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# Birkebeiner Bulletin

Volume 39 No 1  
May 2016



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## Official Newsletter of the Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club

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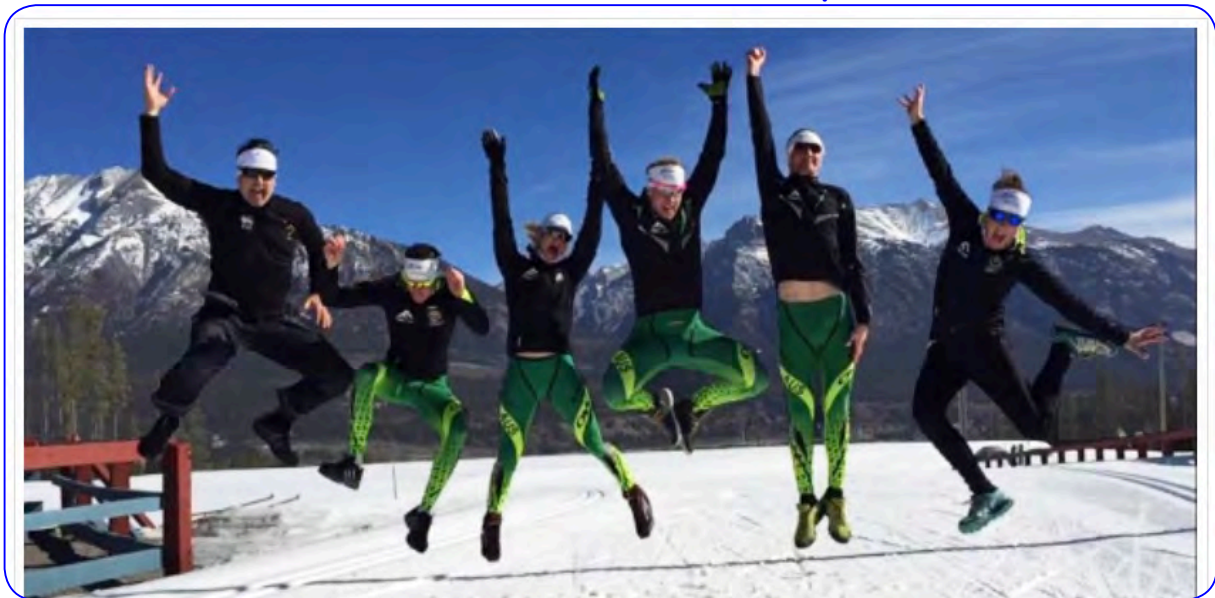
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Bulletin copy closes the 1st of each month — May to October

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## National Team members at the Tour of Canada World Cups



*From left: Randy Gibbs (USA coach & waxer), Callum Watson, Jessica Yeaton, Phillip Bellingham (BNSC), Paul Kovacs (BNSC) and Allison McArdle (BNSC) (assistant coach)*



*Phil Bellingham*



*Paul Kovacs*



## Office Bearers 2015/16

### Officers

<b>President</b>	Ronice Goebel
<b>Vice President</b>	Blair Hume
<b>Secretary</b>	Doug Hamilton (03) 5754 1826
<b>Treasurer</b>	Ann Bellingham
<b>Social Secretary</b>	Kerry Lucas

### Committee Members

Margaret Trnka  
Jim Gargan  
Ian Franzke  
Allan Marsland  
Michelle Forrer  
Alice Hamilton  
Penny Goebel  
Nick Wright

### Volunteer Positions

<b>Bulletin Editor &amp; Website Administrator</b>	Paul L'Huillier
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	Helen L'Huillier
<b>Clubhouse Stewards</b>	Tony Keeble & Megan Benne
<b>Ski de Femme Co-ordinator</b>	Ronice Goebel
<b>Skidoo Steward</b>	Ian Franzke
<b>Bush S&amp;R Victoria Delegate</b>	Ian Franzke

### Sub-Committees

<b>Race Committee</b>	Margaret Trnka (Secretary) Michal Trnka Ronice Goebel Nick Wright Paul L'Huillier
<b>Junior Committee</b>	Michelle Forrer (Convenor) Ronice Goebel Kate Prest
<b>Search &amp; Rescue Committee</b>	Ian Franzke (Convenor) Jim Gargan
<b>Club reps. on Hoppet Board</b>	Bill Little Ronice Goebel
<b>Hoppet Race Committee</b>	Bob Flower (Chairman) Allan Marsland (Race Director) Helen L'Huillier (Secretary)



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**VICTORIA** Local Infrastructure

Sport and recreation

## Clubhouse Rules

*Tony Keeble & Megan Benne*

### *Clubhouse is for day use only*

For the comfort of others the committee asks all members to please observe the following rules:

1. No skis or waxing inside the building. (Waxing can be done in the skidoo shed next door, or in the Windy Corner Day Shelter waxing room.)
2. Use the shelves and hooks for your belongings, keep the downstairs benches clear for people to sit.
3. No outdoor footwear or wet clothes upstairs.
4. Clean up after yourself - no dishes to be left on the sink.
5. Take all your rubbish home. We do not have a rubbish bin in the clubhouse.
6. If you are the last person to leave the clubhouse please ensure all lights are off and the upstairs electric heater and kettle are off
7. Lock the door if are the last person to leave, even in the middle of the day, to keep our belongings safe while we are out skiing.



## 2016 Activities Calendar

**May**

- Sun 1 • Nail Can Hill Run – Albury (refer Page 5 for details)
- Sat 7 • Working Bee (Clubhouse & Trails) – Falls Creek Doug Hamilton
- Sun 8 • RAMBO Mountain Bike Event (Mt Beauty) – (refer Page 5 for details)
- Sun 15 • Roller Ski – Beechworth area (refer Page 5 for details) Michelle Forrer
- Wed 18 • **Annual General Meeting** – Mt Beauty Neighbourhood Centre 7:30 pm
- Sat 21 • Mt Beauty 1/2 Marathon (3km, 10km & 21km) 10 am / Sec. College Helen L’Huillier
- Sun 29 • Buffalo Big Walk (refer Page 5 for details) Michelle Forrer

**June**

- Sun 5 • Roller Ski (refer Page 5 for details) Michelle Forrer
- Sat 18 • Casserole Dinner 5:30 pm – Outdoor School Bogong Village Kerry Lucas
- Sat 18 • Mt Beauty Primary School Ski Sale – Community Centre? 10am–1pm

**July**

- Sat 2 • Birkebeiner Classic (C) 2.5, 5 & 10km – 10am Margaret Trnka
- Thur 21 • Mid-Season Dinner – Roi’s Restaurant (Two courses, subsidised \$15) Kerry Lucas
- Sat/Sun 30/31 • Australian JUNIOR Championships – Perisher Valley NSW

**August**

- Sat 13 • Ski de Femme – Falls Creek Alice Hamilton
- Sun 14 • Rocky Valley Rush/Sun Valley Ramble (15/7.5 km) (C) – 10:30 am Margaret Trnka
- Sat/Sun 20/21 • Australian SENIOR Championships (Sprint F – Distance C) – Falls Ck Margaret Trnka
- Thur 25 • Falls Creek Invitation Night Sprints Finn Marsland
- Sat 27 • **Kangaroo Hoppet Worldloppet Race** 9:30am (7, 21, 42km -F) Helen L’Huillier

**September**

- Sat 3 • **Merino Muster Worldloppet Race** (NZ) (42, 21 & 7 km - F) <<http://www.merinomuster.com>>

## 2016 Junior Calendar

**June**

- Sun 26 • Snow, Trek & Travel **Mini Series #1** (C) – 11am – Falls Creek

**July**

- • Junior Birkie Coaching (*refer to club website for timetable*)
- Sat 2 • Birkebeiner Classic (C) 2.5, 5 & 10km – 10am – Falls Creek
- Sun 3 • **Junior Joey #1**. Meet at the Nordic Bowl Falls Creek – 11am
- Sat/Sun 9/10 • Birkie Junior Development Camp – Bogong Village & Falls Creek
- Sat/Sun 16/17 • Victorian Junior Championships – Sprint (C), Distance (F) – Falls Creek
- Sat 23 • **Junior Joey #2**. Meet at the Nordic Bowl Falls Creek – 11am
- Sun 24 • Snow, Trek & Travel **Mini Series #2** (F) – 11am – Falls Creek
- Sat/Sun 30/31 • Australian Junior Championships – Sprint (C), Distance (F) – Perisher Valley NSW



**August**

- • Junior Birkie Coaching (*refer to club website for timetable closer to season opening*)
- Sun 7 • **Junior Joey #3**. Meet at the Clubhouse Falls Creek at 11:00 am.
- Sun 14 • Snow, Trek & Travel **Mini Series #3** (C) – 10:45am – Falls Creek
- Sat 27 • Joey Hoppet 9:50 am (7km-F) – Falls Creek
- Wed 31 – Sept 2 • Australian Secondary Schools Ski Team Championships

**September**

- Sun 4 • Snow, Trek & Travel **Mini Series #4** (F) – 11:00 am – Falls Creek

**Junior Joey** events are run by parents and usually involve such activities as: novelty races, bumps and jumps, fun games and activities, snowgaines (treasure hunt with maps & clues) and family dress-up days. The juniors then progress to the Birkebeiner Junior Program (Junior Birkies) which gives the children an opportunity to improve technique and further develop their personal skiing skills.

**Contact** – Michelle Forrer – **Mob:** 0417 206 672 – **Email:** <[mishforrer@gmail.com](mailto:mishforrer@gmail.com)>



## Mount Beauty Secondary College Ski Team Recruiting

*Alex Craig – Journalist Alpine Observer*

Three students have moved into the Upper Kiewa Valley and started studying at Mt Beauty Secondary College this year, all of them for the purpose of easier access and opportunities in cross-country skiing.

All three have come in the hope that living near Falls Creek, and studying at a skiing-oriented school will advance their own skiing careers.

Aliena Oldis, 17, and her sister Brianna, 14, have come from Eltham North and Lola Timewell, 14, is from Jindabyne NSW.

Between them, the three have trained and raced at interschool, state and national levels, competed overseas and in Falls Creek's own Kangaroo Hoppet.

Ex-Olympic skier Esther Bottomley, who teaches at the College, said that the arrival of the three girls will double the number of top skiers at the school, and enhance an already excellent group.



*From Left: Lola Timewell, Aliena Oldis and Brianna Oldis, who will be a great assets to the Mt Beauty Secondary College Ski Team, pictured with mentor, three time Winter Olympian and College teacher Esther Bottomley.*

## Junior XC Skiing Development Camp

**Saturday 9th – Sunday 10th July 2016**

This camp is for YOU if you are in year 5 to year 8 and want to:

- learn to XC Ski
- improve your skiing to ski smoother and faster
- pick up some tips for the Joey Hoppet!
- have some fun in the school holidays with other Birkie juniors

**Cost** will be \$50 (Non members \$75, includes \$25 student membership fee to BNSC)

**Accommodation** is at Outdoor School Bogong for Saturday night. Parents will need to arrange to meet us at Bogong at 8am or at Windy Corner, Falls Creek at 9am on Saturday morning. The camp will finish at Bogong at 3.30pm on Sunday. Meals (except Saturday lunch) will be provided and the club will provide great instruction. XC Skis can be hired from Mount Beauty Secondary College and transport will be the Bogong mini bus.

Expressions of interest and questions can be directed to:

**Michelle Forrer** — [Email <mishforrer@gmail.com>](mailto:mishforrer@gmail.com)  
**Mob:** 0417206672

More information and **Application Forms** click [\[HERE\]](#)



**Birkie Bits**

by *Nordic Ned*

**Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

The AGM will be held on Wednesday 18th May at the Mt Beauty Neighbourhood Centre starting at 7:30 pm. Click [\[HERE\]](#) to download a nomination form.

**Club Working Bee – Saturday 7th May**

The annual Club Working Bee is organised to get the Clubhouse in order for the winter. We also assist Falls Creek Resort Management with trail work that benefits all skiers. If you are available please let *Doug Hamilton* know before Thursday 5th April. Mob: 0431 248 298 or Email: <[weegie@live.com.au](mailto:weegie@live.com.au)>. Indicate your preference for the Clubhouse or trail work. A BBQ lunch will be provided.

**Australian XC Skiing Training Diary – update & reprint**

Allison McArdle (currently coaching in Canada) is heading a project to update and reprint the Australian XC Skiing Training Diary. This will be the 5th reprint and update since it was first produced in 1986. It is anticipated that it will be available for this winter.

**Getting married**

Best wishes to Esther Bottomley (our own three time Winter Olympian) who will marry Swiss National Team skier Valerio Leccardi in October. Valerio is a three time Hoppet winner and has represented Switzerland in Winter Olympic Games.

**Nordic Bowl Planning Permit**

Falls Creek Resort Management have submitted an *Application for a Planning Permit for the Nordic Bowl* to the Minister for Planning Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning.

The permit is for a building and works associated with the construction of a multi-use Altitude Training Centre. The Bowl will be developed for minor sports and a recreation facility. The building will include food and drink premises, ski hire shop, storage space and the removal of native vegetation.

**Note** — If the application is approved, the next stage is for the Resort to seek funding to finance the project.

The Club and Kangaroo Hoppet have submitted a joint response to the application. The proposal is seen as a very good thing for cross country skiing at Falls Creek.

Refer to page 12 for a plan of the proposed development. Click [\[HERE\]](#) to view the submitted response. Thanks to Ronice Goebel and Allan Marsland for putting the response together.

**Birkebeinerne Movie**

The Birkebeiner story has been made into a movie and was released in Norway in February 2016. It is not available in Australia yet but the Club is making enquiries. Click [\[HERE\]](#) see a short trailer of the movie.

**Ronice Goebel off to Iceland**

Ronice, Ric and Sue Spiller are going to ski in the Iceland Wordloppet Race called the **Fossavatn Skimarathon (ISL)** 50km (C) on the 30th April. Following the event they will be touring the country for a couple of weeks before heading home.

**2016 Australia Ski & Snowboard Awards – nominees**

These awards were held on 28th April. Cross country Skiing nominee for *Snowsport Athlete of the Year* was Phillip Bellingham and *Junior Snowsport Athlete of the Year* was Katerina Paul. Congratulations Phil and Kat on your nominations.

**Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club – Pre Season activities 2016**

Date	Event	Details/Contact
Sunday 24th April	Bright Fun Run	21, 10, 5km events starting from Bam 11.3 & 6.5km trail runs (8:15/8:45am) More info: <a href="http://www.brightfunrun.com">http://www.brightfunrun.com</a>
Sunday 1st May	Nail Can Hill Run - Albury	11.3/5km options For further details: <a href="http://www.nailcanhillrun.com">http://www.nailcanhillrun.com</a>
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> May	RAMBO Mountain Bike event. Big Hill Mt. bike park Mount Beauty	Kids 1 hour, sport 1.5 hour or 3 hour <b>enduro</b> mountain bike (10am). See Team Mount Beauty website/ <a href="#">facebook</a> for further details.
Sunday 15th May	Roller ski - Beechworth area	10.30am start. For more details contact Michelle Forrer 0417206672
Saturday 21st May	Mount Beauty Half marathon, 10km, 3 km VicSquad training camp - Mt Beauty	Starts at 10am. <a href="http://www.mtbeauty.com/mt-beauty-half-marathon/">http://www.mtbeauty.com/mt-beauty-half-marathon/</a>
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> May	Buffalo Big Walk Meet at park base at 10am start/carpool.	BYO Picnic lunch (at the gorge) Michelle Forrer 0417206672
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> June	Rollerski session?	
Sat/Sun/Mon 11-13 <sup>th</sup> June	Queens birthday	Opening of the ski season - <b>Yipcc!</b> (if no snow maybe a local roller ski or walk)



## Club's Guest Coach 2016

This season BNSC is excited to welcome **Kristian Holmsen** as our invited coach from Fossum IF Ski Club in Oslo Norway. Kristian will coach our Junior Birkies, run adult instruction sessions, work with Mt Beauty Primary and Secondary Schools, run a waxing clinic for club members and provide assistance to the Victorian Junior XC Ski Team. No doubt he will be a great classic skier and we will see him enter a few races too.

Kristian is 26 years old and is finishing his bachelor degree in sports biology (department of physical performance) at the Norwegian School of Sports Science. He is in his 2nd year as official XC ski coach in Fossum IF as the head coach of over 100 skiers and for Skiforbundet as a instructor for adult ski courses. Kristian provided the following profile of himself



**Profile** — At the moment I'm also working at a sports store and I have previously worked almost 4 years at my local school and nearly 3 years at a local grocery store.

Next season I'm planning to coach our junior team, and I see this as a great opportunity to learn a lot and to get new ideas and to see how others are conducting the XC training. I'm hoping to share some of my knowledge and to give some new ideas on how it might be done

When it comes to why this opportunity interests me, I have to say there are many reasons why I want to come to Australia to coach skiing. I would really like to exchange experience and knowledge and I'm curious about how you train and practise XC skiing. I'm also eager to learn more about your culture and your country and I also hope that I can share some of mine. It is also a great chance to gain new friends and contacts which would hopefully lead to later reunions in both countries. Besides all that I hope to learn from you, I also hope you can learn something from me. What I lack in experience I hope to weigh up with my knowledge (finishing my bachelor's degree in sports biology with specialization in physical performance in individual sports, with main focus on XC skiing in May).

My philosophy as coach is to teach "the know-how" to the athletes, so they would be able to train themselves. Because in the end the athletes are performing more of their training alone than with other athletes. That's why I believe in guiding the athletes instead of telling them what to do (most of the time), so they would be able to make rational decisions based on how and most important why (based on experience and sports research).

*From Nick Wright* — I would like to thank Michelle and Conrad Forrer, Kate and Roger Blackwell, Julie and Blair Hume for being able to host Kristian in their homes during this winter. I'm confident they are going to have a superb international experience in their own back yard during July and August.

*Editor* — the Club thanks Ronice Goebel and Nick Wright for coordinating Kristian's visit.

## Membership 2016

Helen L'Huillier – Membership Secretary

Yes, it is nearly time to renew your club membership.

The AGM will decide on the membership fees for 2016 on May 18th, but the current committee has recommended that they remain unchanged.

Once the AGM sets the fees for this year, you can log on, register, and pay with your credit card. Click this link — [https://regonline.activeglobal.com/bnsc\\_2016](https://regonline.activeglobal.com/bnsc_2016)

**Here are some helpful hints.**

1. Ignore any request for a password at the start. If your email is recognised, look for the link: "Start a new membership with this address". Otherwise just fill in the boxes.
2. *Families*: Please enter just one adult for the family membership, and then list the other family members in a single line in the box provided. That means only one form for you to fill in, and one payment of \$75.
3. *Couples or parent and child*: Enter one adult, then click on 'add another person' (don't check out yet!). You may need to create a password in order to add the second person. Ignore any further requests for another password for the second person before proceeding to checkout.

Having trouble? Email: [helenlu@bigpond.com](mailto:helenlu@bigpond.com)

Mob: 0421 273 699

## New Members

We welcome two new members\*:

- Anna Curnow – South Melbourne
- Lou Carrington – Wangaratta

*\*provisional until approved by committee*



**Saturday**

**21<sup>st</sup> May 2016**

21km, 10km & 3km events

10a.m. start

**Mt Beauty Secondary College**

Limited late entries on the day from 8am to 9am  
at Mt Beauty Pool Complex  
(no late entry fee)



**REGISTER ONLINE AT**

[www.mtbeauty.com/mt-beauty-half-marathon](http://www.mtbeauty.com/mt-beauty-half-marathon)



## Search & Rescue Group win Alpine Shire Australia Day Award



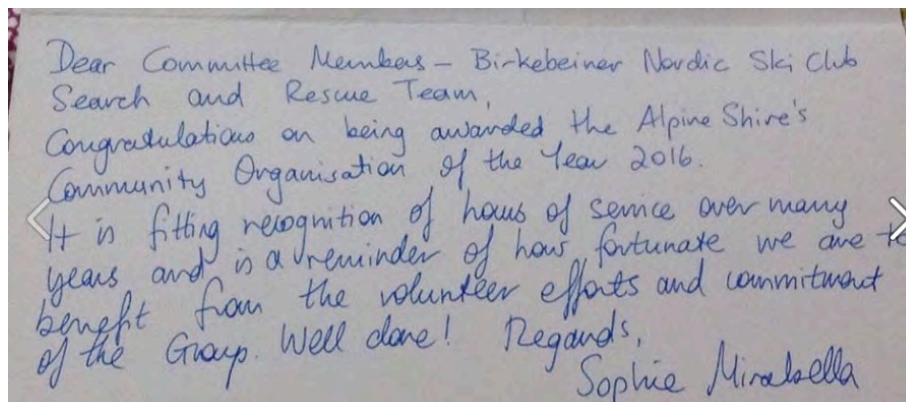
Some of the group members, pictured from left: Jim Gargan, Jarrod Paine, Bill Little, Bob Flower, Tony Keeble (Shire Councillor who presented the Award and also a member), Marty Eriksson and founding member, Bruce Vine.

The **Alpine Shire 2016 Organisation of the Year** was awarded to the **Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club Search & Rescue Group** which has been called-out for rescues in the region's high plains and remote areas 80 times since its formation in 1982 (33 years). The Group was formed through the initiative of Bruce Vine.

On searches, the Group works under the direction of the Victorian Police S&R and is affiliated with Bush Search & Rescue – Victoria.

The Group has had only three coordinators over its 33 years history i.e. Bruce Vine (1982-1994 – 13 yrs), Phil Evans (1995-2011 – 17 yrs) and currently Ian Franzke from 2012+.

This award is great recognition for many years of community service from the Club's S&R Group. Congratulations.



Sophie Mirabella was the previous Federal Member for Indi.

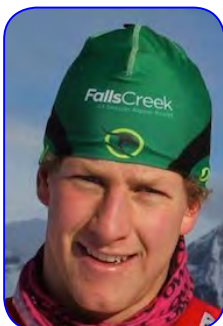
**Checkout the Club website for the history and organisation of the S & R Group**

**Click this link:** <https://birkebeiner.org.au/search-rescue/organisation/>



## National Team Members Overseas Reports

### Phillip Bellingham



This season for me started the same way as it has done the past few years as I headed straight to Sweden soon after the Australian season to begin a training block with my Coach and the sports academy team in Falun. Training went well and I had a lot of time on snow. Despite the lack of natural snow I never went for more than 2 weeks off snow since the first snow fall in June in Australia.

After some solid weeks of training and doing the opening Swedish Cup races I headed down into Central Europe to compete in my first World Cup of the season in Switzerland. This year I was lucky enough to have Randy Gibbs, a previous American wax tech working with me giving fast skis every race which was nice. Unfortunately this world cup in Switzerland and the next one in Italy I was a little off the pace from where I was hoping to be but the following week in the Tour de Ski I showed a little more promise. I had a sprint where I ended up 49<sup>th</sup> around 1.5 seconds from the finals and top 30 so I was happy to be up and about again! Jackson Bursill and I then had a crack at the sprint weekend in Slovenia. This was a new one to the World Cup calendar and always nice to see a new place. I had another solid sprint just 2 seconds from my goal of top 30 which was nice but the team sprint wasn't so solid for us. Unfortunately Jacko got caught up on a tough corner and crashed out putting us out of the race early on but it was still a blast to go round with the top guys. We also had a day off and got to check out Croatia which was just an hour's drive away so that was a pleasant change!

From here it was back to Sweden for a couple of weeks training before attacking the second half of the season. This half of the season had a lot of travel and some fun racing. Callum Watson, Jacko and I went to Estonia and stayed with Kein Eineste, this year's National team coach, for the Estonian National Champs. I was randomly in some really good shape and came out with a 3<sup>rd</sup> in the skate sprint and a 7<sup>th</sup> in the 15k classic, so that was a successful weekend. I then flew to Czech for a demonstration city sprint event in the city of Ostrava. This was a super-fast technical course held in and around an old power station, and with

some big crowds it was a fun event. I came away with a 6<sup>th</sup> narrowly missing the final. The next stop was the Stockholm city sprint which was held on a course of slush and rocks around the old kings' palace in the centre of Stockholm, a pretty awesome location for a cross country ski race. I had a pretty poor race here but as classic isn't really my strength it wasn't too bad. Given the course destroyed multiple pairs of my best race skis I wouldn't have said this was the most successful week of the year.

After two more World Cups in Scandinavia with some mixed results it was then time to head off to Canada for the "Tour de Canada" which contained a total of 8 stages all across the country. This was a super fun yet somewhat stressful bunch of races as it was racing and travelling almost every day. The races were often held at inner city locations which was a bit of a change to most World Cup venues. I had some mixed



*Phil being pursued by team-mate Callum Watson*

results but for the most of it I was in pretty good form. I was expecting to be pretty out of shape this late in the season but I managed to have my best result of the season in the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of the tour with a 46<sup>th</sup> in the skate sprint so I was stoked with that. Unfortunately on the sixth stage, a 30km skiathlon in sloppy snow conditions, I was pulled from the race. Each stage has a time cut off or lapping rule and unfortunately this

day I didn't step up to the plate. I was totally worn out from a long season and a lot of travel and racing so it was a bit disappointing not to be able to finish the final 2 stages but that was it.

The day after the Tour finished the Red Bull NordiX event was held just an hour up the road so Paul Kovacs and I headed up to that. It had some pretty big jumps in it and it was easily the toughest course I've ever raced. I had a good few heats and ended up winning the B-final for 5<sup>th</sup> but had I not stuck a pole between my legs maybe it could have been a little better who knows... All up I was pretty happy with a good season and am happy to be back in Mt Beauty now and ready to start a university placement in the coming weeks.

I wish to thank the Birkebeiner ski club on their continued support of my skiing and international travels it is very much appreciated. I'll see you all out on the trails soon.





## Casey Wright

That time of year has once again come around. As my northern winter concludes, I need to thank the BNSC for supporting me through the Elite Athlete Travel Grant.



This season I decided to try something new. Last September I received an email from the Head Nordic Coach at the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA), in the USA, informing me that I had been selected for a position

on their ski team on a full athletic scholarship. With little hesitation, I packed my bags and migrated North to Alaska at the start of December. I soon found myself in the dark depths of winter where 4 hours of daylight soon became the norm. Unfortunately it wasn't cold, like every kept telling it would be, so all we could ski on was a 3km man made loop.

Unless we were travelling into the mountains, this was the only snow we had access to.

Unlike all of my previous seasons, I did not officially represent Australia this season. Instead, I raced for the UAA Seawolves on the Rocky Mountain Intercollegiate Ski Association (RMISA) circuit. This is held throughout the western states of America and as a result we had to fly to every race, which was a new experience for me. Let just say I got to know Seattle Airport really well seeing that every flight to Anchorage goes through there. Although I raced for a new team I was still in green and gold. It appears that these colours will always be on me somewhere when I am ski racing.

Racing on this circuit gave me the opportunity to ski in many new places, such as, New Mexico, Colorado, Montana, Utah and of course Alaska. New Mexico was one of the more tough learning experiences, especially when we were skiing at around 3500m. To give you some perspective, your heart felt like it was going to burst out of your chest, even when lying down trying to sleep at night. Racing at this elevation was a whole different story.

On the whole I had a bit of a slow start to my season. I had some OK results but they were not at the level I had been hoping to be racing at. I was really happy to finally find some momentum towards the end of my season. At the RMISA Regional Championships in Vail CO, I achieved my best place finish of 14th in the 15km classic mass start. Following these races I was announced as a member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association

(NCAA) Championship team. A maximum of 3 males and 3 females from each team can be selected and I was stoked to be a part of this. Keeping with the form I had found I achieved my best result in my skiing career in the 5km skate at the NCAA Champs. I was beyond thrilled to have finished a race under 100 FIS points, in 22nd place and the closest to the leader that I had been all season. At this point I had managed to achieve all the goals I had set myself for the season and honestly could not have been happier.

As a bit of a sucker for punishment, I finished my season off with two 50km races on back-to-back Saturdays. The first was a classic race called the Oosik (pronounced OO-SICK. It is probably not quite appropriate for me to translate this word here, but I highly recommend putting it into a Google search. I will make you laugh I promise!), and it was held on very narrow, snowmobile tracks through the woods and across

frozen lakes and rivers. The second was a skate race called the Sonot Kkaazoot (I will let you workout how to pronounce that on your own...). This was a slightly more serious race, and on a very brutal and hilly course. All was going well until the last 10km, where we hoped back onto a once frozen river that was now flooding and covered in super slow and wet snow. It was here that I hit the wall like no tomorrow and struggled through the never-ending flat. If that wasn't bad enough the river was actually flooding, and I had to make 2 above boot-deep water crossings. Apart from that it was a great way to end the season!



*Casey leading the pack in the USA*

This season has been a very big learning opportunity for me. Being a part of the UAA Ski Team has opened my eyes to a whole different aspect of skiing. Rather than competing for myself, my results now contribute towards the Nordic team total and Alpine and XC combined total. This has dramatically changed my focus when racing, from solely thinking about my own individual performance, to ensuring that I am giving 110% even if it is the worst race of my season as my result will still contribute to the team's points. This also allowed us to watch the alpiners race and cheer them on. They in return stood out on the XC course and screamed straight back at us. It was amazing to have this kind of support while racing.

I am hoping to spend the Aussie winter here in Alaska training with the APU Ski Team and along side some very fast skiers like Sadie Bjornson and Kikkan Randall, as well as fellow Australian Jess Yeaton.

Once again, thank-you BNSC for supporting me for another Northern winter of racing!



## Paul Kovacs



What a winter it has been in the Northern Hemisphere. Great racing but not such a great snow year. In the entire season I only did a handful of races on natural snow. The rest of the time it was on man-made loops of just a few kilometres. Still, there has been some great skiing.

My season started in Anchorage, Alaska where I joined in with APU, (the team I train with most of the year) and we prepared for US Nationals. Anchorage was struggling for snow yet again this year and so we only had a 3.5km loop to train on. That being said, it was really decent quality and so although mind-numbing, it was a great place to get some skiing in. My first main races of the year were at US Nationals in Houghton, Michigan. I had a mixed bag of races with a good 30km and skate sprint but my 15km and classic sprint were average. Last year in Houghton about a meter of snow fell just in the 10 days we were there; this year the races were almost cancelled from the lack of snow.

After Nationals, I returned to Anchorage for another training block and a few races. I drove to Valdez to do a two-day tour, which was great. I double-poled my first 20km classic race, which was a challenge but a great race. Valdez is a beautiful place and I highly recommend a visit. The training continued in Anchorage and I put together one of best ever periods of in-season training. I felt really good and my skiing was coming along well. I then flew out east to Lake Placid, New York and then to Craftsbury, Vermont. I had my best distance races of the season out there with multiple top 20's on the SuperTour and being within 50 seconds of the podium. Another training block followed back in Alaska to prepare for my final big racing block of the year: the Ski Tour of Canada and then the SuperTour Finals. Arriving in Canada with the Australian team was great and it was fun to be back on the World Cup with all the big guns. The tour was some of the toughest and most mentally challenging racing I have ever done. There was so much pressure in the races not only to perform but to survive. There is a percentage cut-off in World Cup Tours that you have to be within to move on to the next stage so often it's a fight for survival. My tour ended a little earlier than I had hoped when we missed the wax badly in a classic sprint and I was too far behind the winner's time to move on. In the end out of the four Australian athletes that started only Jessica Yeaton finished the brutal tour.



I spent a few days in Canmore, Canada recovering before flying out east one last time to race in the Supertour Finals, also in Craftsbury, Vermont. The racing again was on a small manmade loop and in warm spring conditions. Perhaps because it was so like Aussie spring conditions or for other reasons, but I was in my element it seemed and had great race feelings. I had one of my best distance races of the year again and in the sprint I produced my best ever classic sprint qualifier in 19th. It was really satisfying knocking the sprint way out of the park and just getting some redemption for Canada. The last race of the season for me was good and terrible at the same time. I felt awesome for 35km of the classic 50km mass start but then due to a nutritional mistake I made, I hit the wall extremely hard and proceeded to cramp for another lap or two of the 15 lap race before I decided at 38km to withdraw from the race.

Not quite the way I wanted to end my season but knowing I was skiing so well early on in with the top 15 guys I was stoked to be in there for as long as I was, a big improvement in my fitness.

I ended the season overall really happy. It started shaky but finished really well. I'm about to receive my lowest ever distance point average in the next FIS period and have my lowest ever world ranking so it's a great way to finish off the season, and motivation and encouragement for next season.

In two weeks time I fly to Wainwright, Alaska a small rural Alaska Native village above the Arctic Circle to teach children to ski before I hang up the skis for the season up here. I plan to take a little time off before gearing up for summer training again. As you can see I spend a lot of time travelling and moving around and without the BNSC's continued support what I do wouldn't be possible. Thanks once again to the club for always supporting me!

If you'd like to find out more details of my trip check out my blog at [www.pkovacsxc.wordpress.com](http://www.pkovacsxc.wordpress.com)

Thanks again and happy skiing!





## Katerina Paul



Overall I was very happy with my season, along with the national team coaches. There was some disappointment towards the end of my season as I didn't peak when I had wanted to. During my first few weeks in Europe I was based in Obertillach, I began to find some form on snow in a short period before my first ever European race.

My first set of races was the OPA Continental cup races in Slovenia. I was stoked to achieve 27th in the skate sprint, getting me through to the quarterfinals. The following two days I got 31st on both days in the two distance events. A great start for my season. I found my speed, and was pleasantly surprised that I could begin to compete with the European Open women even though I am still a junior.

After joining up with the Aussie team we based ourselves in Seefeld Austria. After a couple of weeks training there, we had Austrian Championships in Salfelden. The two races there were 5km, a skate and a classic. I had an awesome weekend, I felt very fast and fit. I placed 18th followed by a 17th the following day in the open women's. The racing I had on this weekend is some of my best performances I have ever had.



*Coach Alasdair Tutt offering Katerina every encouragement*

Sadly I got sick straight after this set of races, I tried to recover in time for the next set, which were the OPA Continental cup races in Campra, Switzerland, disappointingly I didn't recover in time. I raced the first two days, I still managed a 23rd in the classic sprint, advancing me into the quarterfinals, although the following day my cold had moved to my lungs, and I struggled to achieve the result I wanted coming in at 38th. I pulled out of the 3rd race for the weekend of OPA racing, in order to try and recover for World Juniors, which were fast approaching.

The team travelled back to Seefeld for 10 days in the lead up to the FIS World Junior Championships. I managed to slowly recover, although I was struggling with fatigue. When we arrived in Romania I was feeling good and healthy, but sadly as I discovered throughout the racing week, I had

lost a bit of my form and didn't get to achieve the results I wanted. Strangely I got heat stroke during the skate sprint and it felt like someone had hit me with a baseball bat as I crossed the finish line.. I nearly passed out in the last 100m. This of course was not ideal and it resulted in a headache lasted the rest of the day. I placed in at 46th out of 79, so outside of top 30, which was my original goal.

My other two results from the week; got worse before they went better again. I placed 64th in the classic 5km, where I feel like I blew up from heat, and just lack of form. The 10km defiantly not my event, was one of the races were I felt better. I got 55th. In reflection I had a very good set of races at World Juniors, and I believe it was a good progression from my previous year at World Juniors In Kazakhstan.

In summary none of my results were the results I was looking for, but I have had a killer season, and I have managed to achieve a qualification for the continental cup team, which I am pleased to be apart of as I am no longer a junior skier.

The Australian Team coaches are very happy with my progress, my 46th place at World Juniors, even though I was disappointed, Finn stated that my result was the best female % since Esther Bottomley in 2003.

My technique is another thing that has improved drastically while being away, I have more faith in my skate technique and ability, and I am still learning how to use my "brain" during racing for tactics.

What I have learnt mentally from the European season is that for me isn't enough to do well for an Australian against the world, I want to be more competitive against the Europeans.

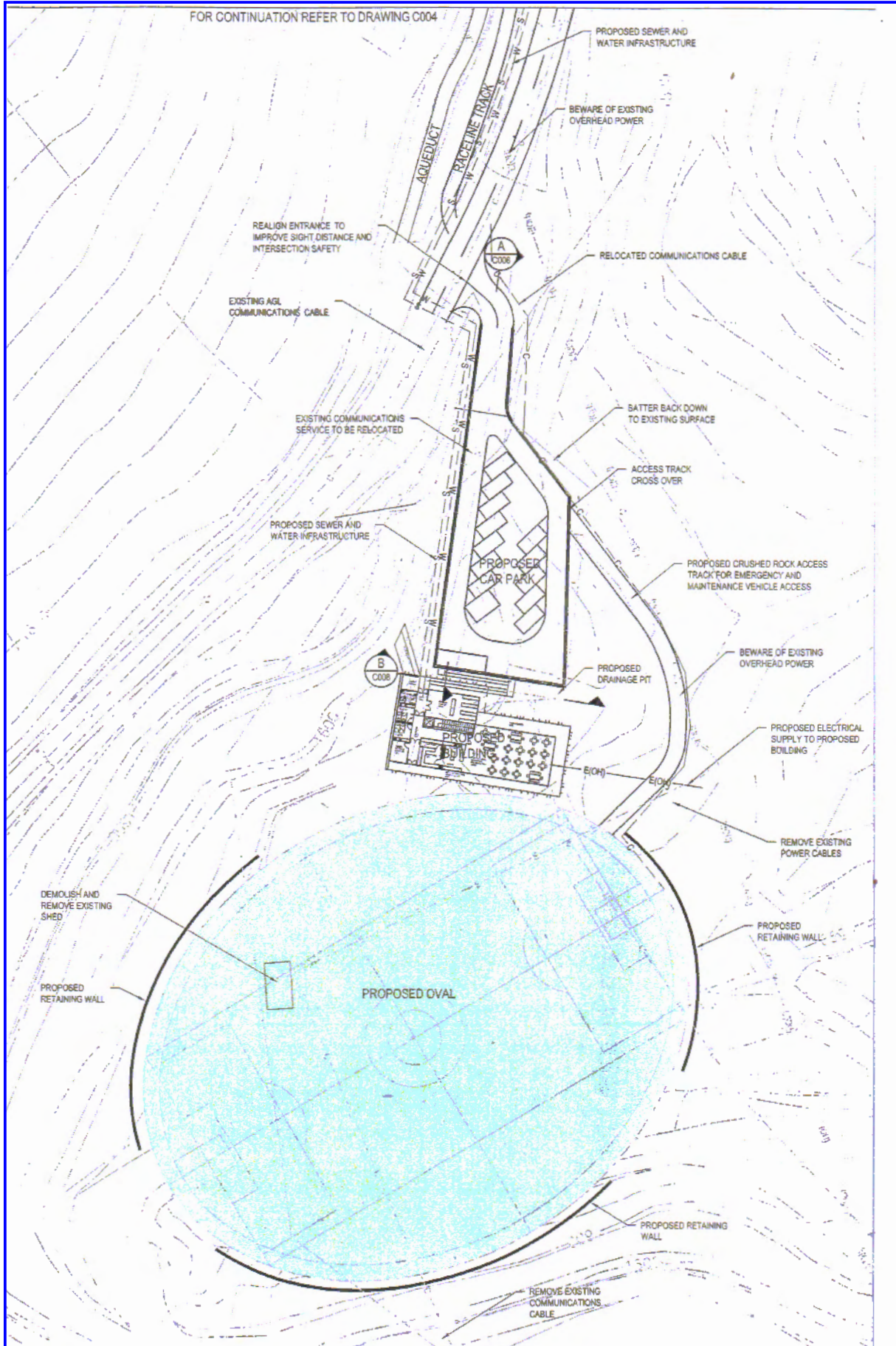
I would like to thank the Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club for the financial support for the Northern Hemisphere season. It is greatly appreciated and without the support from Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club and other sponsors, it would make it very difficult to be the position I am in today.





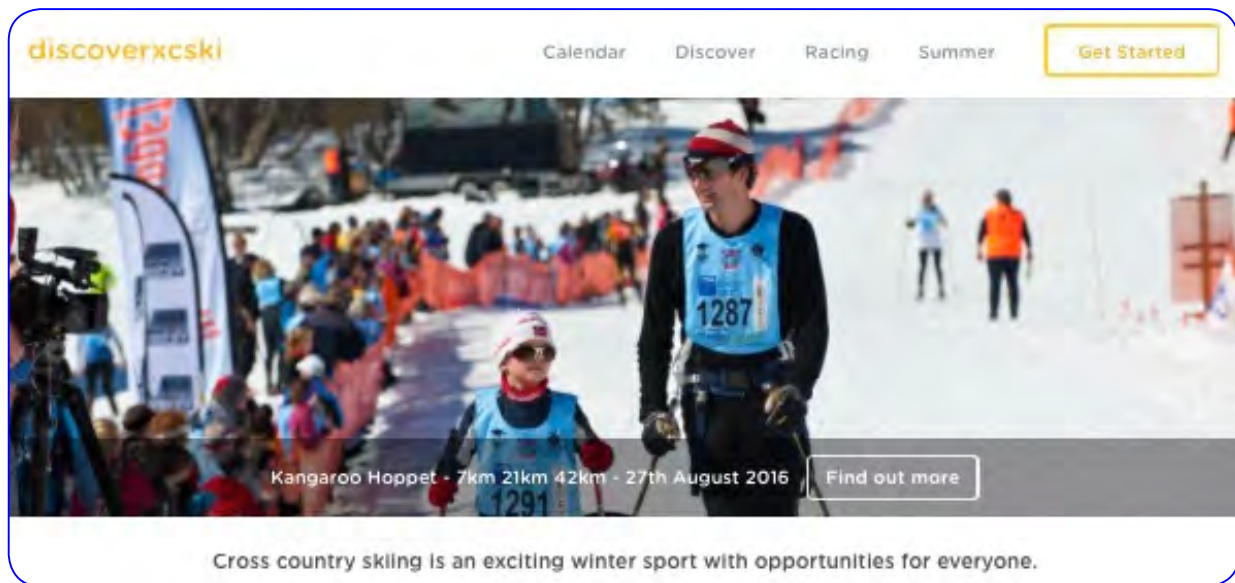
# Falls Creek Nordic Bowl Planning Permit

(Refer to page 12 for details)





## Discover XC (a new website) Boosting Participation



The Ski & Snowboard Australia Cross Country Committee is excited to announce the launch of **Discover XC**. Click **Discover XC**, an introductory web portal that aims to boost cross country skiing grassroots participation. The new website has been put together in partnership with *Ski Cross Country Victoria* and the *Australian Sports Foundation's*– Giving for Grassroots project.

Designed to be mobile/tablet friendly, Discover XC showcases the many different faces of the sport and provides practical information and tips for beginners of all ages. Whether people might be interested in finding a healthy recreational alternative, keeping fit during winter, discovering snow-fun for the whole family, exploring the alpine back-country, seeking an adrenaline rush or taking up ski racing, Discover XC and cross country skiing has something for everyone.

*“It can be very difficult to get started in the sport without an inside connection,” said Kate Prest, one of the key drivers of*

*the project from Camberwell in Melbourne. “A cousin introduced me to the sport as a teenager, I got my family into it and now we’re all hooked. With Discover XC we are trying to break down participation barriers and create easier pathways into the sport.”*

The next phase of the Discover XC project focuses on promotion in schools, using a mobile unit to travel around providing information on how to get started and demonstrating the sport using rollerskis. Also in the wings is an overhaul of the National XC website [AUSXC.com](http://AUSXC.com) to provide more information on Australian cross country ski racing.

[www.discoverxcski.com](http://www.discoverxcski.com) is now live for people to browse. Click the link. For more information on getting started in the sport...click on the *Get Started* section on the website!

*Editor – Kate Prest (BNSC), Robbie Catto-Smith and Finn Marsland (BNSC) have been the driving force behind this project and have put together a first class website. Well done and thank you.*

