%
Senior Snowshoe	21	12	21	12	+58%	2.0%
Student Snowshoe	1	1	1	1	0%	0.1%



## Lockers

~Neal McNair

Many of our members continue to take advantage of the convenience of renting a locker. This season we had 162 lockers rented out of the 192 that are available. If you had a locker this season, it will be held for you next season until December 31, meaning you will have to purchase your membership before the new year in order to keep your claim to your locker. If you do not plan to renew your locker, please let us know as soon as possible, and be sure to remove your equipment. We also encourage all our members to remove their equipment for the off-season as we cannot be held liable for any loss or damage that may occur.

## Off-Season Facilities Rentals

~Neal McNair

During the off-season the Porcupine Ski Runners main lounge is available to rent for a variety of events and gatherings such as business meetings, social gatherings and day camps. Our chalet offers the following amenities:

- New modern building
- Spacious open concept main lounge that can accommodate up to 80 people
- Kitchen facilities
- Free high-speed wi-fi
- Ample parking
- Surrounded by nature and excellent walking/hiking trails

You can get more information and book your rental on our website: [www.porcupineskirunners.com/offseason](http://www.porcupineskirunners.com/offseason)

## School Groups

~Neal McNair

PSR has been hosting a schools program for many years. Participation used to be limited to schools with their own ski equipment, but now with our rental program, any school can make use of our facilities and introduce students to cross-country skiing or snowshoeing. This year saw a significant increase in participation by school groups, with approximately 300 students using the trails on a weekly basis, plus another 300-400 coming out for single day outings. This program is a great way to get a new generation of skiers hooked on the sport, and our hope is that they bring their parents out a few times as well.

Thank you to our lead rental room attendant, Brent Cleverdon, for his patient and reliable work getting these kids setup with their equipment and out on the trails in such an efficient manner. Thanks also to all the teachers and parent volunteers who put in the time to run these programs!

## Snowshoe News

~Christine Dorion

Snowshoeing this season was a success with many new members and day users enjoying the great trails at PSR. This year, new ropes were installed and a new Snowshoe Board was placed inside the chalet for those wishing to track their kms throughout the season (thanks Gerry Perreault). Next season we will be offering a recognition to those reaching 500km and maps will be updated. The snowshoe trails have been maintained by Larry & Sylvie Labelle, Ray Denis and, new to the crew, Samuel Miron. I would like to applaud them for all the work that has been done this year. With this year's success, snowshoe events should continue next season on a weekly basis. I would like to thank everyone who used the snowshoe trails and participated in the weekly events. It was great fun to watch the trails being enjoyed by all ages. Any feedback, comments or suggestions on the snowshoe trails can be emailed to [christine@nconn.com](mailto:christine@nconn.com).



## 37th Annual Porcupine Ski Runners Loppet

~Rhys Lucas

This year's annual PSR Loppet was held on March 19<sup>th</sup> with over 100 registered participants. After having to postpone the event one week due to cold temperatures we were treated to a perfect day of skiing. We had warm weather, blue skies and perfect trails thanks to Ray and the grooming crew. Some of the out of town skiers commented it was the best ski they've had all year. The warm weather allowed us to hand out draw prizes and awards on the deck outside while enjoying the chili lunch. A special thanks to our primary sponsor Goldcorp for continuing to support our events and making Ski Runners such a successful club. Also, many thanks to Vodusek Denture Clinic and Lorne Luhta Ski Sales for supporting the event and providing prizes for this year's Loppet. Of course, events like these couldn't happen without our dedicated volunteers who helped in making this year's loppet a success. A full list of the loppet results can be found in the events section of our website.



## Jackrabbit Youth Program 2017

~Christine Dorion

Jackrabbits was so much fun this year, with over 90 kids registered and many new participants. It was nice to meet all the new families and new friendships were made all while having fun during the winter months. I would like to thank all the parents for involving their kids in this great winter program. None of this would be possible without the involvement of parents and of course the volunteer coaches and helpers.

A big thank you to Leigh Charbonneau, Derrick Cremin, Denis Charette, Angie Bernier, Tim Edwards, Richard Warriner, Mel Bucar, Dave Vodusek, Alana Graham, Diane Luhta, Dave Bucar, Rhys Lucas, Joe Barazzutti, Heather Young, Aileen Felsler and all those who helped in the kitchen and around the chalet.

As promised, the kids who participated this year will be guaranteed a spot in the program next year, with the number of coaches available. Jackrabbit registration for next season will be in November.

We are always looking for coaches, assistant coaches and helpers. This fall we will be offering a coaching course to those interested in helping out. If any adult is interested, please contact Christine at [christine@nconn.com](mailto:christine@nconn.com)



## Biathlon Bears

~Angele Caporicci

The Biathlon Bears winter season came to an end on April 1<sup>st</sup>, when we held our luncheon and badges presentation. The program had 12 Biathlon Bears this year, as well as several racers.

A very good season overall with several of the Bear Racers obtaining medals at various races. Vincent Neron, obtained a gold medal at Regional Biathlon Cadet races and qualified to attend Cadet National Biathlon, where the Ontario Team earned a bronze medal overall. Andraya Johstone, obtained a silver medal at Area Cadet Race in Sault Ste Marie, and two silver medals at a recent Ontario Air Rifle Championship race in Collingwood (Highlands). Will Little, a first year racer (11 yrs old), finished well, and shows good promise for next year.

Several of the Biathletes also participated in the High School Cross Country races, where a few qualified to race at OFSAA.

Biathlon Bears will continue with its summer training program. We are planning to hold a weekend summer training June 10-11, 2017. We are also looking forward to hosting another NCCP Silver and/or Gold Biathlon Coach course sometime in September. Details will be available over the next few months.

This summer, we plan on doing some work to expand the range area, in order to have more levelled lanes. This will require some volunteers to go into the area and do some land work. If any PSR members wish to assist, or provide their expertise, we would always welcome your help.

NOTE: One of our own Alumni, Trevor Kiers, raced the International circuit this year, and won many medals at the Canadian Biathlon Nationals in Canmore, Alberta. He currently lives and trains in Canmore and races for the Junior Canadian Biathlon Team.



## PSR Junior Development Ski Team

~ David Vodusek

The PSR Junior Development Ski Team had a fantastic ski season and proudly represented the Porcupine Ski Runners. The team participated in an Ontario Cup at the Temiskaming Nordic Ski Club and the 2017 Ontario Midget Championships at Kawartha Lakes Nordic Centre, as well as several local invitational races and loppets in Northern Ontario.

At the Ontario Cup, our young team collected five medals in the peewee category with Oscar Clark winning a bronze medal in the Kings Court Sprints and a silver medal in the 2.5km mass start classic. Teammate Clarke Frey joined Oscar on the podium collecting a bronze medal in the mass start classic. In the peewee girls' category, Julia Vodusek won a bronze medal in the Kings Court Sprints and a bronze medal in the 2.5km mass start classic.

In our first appearance at the three day Ontario Midget Championships, Julia Vodusek collected one silver (3km skate – year of birth category) and two bronze medals (sprint SkiCross and mixed team relay events.) Nicole Kukulka, racing up an age group, captured a bronze medal in the 3km classic (year of birth category.) In their respective age group categories, for the 2006 year of birth, Julia Vodusek was second overall with Brielle Charette 7<sup>th</sup> and Allysha Gray 10<sup>th</sup>. In the 2007 year of birth category, Nicole Kukulka was third overall and Chantal Kukulka was 5<sup>th</sup>. In the peewee boys, 2004 year of birth category, Clarke Frey was 8<sup>th</sup> overall. Oscar Clark placed 5<sup>th</sup> in the 2006 year of birth category and Julius Frey placed 7<sup>th</sup> in the 2007 year of birth category. Brielle Charette was also the recipient of the best classic technique award for Sundays 3km peewee classic event.

The 2017-18 Junior Development team included Brielle Charette, Oscar Clark, Allysha Gray, Clarke Frey, Julius Frey, Chantal Kukulka, Nicole Kukulka, Mari Luhta, Julia Vodusek, and Olivia Vodusek. Since the team began training as a group in November 2014, the skiers have continuously improved and their results from this past season reflect the commitment of both the racers and their parents. The team held 2 practices each week;

however, many of these young athletes demonstrated their dedication to the sport by training an additional 2-4 times each week on their own. As a result, they were able to reach impressive distance goals, including some racers skiing upwards of 450km in the season!



*The PSR JD Ski Team and coaches at the Ontario Cup #4*

## PSR Race Team

~Mike Kornell

The PSR Racing Team, with skiers of high school age, consisted of Isaac Rondeau McNair, and Kristen Kornell. Summer and Fall dryland training was done locally, as well as with the Nipissing Junior Lakers team in North Bay. This regional team concept within Northern Ontario also provided year-round support for club skiers from Sault Ste. Marie, Temiskaming, Sudbury and North Bay.

Isaac and Kristen competed in all 4 Ontario cups (Thunder Bay, Duntroon, Ottawa and Temiskaming). Kristen also raced at the Canadian Championships in Canmore, Alberta where she achieved 12<sup>th</sup> aggregate placing, (and the fastest skier from Ontario) in her juvenile girl category.

A big thanks to local PSR coaches Dave Vodusek and Rhys Lucas, and Nipissing Lakers coaches Toivo Koivukoski and Dave Nighbor.



## 2016-2017 Financial Summary

~Beverly Beaven CPA CGA

Another great year for skiing which lead to an increase in memberships. Even though our ski season started earlier, we still have our regular expenses for all 12 months as well as unexpected expenses. You will note, our 3 biggest expenses are insurance, utilities and payroll.

Our fiscal year is from June 2016 to May 2017. The information provided is up to April 2017 but the few expenses to come in May will provide a positive net income this year for our club.

Revenue	Membership	80,468
	Rental equipment	21,818
	Day Fees	16,105
	Chalet/Locker rentals	12,888
	Loppet and OFSAA	9,027
	Other	13,791
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>154,097</b>
Expenses	Insurance	25,196
	Utilities/Property Taxes	23,722
	Payroll	20,984
	Equipment and trails	15,013
	Other	18,404
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>103,319</b>
<b>Revenues less expenses</b>		<b>50,778</b>

### Summer Chalet Hours

During spring, summer and fall the chalet does not have regular hours of operation.

For assistance call:

Ray Denis	705-365-7670 (Primary contact)
Gerry McNair	705-264-9093 (Alternate Contact) cell: 705-266-4213
Neal McNair	705-363-7719 (Alternate Contact)
Alan Heino	705-264-9107 (Alternate Contact)
Gerry Perreault	705-264-6939 (Alternate Contact) cell: 705-363-7716

## 1000 Kilometre Challenge 2017

~Lorne Luhta

Fourteen dedicated skiers reached the 1000 km mark and another 11 skied between 500 and 1000. Our season ended earlier than usual with the rain and icy conditions and I am sure if we had good skiing until the end of April like most years, more members would have earned the highly coveted Challenge Pin. The pins will be available at the AGM in June.

Congratulations to all club members who participate actively in this wonderful winter sport!

# 1000 KM CLUB

Ray Denis	2047
Claude Castilloux	1717
Isaac Rondeau-McNair	1500
Claude Gagnon	1285
Jane Schultz	1260
Kristen Kornell	1245
Brenda Smith	1238
Kevin Montgomery	1166
Nick Kanya-Forstner	1155
David Kapias	1144
Kim Wagner	1087
Mary-Anne Church	1077
Ben Ollila	1038
Gerry Perreault	1028
Erik Luhta	825
Rob White	790
Neal McNair	756
Norm Disley	746
Lorne Luhta	746
Alan Heino	708
Spyke Pintar	640
Raphael Delli Quadri	630
Mike Cousineau	525
Jan Deyne	522
Stan Vasilauskis	513
<b>Total Kilometers</b>	<b>25388</b>



## Rookies vs. Vets

~Rhys Lucas

The Vets once again prevailed over a young, but up and coming, Rookies team. On a perfect April morning, speedy rookies Kirsten Kornell and Isaac Rondeau-McNair got their young team off to a great start, but the Vets were able to fight their way back, take the lead and never look back. This year's race took place on the sprint loop with each skier skiing two 500m laps. The first Rookies vs. Vets race was held in 1978 and is typically held late in the season. While our current junior race team is mostly made up of young skiers, the Vets know the rookies are getting stronger every year so we expect another exciting race next spring!

Thanks again to Ray for keeping our trails in perfect condition so late into the season and to all the volunteers for keeping this tradition going.

 <b>Rookies</b>			<b>Rookies vs. Veterans 2017</b>			 <b>Veterans</b>		
Skier	Clock	Lap time	Skier	Clock	Lap Time			
Isaac Rondeau-McNair	2:40	2:40	Erik Luhta	2:58	2:58			
Kristen Kornell	5:48	3:08	Lorne Luhta	6:43	3:45			
Vincent Chenier	9:09	3:21	Mike Kornell	10:13	3:30			
Will Little	13:19	4:10	Brenda Smith	13:59	3:46			
Julia Vodusek	16:57	3:38	Derrick Cremin	17:17	3:18			
Allysha Grey	20:59	4:02	Mary Anne Church	20:51	3:34			
Clarke Frey	24:53	3:54	Claude Castilloux	24:18	3:27			
Olivia Vodusek	30:08	5:15	Brenda Vodusek	28:17	3:59			
Mari Luhta	34:47	4:39	Robert Coderre	31:19	3:02			
Vincent Chenier	37:56	3:09	Guy Chenier	34:52	3:33			
Kristen Kornell	41:02	3:06	Rhys Lucas	37:49	2:57.1			
Isaac Rondeau-McNair	43:41	2:39	David Vodusek	40:46	2:57.2			
<b>Total</b>		<b>43:41</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>40:46</b>			

**Winners: Veterans**

