



CITY OF LAKES

Nordic Ski FOUNDATION

YOUTH . EVENTS . TRAILS



NOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By John Munger

The fourth year of the City of Lakes Nordic Ski Foundation has been a good one. The organization has seen some tremendous volunteer efforts, new and strengthened sponsorship, the expansion of its base of events, expansion of its youth programming, successes with snowmaking and fundraising, and the introduction of a great new look. Despite these successes, the organization continues to struggle financially.

FOUNDATION VOLUNTEERS WORKED HARD THIS YEAR:

- About 400 volunteer shovelers literally made a ski course for the 2006 Loppet;
- 700 more volunteers put on a great event;
- A smaller but dedicated group pulled off new events in the Tri-Loppet and Trail-Loppet;
- 120 volunteers worked more than 400 hours on Trails Day
- Dedicated year-round organizers have put plans in place for the best Loppet ever in 2007



Director Notes continued on page 4,

TRAILERS – NOTES FROM THE COURSE DIRECTOR

By Bill Dossett

HOIGAARD'S CLASSIC GOES TO 25K...

With the 2007 event, the Loppet introduces its new Hoigaard's Classic format. The Classic will start and finish at the same time and in the same place, but the course will avoid some of the hilliest sections. The hope is that this newly re-tooled event will continue to attract the top classical skiers in the area while also attracting more intermediate-level skiers and avoiding some of the congestion caused when the best free-style racers catch up to some of the slower



Trailers continued on page 2,

SNOWMAKING IN WINTER 2006-2007

For the first time ever, as of the publication date, the Park Board's Wirth Winter Crew has created an artificial snow loop for cross country skiing that is about 800 meters in length. The practice area and most of this loop are lighted.

Skiers have been flocking to the area, particularly high school students and teams. On opening day only 500 meters of ski trail was groomed and the announcement that the trails would be open did not come until 10 p.m. the day before the opening. Despite the limited loop and the late-notice, the Park Board sold more than 150 passes on that first day. The next day, more than 120 high school students skied on an 800-meter loop.

Snowmaking continued on page 4,

NEW WEB SITE FOR THE FOUNDATION

www.loppet.org. That is the address for the Foundation's new website. Designed by Duffy Design, the web site contains information on the Foundation's three major focus areas:

- Events
- Programming
- Trails

The site also includes volunteer, membership, contribution and sign-up information. Visit www.loppet.org for more details.

Publication of the City of Lakes Nordic Ski Foundation

Distributed to Foundation members and friends

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“The mission of the City of Lakes Nordic Ski Foundation is to promote and support cross country skiing in the Minneapolis area, especially among youth.”

Trailers continued from front,

classical style skiers. With the new format, freestyle and classical skiers should not overlap until after reaching the lakes – where there is plenty of room to pass without problem. Prizes - including imported brass bells from Austria and the Norway trips for the winners – remain the same.

So far, reaction has been positive. While some classical skiers were initially concerned that these changes were somehow a degradation of the classic race, they have been supportive after hearing the Foundation’s motives for the changes. A common refrain has gone something like this: “Anything that encourages more people to ski is a good thing...”

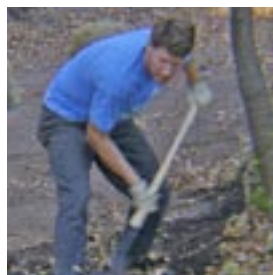
TOUGH DOWN-HILLS HAVE BEEN ALTERED...

After last year’s icy race, we heard from some of the more recreational skiers that the challenging descents created more “excitement” than some were looking for. The good news is that we were able to identify all of the problem spots at one time. While not all such locations have been addressed, we have made improvements to many of the hardest down-hills and turns. We banked some corners, re-routed the trail in some locations and simply trimmed trees and bushes in some places.

THE NEW SNOWMAKING LOOP...

The Foundation has been putting your contributions to work.

The challenge: How to create a snow-making loop without the millions needed to bury more than a mile of steel pipe and dig a holding pond?



Bill Dossett working on the trails

The solution: Build a new trail that loops around the existing irrigation well at the top of the hill behind the Wirth Chalet.

DONE.

This summer the Loppet’s Trail Crew identified a two-kilometer loop in an area that has become known as the “Skier Ghetto.” Near the Chalet and the water well, but mostly avoiding the golf course, the trail makes the most of the available terrain. It starts with a long climb (long enough so that even skiers like Piotr Bednarski will be breathing hard), has some flatter areas on top of the ridge behind the Chalet (where this year’s snowmaking is located), a practice area for high school teams, and some stunning views of downtown. {See Map}

After significant work identifying the trails, the Foundation worked with the Park Board to have the trail alignment approved. Once approved, Park Board Forestry cut the bigger trees and then a forestry mower leveled the small stuff. The Foundation then hired a bulldozer to grade the trail out. Once bulldozing was complete, Loppet volunteers removed branches, raked the trail out, and seeded.

The snowguns have already been busy, and the Park Board will be grooming every night with its new Pisten Bully (obtained in 2005 with the help of the Foundation). Get out and enjoy!

OTHER TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS...

Other than the snowmaking loop, our goal this year was to improve the trails that have been put in place over the past several years. We feel very good about the improvements we made this year and think that skiers will be happy once the snow falls.

The Park Board added one small section of new trails near Bassett Creek on the north end of the golf course. The Bassett Creek segment includes a creek overlook, a nice section of woods and an improved up-hill leading back onto the golf course.

TRAILS DAY...

- 120 volunteers.
- 3 hours.
- About 50 projects.
- More shovels, rakes, and unidentifiable implements than would fit in a garage.

Sounds like chaos? Not at all. Skiers are the best volunteers. Point us in a direction and we get to work! And the trails get better every year. Trails Day is becoming a great tradition, a chance to hang out with old friends, meets some new ones, and apply some polish to the trails. Thanks to REI and Burnsville Subaru for sponsoring! And thanks to all of you for making the Loppet Trail possible!

Editor’s Note: The organization is lucky to have such capable trails leadership. Bill and Craig Rudd make a great team and bring a wealth of experience and know-how to the Foundation.



Map by Mommisen Design

PROGRAMMING AT BRYN MAWR AND ANWATIN

By Margaret Adelsman

The City of Lakes Nordic Ski Foundation is proud to announce the third year of its "Bryn Mawr Skis" youth development program and the beginning of an exciting new program at neighboring Anwatin Middle School. These programs are designed to encourage fitness and combat America's obesity epidemic by introducing elementary and middle school students to cross country skiing. It also will provide an opportunity to further develop the skills of students who have advanced from the introductory program.



Foundation Youth Coaches, Margaret Adelsman and Amy Wyman, started meeting with students in Bryn Mawr Elementary physical education classes each Wednesday morning in early-December. Students learn the basics of cross country skiing while also receiving instruction in general fitness and health from North Memorial family practice physicians. At Anwatin Middle School, students started meeting with coaches Marie Jordan and Sarah Rohwedder on Tuesday and Thursdays after school.

Once the snow falls, students strap on their skis and glide right from the doors of the schools to the adjacent Loppet Trails. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board grooms the trails, which are also part of the City of Lakes Loppet trail system.

Students typically ski once or twice per week, weather permitting, throughout December, January and early February. The programs end with a chance to participate in the City of Lakes Loppet weekend skiing events. On February 3, 2007, Bryn Mawr students will ski in the Sons of Norway Minne-Loppet, a free event for kids, and Anwatin students can tackle the longer Rossignol Junior Loppet – designed for students in grades 5-9. Like the finish of the full-length Loppet race course, the youth events are completed on the streets of Uptown. Kids have an opportunity to show off their newly acquired skills in front of thousands of cheering spectators. All Minne-Loppet race participants receive a medal, and all Bryn



Mawr and Anwatin students who complete the program receive a certificate of completion.

Bryn Mawr Skis and the Anwatin Ski Program are joint ventures of the Foundation, Bryn Mawr Elementary School, Anwatin Middle School, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, North Memorial Medical Center and Rossignol USA:

- The foundation coordinates the Program, prepared the ski trails through the school grounds, and provides educational staffing, ski equipment, storage units, and transportation to the Minne-Loppet and Junior Loppet.
- Bryn Mawr Elementary and Anwatin Middle Schools are close partners. Principal James Lemmer and Physical Education Teacher Anita Chavez at Bryn Mawr, and Principal Beth Russell and Debby Peterson in Community Education, are critical to making the programs a success.
- North Memorial physicians attend the Bryn Mawr Skis classes and provide instruction on health and fitness topics for the length of the Program.
- The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board grooms the trails through the school grounds and in the surrounding areas of Theodore Wirth Park.
- Through its sponsorship of the Loppet, Rossignol USA provides ski equipment, including boots, poles and bindings, for all Program participants.

The Bryn Mawr and Anwatin ski programs are a unique opportunity to positively influence young people about health and fitness. These programs also introduce them to the wealth of natural resources that exist right in their own neighborhoods. The Bryn Mawr program has been well-received each year, and the Foundation looks forward to another great winter of bringing smiles to Bryn Mawr and now Anwatin students on skis.



Volunteers are welcome to participate in either ski program. Visit www.loppet.org or call 612 604-5330 for general information on the programs. For information on volunteering Wednesday mornings with Bryn Mawr students, contact Margaret Adelsman at 651-639-8992. For information on assisting with Anwatin skiers on Tuesday or Thursday afternoons, contact Sarah Rohwedder at (612) 518-8541.

CITY OF LAKES NORDIC SKI FOUNDATION

Your membership in the Foundation helps keep skiing thriving in the Twin Cities. The Foundation has ambitious goals: add snowmaking at Wirth Park, expanded youth programming (the Foundation now runs programs at Bryn Mawr, Anwatin, and Andersen Open School in Minneapolis), continues to improve the Loppet trails for better daily skiing and, of course, for the Loppet itself. Like last year, members are entitled to special benefits, including discounts at local ski shops, voting rights at the Foundation's Board Meetings and periodic newsletters like this one.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION

JUNE 1, 2006 – MAY 30, 2007

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip code: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____
 Club/affiliation: _____
 Birthdate: _____

MEMBERSHIP FEE

Basic Level (Voting rights at annual meeting, 5% discount at Finn Sisu, 10% discount at Gear West)

Individual	\$25	\$ _____
Family	\$40	\$ _____

Premium Level (Voting rights at annual meeting, 5% discount at Finn Sisu, 10% discount at Gear West, stone grind and thermo-bag treatment at Hoigaard's (\$70 value for only \$19.95))

Individual	\$50	\$ _____
Family	\$70	\$ _____
Business	\$100	\$ _____

DONATE TO THE LOPPET FOUNDATION

Trail Development (snowmaking at Wirth Park) \$ _____
 Youth Programming \$ _____
 General \$ _____
Total Payment \$ _____

Note that donations to the Loppet Foundation are tax deductible to the fullest extent provided by law. Please make checks payable to the City of Lakes Nordic Ski Foundation. (Tax ID # is 41 175 3882)

Please return this form to:
 City of Lakes Nordic Ski Foundation
 1406 West Lake Street, Suite 207
 Minneapolis, MN 55408
 Call 612 604-5330 for more information.

Snowmaking continued from front page,

While the loop was short, skiers were happy. Kim Rudd was just happy to be out: "This is great! It beats roller skiing, it's closer than Elm Creek, and it seems like a great start to the snowmaking tradition at Wirth Park," said Rudd.

WHY ONLY 800 METERS?

Through the contributions of the ski community, the snowmaking capability at Wirth Park has been significantly upgraded over the last year. Upgrades have included:

- Purchase of Pisten Bully brand snow-cat;
- Purchase of two new snow-guns (replacing outmoded snowguns from the 1950s);
- Installation of water lines and hydrants supplying the alpine area and limited cross country;
- Upgrading of electrical capabilities;
- Purchase of booster pump;
- Addition of two-kilometer loop in preparation for snowmaking (see separate article on construction of snowmaking loop).



To make snow on the entire two kilometer loop greater investment will be necessary. Water lines, hydrants and electricity to run the snow-guns, pumps and lights will have to be run around the entire loop. More snow guns and additional booster pumps will also be needed.

\$200K FOR 2K IN 2007

Early-season 2006 has been perfect for the Foundation's snowmaking campaign for Theodore Wirth Park. Cold weather but no snow... a typical scenario in Minneapolis and the exact reason why snowmaking is so important to the long-term health of cross country skiing in the Twin Cities. More than that, the early season snowmaking was important in two respects. First, it helped establish that the Foundation has actually accomplished something with the contributions that the ski community has made over the past year and a half. Second, the short loop provides the best argument for continuing the campaign – want a longer loop? Make a contribution.

The Foundation fundraising committee has been hard at work through the summer and fall. The committee is currently focusing its efforts on the larger philanthropic community by organizing a capital campaign: "\$200K for 2K in 2007." The campaign is founded on an agreement that the Foundation forged with the Park Board last summer. The agreement has three important elements: (1) the Park Board agrees to match funds raised by the Foundation, up to \$150,000, (2) the Park Board agrees to install professional management of the Winter Recreation Area at Wirth Park, and (3) the Park Board agrees to work to procure additional funding for the Winter Recreation Area at the Regional or State level.

In total, this is an \$800,000 project – with the

first \$450,000 already completed. Once the final \$350,000 (\$200,000 raised by the Foundation, \$150,000 from Park Board matching funds) is raised, we will have a fully-functioning two kilometer loop with snowmaking and lights – with a goal of completion by fall 2007.

To get involved with the fundraising team call Kate Ellis at 612 382-0489, or to make a contribution, visit www.wirthwinter.com or send a check to the Foundation office: 1406 West Lake Street, Suite 207, Minneapolis, MN 55408.

COLL CITIZEN SKIER PROGRAM

On a Monday evening early in November, a group of about thirty-six skiers met at the Wirth Park Chalet for the beginning of the third season of the COLL Citizen Skier Program. The program gives beginner and intermediate skiers the opportunity to improve their conditioning and ski technique through hearing from some of the area's most accomplished skiers and coaches, participating in dryland training and (with the onset of cold weather and snow) skiing with experienced skiers. The goals of the Program are to give participants the skills and confidence to ski in one of the Loppet's events and to expose them to folks in our local ski community.

Every Monday evening the group hears from an experienced coach or racing skier on a wide range of topics including how-to-fit-training-into-an-already-busy-life, nutrition for training and racing, the basics of waxing, why and how-to stretch, and exercises for proper body position. These presentations are given by local notables such as Jan Guenther, Ahvo Taipale and Andy Turnbull, among others.

After the presentations, the group goes outside for dryland training on the Wirth Park "big hill" or skiing on the Park's trails. (With the recent completion of the small artificial snow loop at Wirth, the Citizen Skier group was on snow earlier than ever this year.) These sessions are led by a team of "facilitators," experienced masters skiers who volunteer their time to spread the gospel of cross-country skiing to anyone who will listen. (This year there are about nine facilitators and about thirty participants.) Once there is snow on the ground, members of the program meet on Saturday mornings for more extended sessions, including skiing and socializing.

The Citizen Skier Program is a low-key, social way to be introduced to the sport of cross-country skiing and improve your beginner or intermediate skiing skills. If you are interested in joining the Citizen Skier Program, visit the COLL website and sign up.



NEW YOUTH PROGRAM AT ANDERSEN OPEN SCHOOL

The Foundation is always looking for new opportunities to start youth programs in the Minneapolis area. After Allina Hospitals and Clinics recently moved to Minneapolis, the Foundation contacted Allina about the possibility of working together on a youth program at Andersen School. Andersen sits just one block away from Allina at 28th and 12th Avenue – immediately behind Abbott Northwestern Hospital. Allina already sponsors a health and nutrition program at Andersen and was excited about the prospect of bringing the Foundation in to teach the same kids the value of a lifetime sport like cross country skiing. Allina provided a two-year grant to the Foundation to start a program at the school. Ski equipment is on order and coaching has already begun.

"We are thrilled to help provide an opportunity for the kids at Andersen to learn to ski," says Nancy Payne of Allina. "This program is a perfect compliment to the work we are already doing in the school – it gives the kids a real life context to apply the lessons we have already been teaching them on health and nutrition."

The Foundation is excited to have two excellent coaches on board in Marc Beitz and Nate Bash. Marc is a former Andersen student, an Olympic caliber skier and an experienced coach. Nate skied at and continues to coach at Washburn High School and is also a semi-professional wrestler (meaning he can relate well to the kids). Both Marc and Nate are expecting great things from the program. "The first day was really exciting – I came home physically exhausted but mentally re-energized by the enthusiasm of the kids," commented Marc. "Once the snow flies I expect the kids to have a great time."



Making the Program works takes a joint effort of Allina, the staff at Andersen Open School, including the physical education instructors, Cyndy Woodbury and Dr. Joseph Rosenfield (Dr. "J"), the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (the skiing takes place in nearby Stewart Park), the coaches, and Loppet Super-Volunteer Jeff Richards, who is scheduled to groom in the park. Volunteers are needed (it is not necessary to be a good, or even competent, skier). The program runs on Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Call Marc (612 724-4071) or Nate (612 232-2765) to volunteer.

SPONSORSHIP

2007 has been a solid, if not scintillating, year for sponsorship. The biggest news was strengthening the Foundation's connection to Medica – an organization with a complimentary mission – making Minnesota a more healthy community.

NEW LOPPET SPONSORS INCLUDE:

- Stormy Kromer
- Shapco Printing
- Comcast
- Tamarack Point LLC
- Icelandair
- Unity Business Systems
- LBF Photography

OTHER EVENT SPONSORS INCLUDE:

- Penn Cycle (sponsoring the Tri-Loppet)
- Wheel Fun Rentals (Tri-Loppet)
- Bell Canoes (Tri-Loppet)
- Mommsen Design (Trail-Loppet and Tri-Loppet)
- Burnsville Subaru (Trail-Loppet and Trails Day)
- Maplelag Resort (Tri-Loppet)

EVENTS

The addition of the Tri-Loppet and Trail-Loppet are important to the ongoing health of the organization. Because these events are not as weather-dependent as the Loppet, they provide the organization with sources of registration and volunteer energy that are more dependable year-to-year. They also provide an opportunity for sports-industry sponsorship that goes beyond ski companies.

SNOWMAKING

Last year the organization helped the Park Board achieve snowmaking capability, but by the time the Park Board had the capability to make snow, December was largely over and, worse, January was too warm for snowmaking. This left the ski community wondering what had been accomplished.



Achieving a small snowmaking loop this year has helped the organization maintain credibility in the community.

Better, this winter has been perfect for demonstrating why we are working so hard on snowmaking at Wirth. With cold weather in early-December but no snow on the ground, the need for snowmaking became obvious. And anyone who skis the short artificial snow loop at Wirth knows that there is a need for additional infrastructure so that the Park Board

can create a longer loop.

FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

The organization has developed a small, but strong, core of fundraisers, including Kate Ellis, Bruce Abbett, Al Sedgwick and Mike Henley. The fundraising group recently held a dessert and coffee reception hosted by Kate and her husband John Harrer. That reception was well-attended, with R.T. Rybak and Piotr Bednarski speaking eloquently on the need for snowmaking at Wirth. The idea is to continue the campaign for snowmaking over the winter – with a goal of raising \$200,000 by April 15, 2007.

We are looking for individuals that may be ready to make a significant contribution toward the Wirth Winter Recreation Area. If you would like to talk about that possibility or if you have ideas on someone who may be, please call Kate Ellis at 612 382-0489.

THE ORGANIZATION HAS A NEW LOOK

With the leadership of Duffy Design, the Foundation has developed new “design language.” Duffy helped us understand the meaning and importance of a consistent design language and then created design elements that are unparalleled in the industry. The design pieces include a color palate and a few critical images that can be mixed and matched to fit the various Foundation applications.



The color scheme is very basic: black, white and a steel blue. The critical images include a rendering of the downtown skyline, snowflakes, and a skier reaching for the finish line. By placing the skier before the downtown skyline the foreground evokes the lakes element of the event. For youth events, Duffy developed a younger skier image. For non-skiing events, it is easy to substitute a runner or biker for the skiers.

By using this new design language across the various Foundation applications – be they posters, brochures, clothing or, indeed, newsletters, the Foundation is able to maintain a consistent look so that Foundation materials say “City of Lakes Nordic Ski Foundation” by more than a pasted-on logo.

OVERALL HEALTH OF FOUNDATION

The organization continues to have tremendous industry and purpose and is playing a vital role in the Twin Cities community. With

frequent reports lamenting the nation's obesity epidemic, the Foundation's youth programming efforts provide a timely Minnesota-centric approach to confronting a major societal problem. In an age of growing concern over global warming, the Foundation's efforts to bring snowmaking to Wirth Park are critical to the long-term health of our sport. And our core events help keep the community active while helping to attract top-caliber young people who are looking to settle in active cities with a reputation for life-after-work.

Like many non-profits, where the organization continues to have problems is financing. The organization's financial model is based on leveraging its largest event – the Loppet. Revenues roughly break down as follows: \$65,000 in sponsorship, \$65,000 in Loppet registration (other events have been used as fundraisers for snowmaking), \$5,000 in Foundation memberships, \$5,000 more in direct contributions to the Foundation and an additional \$5 - \$10,000 in grants for youth programming.

Making ends meet is increasingly difficult. The problem is routed in the Loppet – the engine that drives the organization. Until the Loppet is able to overcome the weather problems – real and perceived – that have plagued it year after year, the organization is unlikely to achieve long-term financial health. Sponsorship has held steady, but new non-ski-industry sponsors are reticent to sign up so long as the perceived viability of the event continues to be an issue year-after-year.



The same is true for registration. Before the cancellation in 2005, the event was on a steep upward trajectory in registrations. Since then, registration has been steady, at best. With ever growing costs (the City, the Minneapolis Park Board and our vendors seem to believe that the event is overflowing with profits), steady sponsorship and registration numbers will eventually translate into major problems for the organization. At this point, without a significant increase in registration for the 2007 event, the organization is projecting a significant deficit.

As an organization, we look to our members



PROFILE OF CHIEF GROOMER JOHN GRONQUIST

by Jerritt Johnstone

When the snow finally comes—and it will—John Gronquist and his crew of six groomers at Minneapolis Parks and Recreation will be ready. Gronquist's team is based at Wirth Winter Recreation Area, and it fans out to groom the City of Lakes Loppet course, as well as Gross, Hiawatha and Columbia golf courses.

Gronquist has been working for the Park Board for 32 years, and has been grooming for the last ten. He grew up in North Minneapolis and currently lives in Champlin. When he took a break to speak with me he proudly said that his team had just gotten the snow guns turned on at Wirth, less than 24 hours after the temperature finally dropped.

The course is as ready for snow as we skiers are. Gronquist and his crew, with the help of volunteers from the COLL, did a lot of work this summer on the trails. They are leveled, smoothed and waiting for their winter blanket.

Although not a skier himself, Gronquist's pride in the COLL trail is evident.

"It's fantastic. It has opened up into a premier course in the region. It's very challenging. We did a lot of work leveling the trails this summer."



2006 Luminary Loppet

"It has good width and not a lot of camber. It is challenging with difficult uphill, but we have made it safe."

He says that a new section along Bassett Creek is very nice. "You can ski down to a new bench we built, rest and have a snack, then ski a nice uphill."

Gronquist remembers years ago when grooming was low tech and skiers in Minneapolis, when lucky, had a single lane to ski. A few years ago Minneapolis recommitted to quality and bought equipment to back that up; a new Ginsu and two new Tidd Tech groomers.

Now, when snow conditions warrant, skiers can expect daily grooming of the COLL course. Gronquist's knowledge of the intricacies of grooming are obvious and area skiers are the ones to benefit.

"We wait a few hours after the snow falls before starting to groom. You have to let the snow get on the ground and the moisture settle in, but you can't wait too long or the snow gets powdery and blows away."

"The entire crew loves the winter program even though it means late nights and long hours. They have a lot of pride in their work and the trails that work creates."

Every once in a while Gronquist gets a complaint about the trail being too soft. He says that it is important for skiers to remember that it does take awhile for the snow to set up. Give it a little time and it will firm up nicely.

As winter approaches, Gronquist wants to make sure that people realize the improvements in the trail and the great skiing conditions are the result of many people working together. "I want to say thanks to the other employees, the ski community and the Park Board for working together to get things done."

So if you are out skiing on the City of Lakes trail, or any of the other parks in Minneapolis and you see a groomer, say thanks and give a wave, because it will be John or one of his crew working hard to make skiing the best conditions will allow.

Editorial Note: This fall, Gronquist led the Park Board crew in setting a small artificial snow loop for cross country skiing. Gronquist's leadership in making snow, planning a course, and grooming the area has been critical to the early success of this program. We look forward to John's leadership in the year's to come, as the artificial snow capability hopefully improves to the point where 2+ kilometers of artificial snow are possible.

HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE ENJOY TRI-LOPPET

On a stormy morning in late-June, over one hundred boats gathered on Lake Calhoun for the first annual City of Lakes Tri-Loppet. The Tri-Loppet is the Nordic Ski Foundation's own unique triathlon: paddling – trail running – mountain biking. The event starts with a 7 mile paddle, continues with a 5 kilometer trail run and finishes with a 7 mile mountain bike ride. Participants competed in one of several categories: Teams (2 or more participants competing together), Doubles (partner on the paddle, individual from there) and Solo (paddle, run and mountain bike individually).



Start of the Tri-Loppet

The Foundation believes that the race established a new Minneapolis record for most boats in a single race. "We've run our Canoe Derby on the lakes for 25 years and I don't think we've ever had more than 60 boats at any one time before," said Andy Turnbull of Hoigaard's, who organized the paddling portion of the event.

The unique format of the event seemed to fill a void in the race calendar. While triathlons are popular there is a good-sized contingent of people who either love paddling or are afraid of swimming or biking in larger groups.

For these people the Tri-Loppet offers a meaningful alternative to the normal triathlon. Because the paddling is generally done in tandem, the Tri-Loppet is an excellent family and relay event format as well (several teams had Mom and Dad paddling, Junior running and Junior 2 mountain biking – or some permutation thereof...).

There was a bit of a cloud over the day as a few participants were injured during the bicycle portion of the event. However, both injured parties have reportedly healed up well and are expected back at future Tri-Loppets. (The bike course will be significantly altered in the future in order to avoid the biggest problem area – a wooden bridge that became slippery when wet).



For more information on the Tri-Loppet, or to volunteer or help organize the event, visit www.tri-loppet.com or call the Loppet Hotline at 612 604-5330.

R.T. Rybak and Bill Dossett paddling in the Tri-Loppet



Loppet Volunteer Larry Meyers competing in the Tri-Loppet

WITH SOME EXTRA ADVENTURE AND A BEAUTIFUL DAY THE FIRST ANNUAL TRAIL LOPPET WAS A SUCCESS

More than 120 runners took part in the first Trail Loppet. Like the Tri-Loppet, the Trail Loppet seems to fit an unfilled niche on the racing calendar: a real trail race in the middle of the City.

The 5 kilometer course was challenging – with Jenny Breen and Steve Christopher winning the female and male crowns, with times of 27:32 and 21:30, respectively. “It was a great course – running on trails is a ton of fun,” said participant and Loppet Volunteer Mike Erickson.

The Half Marathon course was equally challenging and a bit more “interesting”... The first 8 miles or so went fine, with Chip Tabor holding a commanding lead

in the men’s field up until that point. But after a short foray on the new Minneapolis Off-Road Cycling Association (MOCA) mountain bike trails, Tabor and a five- to six-man pack that was following Tabor, missed a critical turn. With this wrong turn, Tabor and company missed two to three miles of the course and ended up finishing in a blistering time. This whole group ended up disqualifying themselves... “We had a good time – I’ve never run so fast,” said Tabor, with a wink...

The rest of the field fared only a little better – with several runners making wrong turns in the MOCA trails area. Only a few runners, like Brad Erickson (Park Board General Man-



ager, Loppet volunteer and former resident of Theodore Wirth Park), were confident that they had run the whole course without missing any turns. In the end, though, most participants commented that they really enjoyed the event...

Organizers plan to work on the trail marking for next time. “We learned some valuable lessons,” said Race Director John Munger. “Especially in the mountain bike trail sections, flags and tape are not enough – we need some signs... The problem is that we cannot close the mountain bike trails off by taping across them, but without taping those trails off it is very difficult for runners to know which way to go – especially towards the end of a tough race. We will do better next time...”



The good news is that the Trail Loppet participants were almost universally understanding. “We were out to have a good time,” said Jane Kay and Larry Meyers. “While we probably ran a little extra, the trails were great and we certainly had fun,” commented Kay. And Larry even volunteered to use his coaching expertise to help mark the course next time: “When I mark the course people know where to go,” said Meyers.

Post-race festivities were marked by hot dogs, bratwurst, inspections of Burnsville Subaru’s 2007 model car, and prize drawings for two free City of Lakes Loppet entries.

FOURTH ANNUAL ROLLER RALLY

More than 60 participants took part in this year’s City of Lakes Loppet Roller Rally, raising more than \$1,000 for the Foundation and its programming. The Roller Rally itself went off without a hitch. Bikers, roller skiers and in-line skaters enjoyed a 20-kilometer loop on the Midtown Greenway, the Kenilworth Trail and Cedar Lake Trail and through the Chain of Lakes area. Afterwards, participants enjoyed a free hot dog and soda and the many door prizes provided by Hoigaard’s. With Hoigaard’s move to its new location in the Miracle Mile, next year’s Roller Rally promises to be a bit different...

Stay tuned for more information.



Director Notes continued from page 5,

for support. Ideas on new sponsors are always important (we have a strong marketing package available to Loppet sponsors). Contributions are also helpful and help keep the organization working on youth programming expansions, trail development and positive community events. The Foundation has a number of non-monetary needs as well:

- Office space starting March 1, 2007;
- Storage space in or near Minneapolis;
- Trucks or trailers for use in the weeks surrounding the Loppet;
- Volunteers and organizers for the Loppet, youth programming and other Foundation events;
- 300 yards of clean (tested) dirt for use next spring on the railroad grade; adjacent to the Greenway Corridor (Call John Munger for more information – 612 604-5331)
- Office help – mailings, accounting, data entry, etc.;
- Web development (the Foundation maintains five separate website – all housed within loppet.org);
- (What else are you good at? What do you enjoy? We can usually use help in just about any area...).

Have some ideas on any of these categories? For more information, visit www.loppet.org, call Foundation Executive Director John Munger at 612 604-5331 or send him an email at directo@cityoflakesloppet.com.

NEW PHONE SYSTEM

Up until the last few months, the organization has survived with cellular phones. But cellular phones provide low-quality service, no ability to forward calls, no conference calling ability, and they provide a generally poor business image to potential sponsors and the community. Along came Unity Business Solutions... Unity is a new-to-the-Twin Cities voice-over-internet phone company that provides communications solutions for small businesses in the area. Unity is now sponsoring the event by providing communications support. Unity provided the organization with a block of phone numbers, with an auto-attendant, facsimile, conference calling, call forwarding and much more, all built into the system. The Foundation’s new main phone number is 612 604-5330. Give us a ring...

And if your business is looking at a new phone system, give Unity a call – they have an excellent product – and a real person will actually talk to you. Call Loppet skier Chris Leaf at 612 604-5234 for information on Unity and its offerings.



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Have an idea for an article? Want to place an advertisement in this publication? Contact Ben Kremer (612 387-2002) or John Munger (612 604-5331).



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