
BIRKEBEINER BULLETIN



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Official newsletter of the Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club

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Annual General Meeting

Date Wednesday 19th May, 2009.

Time 7.30 pm

Venue Kangaroo Hoppet Office – in the big room.

Supper Will be provided.

Agenda The agenda at the AGM will include Reports from the President, the Treasure and several Sub-Committee convenors.

The agenda will also include the election of the General Committee and Executive Positions for 2010/2011

Mt Beauty Primary School presents:

2010 Ski Sale

Second hand Ski Sale 2010

When? Saturday 12th June 2010
Queens Birthday weekend

Where? Mt Beauty Community Centre
Hollonds Street, Mt Beauty

Time? 8am Registration of goods
10am – 2pm Sale of goods

What? Clothes, skis, boots, poles, hats, gloves,
downhill, cross-country, jackets, car-chains...

How? Bring your gear on the day, we will sell it for you,
adding 20% commission for the school, or donate
your gear and the school gets all the proceeds.

Why? This is a major fundraising event for Mt Beauty
Primary School, run by Parents Club volunteers.

Questions? Ring **0419 891 399** for more information.

Phillip Bellingham in Europe

Paul Kovacs and I arrived in Switzerland in early December. We spent the first 3 weeks of our trip in a town called Davos. We did a three week training block, getting our ski legs back and getting acclimatised, we also got to watch the National senior team race in the world cup. We then went south, nearly to the Italian border where we competed in a Swiss cup. I recorded 158 FIS points, my best yet, in the 10km classic, qualifying me for the World Junior Championships. We stayed on here for a bit longer, staying and training with the Great Britain ski team. Travelling now with Ewan Watson, Robert Jones and Paul Kovacs, the four of us then headed north to Germany for a minor night sprint race, in a town called Fischen, where we competed quite poorly, then for some more training. We spent three nights with Paul's German exchange family, this allowed us to have a good break and get some washing done. We then drove up into Czech Republic and met the rest of the national team for an OPA cup race. Here we raced a skate sprint and a 10km classic. While finishing in the back end of the field I managed to get some more good FIS points. The National team then went separate ways again and the four of us went south into Germany for the World Junior Championships. The first race was a skate sprint on a fairly hilly 1.3km course, I skied ok managing not to have any technical problems and finished 98th out of about 108 starters. Two days later I had my best race, in the 10km classic. I paced the race well on a really tough and hilly course; my wax was working really well and I couldn't have gone much harder finishing 90th out of about 108. Another two days later I woke up feeling pretty sick, but about to start the 20km pursuit. Ten minutes before the race start I vomited quite a lot which made me feel better, I started the race but had to pull out after about 2kms, feeling really poor and having no energy. Having eaten the same meal the night before Callum Watson, myself and a New Zealander who was travelling with the team continued to be very sick that day and spent the night in a German hospital before arriving back into Australia soon after. I would like to thank the BNSC committee and members for the grant I received to help me with the costs of this trip, it was really helpful and greatly appreciated as my trip was a great experience and very rewarding, thank you.

Mark VanderPloeg Overseas

My trip to Europe was stretched over several countries with many sprints along the way. The highlights of the trip would have to be the world cups and the different countries that I visited along the way. Scandinavia was definitely an experience. As we were there the days got significantly shorter during our stay. When we arrived the days were almost normal but as we traveled further north the darkness grew, so by the time we got to Finland, which was the site of the first World Cup for me, the days were very short. In Kuusamo, Finland, the tracks there were ideal for a classic sprint. Double pole out of the stadium, downhill then a small rise onto a short flat turning to a sheepish uphill, U turn down a parallel track and back up a reasonable up hill that steepens onto the stadium, to a long double pole/ double pole kick to the finish.

It was exciting in the days before the race seeing the good guys out on the tracks training and preparing for the races just as we were.

Race day, waiting in the the staging area before my race I could see the first few racers finish as I was finishing my warmup, and they were looking fast. I told myself I would be just as fast.

In the starting gate, countdown. 5, 4, 3, 2, and I was off (it isn't a false start because you can start at 2 seconds to go as you trip the wand and are wearing transponders on your legs.)I took off from the start. Went hard to the downhill. Hitting the small rise double pole over that then into diagonal on the next hill, Slipping a bit, work more from the arms and try to look more up the hill and shorten the stride. Get to the top and push over, bit more tired than I would have liked. Up the next hill bit tired just trying to

keep speed, slip just at the top, as the lactic acid hits, keep pushing on to the double pole working into the last straight. Try to pick it up to the finish, still try to keep standing up as my whole body is screaming with lactic, and over the line. Look at the clock and I am about 30 secs back. Very disappointed. Some of the aerials girls were there training and they came over to watch and congratulated Paul and I. Good to hear that we looked faster than we skied. Good experience and I learned that when racing against the best in the world unless everything goes perfect you can easily get smashed. Next world cup was Davos.

Davos was sunny as usual with picturesque mountains and fantastic training weather, temps of around -7 in the sun, -12 in the shadows. Great tracks with some really fun trails going up some of valleys. This was somewhere I had been before and therefore a familiar place to go back to, especially since we were staying at the same place we did last time. The course was similar to last year but with some slight changes making it a slightly longer course. Basically the course went up a long gradual hill which steepened at the top then did a u turn and went back down with a few small hills on the way back. I was excited to do a skate sprint and was feeling good before the start. The plan was to go out steady and try to push hard as the hill steepened. This was because the course was long, taking around 4 mins in training in the week before the race. The plan went well as I felt I could really push the last part without losing too much in the first part. I finished up 80th out of 99 which was my best world cup result and was less than 10 percent behind the fastest qualifier, which I was happy with.

Slovenia was next, another new country for me. The races were at the top of a mountain at a downhill resort. There was just enough snow with some rocks showing. The distance races were run on a 2.5k loop but the sprint was unchanged. We were staying in the hotel right near the tracks Can't say too much about Slovenia as it was a bit isolated up on the mountain. But I can say that the food was pretty good. They had goulash which is kind of stew like and really nice. They also had deep fried cheese, yep that wasn't a typo. None of the Aussies were game, Valerio a Swiss sprinter who was eating with us (you may have seen him in AUS last season), claimed that it was very nice.

The day before there was lots of spectators, which I thought was pretty crazy. The course was a flat onto a short down then a few uphill before turning back to the stadium with a steeper pinch then a long straight to the finish. Morning of the raceday the weather was cold, neg 17 snowing and windy. It would be a tough sprint. Well without going into too much detail about this one let's just say that I was not feeling good. The snow was not fast and I got overtaken by the guy starting behind me (for you that might not know the skiers start in order of FIS points meaning the skier who overtook me was lower ranked than me). Needless to say not a great race. That was the last of my world cups.

Overall feeling for my world cups was that they are heaps of fun and very exciting but if everything doesn't go perfect (for me at least) you are open to getting smashed. I didn't achieve what I was hoping to when I headed over, but I had a great time in the process and learned heaps. See you all in the coming winter and good training till then.

Paul Murray: Report From Vancouver

From the age of seven I dreamt of going to the Olympics. I didn't really care which sport I went in, I just knew I had to go. Twenty five years later I am back home after my second Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada.

For 18 years BNSC has played an important role in my development, both as a junior and senior skier. Our club has a great history of Winter Olympians and there were always older athletes who inspired me when I was younger, and showed me both how to be an athlete and what it took to make it to our sports biggest stage.

I had dreamt of Feb 17th 2010 and the XC Olympic sprint as the day I would achieve what I had trained for the last 10 years, making the top 30 at a major championship and the sprint finals. For 18 months I trained harder than I ever had, did everything possible to stay healthy and injury free and sacrificed more

than I ever thought I could in a bid to make it happen.

In the end Feb 17th didn't go any where near as I had planned. It was a massive disappointment but time and perspective have given me a better understanding and appreciation of that day.

The first time you make an Olympic team it is an incredible feeling. You are excited about marching in the ceremonies, the new gear you will get, the village, being on TV, and just finally getting to your competition. Most athletes who try for a second games have different goals the second time round.

I can say that my second shot was all about having an impact on the result sheet. It's fun to march again in the opening ceremony. It's nice to get 2 big bags of new clothes and the excitement that surrounds the games is like nothing else an athlete can experience. Second time around it is much easier to keep your focus and ignore all the crazy distractions.

My 2010 charge started in March of 2009. I managed to ski fast enough in the Stockholm World Cup and in doing so I put myself in a great qualifying position for Vancouver. As 2009 unfolded I found that I was having one of the best training years of my life. I had stayed healthy the whole year, injury free and was in great shape leading into the European winter.

Our Shadow Olympic Team or squad was much bigger this time round than in 2006 and it was great to be part of that in the games build up. As the selection races went by and finally ended in Slovenia on Dec 19th I was pretty relieved to still be sitting in one of the top 3 selection spots. I had struggled all of November and December to find form and my Stockholm race in March had given me my ticket to Vancouver.

After Christmas I headed back to Sweden to try and get some solid training in and hopefully get that good feeling on skis again. By the time our Olympic team arrived in Silverstar for our training camp I felt like I had turned a corner and was actually skiing fast again. Three days into the camp I got sick and remained sick for 12 days. I really have to thank my team mates for their understanding and support during this time so close to the Games. Both Es and Simbo were awesome and I really appreciated it.

A week before the Games started we raced our final World Cup in Canmore and the three of us all skied quite well. We were all looking forward to getting to Whistler and getting things rolling.

Straight after the Canmore WC we arrived in Vancouver. The place was buzzing five days out from the Games start and it was really cool doing the uniform fit out. It is incredible the amount of stuff that you get. That afternoon we moved into the Whistler athletes village and finally got to relax. I was sharing a room with Ben Sim and our whole Australian Team had the ground floor of an apartment building 100meters from the dining hall and transport mall. We couldn't have had a better location!

The athletes village has almost everything you need. A 24hr dining hall, video game parlor, bank, post office and shops, recreation rooms, 24hr gym and recovery centre and internet cafes. We spent our fair share of time in the video parlour during our down time and the dining hall was a great place to hang out with other athletes from all over the world.

The Opening Ceremony was incredible. Marching is such a buzz and the show the Canadians put on was spectacular. It's hard to put into words the emotions you have marching into the stadium, so I won't try, but it is 1000 times better than you can imagine it being and something that I will never forget.

The sprint race day for Esther and I came up pretty fast and our service team who had been doing a great job all week were again on the money. My whole family had come across and it was so great to have them there. I skied as fast as I could and ended up 55th. Well short of where I was aiming for but satisfied to have skied as well as I could on the day.

I then had two rest days which was a great opportunity to hang out with my family and mates. The Whistler Village which had the sliding, alpine, XC and biathlon events, was buzzing and so many Aussies were stoked to see us out and about when we were in town.

The sprint relay was my last event with Simbo and it was a lot of fun to race. I knew I wasn't in good shape and was just happy to hang on as long as we could to the bunch in our semi final. Simbo who had his best ever winter made us look good for nearly 4 laps and then I got tired. Possibly the most lactic I have ever been in a ski race!

When people ask me how the Olympics were most want to know was it fun?

There are two ways to look at your Olympic experience. The first is purely performance based. Did I go well and achieve my goals. The answer for me was no.

Did I have fun and enjoy the experience that the games only give you every four years? YES!!! It's a massive honour and privilege to get to race for your country at the Olympic Games. I feel very lucky to have had the chance to do it twice and although I haven't skied my best at either Games the journey and the experiences they have given me are now more important than where my name is on the result list.

People ask "Was it worth it, all the sacrifice and training?" My answer is always the same. I would do it all again in a heart beat and to anyone who has dreams or aspirations of chasing that Olympic race bib don't be afraid to have a go.

During the Olympics I received so many great messages from our club members via email, Hero message and SMS. It was awesome to get these and they really helped keep us motivated and inspired. There are many BNSC members who have played a very big part in my journey and to you I say a massive thank you. As a club we are so lucky to have dedicated members who help run races, clinics and fun events. Our club supports junior and senior athletes with generous donations every year helping their overseas campaigns making life easier on the families who support these athletes. We are also lucky enough to have some of the best skiers in the country as local members who help inspire the next generation and the weekend warriors alike, and finally we have several Olympic coaches and managers who have shaped the careers of many young skiers for many years.

My time as a serious ski racer is now over and I am looking forward to skiing on sunny days and enjoying winter in a much more relaxed manner.

Looking forward to seeing you all on the tracks when the white stuff arrives!

Cheers

Paul

Editorial

I draw your attention to the AGM, see page 1. We have reports from three of our athletes who competed overseas, Phillip Bellingham, Mark VanderPloeg and Paul Murray.

Memberships are due on the 1/06/2010. Check your address label if you receive the newsletter by post. If you get it off the mc2 website, check the document that lists all membership renewal dates. We are moving to online membership. Everyone whose membership is due to be renewed, needs to log onto a website whose URL I will advertise in a later edition and on the mc2 website, and register and pay by credit card. The AGM has to approve the recommended membership fees, but as they are unchanged, I see no problems arising there.. At renewal time next year you will sent an email reminder. I will look after the life members and those whose memberships are not due this year (a total of 14 memberships). This should make things far more streamlined for members and it will make it easier for me and the treasurer. I do not anticipate any problems, but there may be some early hiccups, testing so far has not found any problems.

I will include the race calendar and club calendar in the next edition. In the meantime the mc2 website gets postings of every club event as soon as it is organised. If you wish to participate in any of the planned pre-season events check out <http://mc2.vicnet.net.au> or page 7.

Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club – Pre Season activities 2010

Date	Details	Details/Contact
Sunday May 2	In line blading/Roller skiing	Meet at Mt.Beauty SC car park at 3pm. Bring own blades or use club roller skis. Please bring helmet and protection. For more details phone Jenny 57541885
Sat May 8th	Mount Buffalo Walk	Meet at the Park gate car park at 10am for a walk up the Big Walk (9km) or part of, to finish at the Gorge car park near Chalet for a picnic lunch. This is also the Chalet centenary celebration day with activities all day (see Vic Parks website). Contact Michelle for further details. 57541722
Sunday 16 th May	Beechworth – Everton bike ride on rail trail	Meet at Trail Head at old Beechworth station at 11am for 10km downhill ride. BYO Picnic for finish at Everton
Sunday 23 st May	Mount Beauty Marathon	3km, 10km, 21km. 10am start from Pool/oval area. Contact Rachel 57541616
Sunday 30 th May	Rogain event in Mount Beauty mountain bike park.	Meet at mountain bike car park for a 3pm start. Contact: Michelle 57541722
Sunday 6 th June	In line blading/Roller skiing	Meet at Mt.Beauty SC car park at 3pm. Bring own blades or use club roller skis. Please bring helmet and protection. For more details phone Jenny 57541885
Sunday 13 th June	Duathlon (run and ride) If there is no snow for opening weekend	Meet at car park after end of houses on Simmonds Crk Road. Bring bike and running shoes. Contact Ronice 57544910



Simbo pumped to be going (Thanks to Mark Vandy for the photo)



Paul getting all the new gear. *(Thanks to Paul for the photo)*



Paul in the sprint *(Thanks to Paul for the photo)*



The wax crew, Finn, Jeff, Ben and Duane *(Thanks to Paul for the photo)*



Simbo, Paul and Esther under the rings. *(Thanks to Paul for the photo)*