

## WELCOME TO THE 2007-2008 NORDIC SKI TEAM PAC MEETING

The coaches for the season are:

Doug Boonstra - Head Coach:	975-6796 (Voice Mail - Attendance messages) 975-8240 (W) 556-1164 (H)
Chris Stensgaard - Asst. Coach:	975-4383 (VM)
Amy Wyman Asst. Coach:	amywyman@excite.com

**Question:** How do you break this large group up so that each athlete gets proper amounts of coaching attention, and with equal ability individuals?

**Answer:** The organization of practices is going to be centered around training groups that will be in most cases based on their ability level. From a coaches standpoint it is very beneficial for organizing practices, designing appropriate workouts, and charting improvement of the skiers. The training teams will be called Team Austria, Team Belgium, Team Canada, and Team Denmark. The top ten finishers from the previous race / time trial, will comprise Team Austria, and will ski on the varsity for the following meet in that technique. Workouts will vary slightly from training group to training group. Some will have more of a technique focus, others more of a training focus.

**Question:** Do I need to come to practice all the time, and what if I can't make it due to illness or death in the family?

**Answer:** Coach Boonstra and Coach Stensgaard both teach at the high school. This should make it very convenient for athletes to notify one of us **prior** to practice if they will not be there, and the reason why. If you are sick and not in school, you **must** leave a message on Coach Boonstra's voice mail, 975-6796, **prior** to 2:30 on the day you are missing. You will not be allowed to race in the next meet if you fail to notify one of the coaches of your absence **prior** to practice. If this occurs three times during the season, you could face dismissal from the team following a meeting with the coaches and captains.

**Question:** Do we practice over Thanksgiving and Christmas breaks?

**Answer:** Yes we do expect athletes to continue training over breaks. Some will be on your own, and others we will schedule as a team. The practices that we schedule over the Christmas break are **NOT** optional practices. Family commitments are important, and please notify the coaches when a conflict arises. Three Rivers Park District requires a trail pass for all their park ski trails. The cost is either \$4 per day, or \$25 for the entire season. This pass is valid on the man-made snow areas at Hyland Downhill as well as at Elm Creek. You can sign up tonight if you are interested in the \$25 pass. If not, be prepared to pay \$4 per visit. Coach's recommendation: **Get the pass.**

**Question:** How are the meets organized, when do they begin, and will there be early dismissals?

**Answer:** We will be dismissed around 2:00 on conference meet days. During December, the meets will start at 3:30. The rest of the season they will start at 3:45, unless noted otherwise. New to the conference this year is a Varsity Sprint race. The Lake Conference meet schedule includes two classic races, two skating races, and a sprint race. The conference champion will be determined from the results of these five meets. In January there is a Lake Conference Carnival Week that this year has a duathlon. The Lake Conference will also hold a two-day pursuit Varsity Conference Championship Meet. These two-day races will include both skating and classic. All-conference skiers will be selected based on their finish in the Conference Championships. The top 16 skiers will receive All-Conference awards. The Section 6 and State Meet are run with a same day pursuit format. There will also be a two day JV Conference Championship meet.

**Question:** How do you earn a letter in Nordic skiing?

**Answer:** There are a variety of ways to earn a letter in Nordic skiing.

1. Third year skiers, who are seniors.
2. Wearing a Varsity bib in more than 50% of the conference meets.
3. Wearing a Varsity bib in less than 50% of the conference meets, plus a major invite or Conference Championships.
4. Making the section team.
5. Coaches discretion.

**Question:** Will we be going on a training trip this year?

**Answer:** Yes. We have put together a training trip to Maplelag Nordic Resort in Calloway, Minnesota (near Detroit Lakes) The trip will run from Dec. 27 - 30. The cost of the trip, including 10 all you can eat meals, transportation, lodging, and ski passes will be around \$250. Sign-ups will take place soon, and you will be given a permission slip to fill out at that time. Returning letter winners will get first opportunity to sign up, followed by 4th year non-letter winners. The remaining slots will be filled by coaches' invitation. A smaller group of skiers will also be heading up to Houghton, MI over a long weekend From Dec. 6-9. Information on this trip is coming soon.

**Question:** Do I need to buy equipment, and is it expensive?

**Answer:** Yes, to both questions. The team does have *some* skis available for **first year** skiers. These will be distributed this Wednesday morning on a lottery basis. You must be present when and if your name is drawn to have a chance. Athletes will need to secure equipment that is suitable for both the skating and classic techniques. This can be accomplished with either two sets of equipment or a combination ski package that you will hear more about during the meeting tonight. My personal suggestion would be that if you already own skating equipment, then you should look into classic equipment. If you are new to the sport, are not quite sure of your long term involvement at this time, and have yet to purchase equipment, I would look into a package deal that both Gear West and Hoigaards are offering tonight. This way you end up with two pairs of skis for basically the price of one. MYSL is holding their annual used ski swap/sale this Saturday at Dunwoody Institute, and we also are holding a used equipment sale this Thursday evening here at EPHS. Gear West has also mentioned a "Lease Program" that may interest some of you. Be sure to ask them tonight.

**Question:** Do we get to do a fund-raiser again this year?

**Answer:** Yes. We are continuing our fundraising relationship this year with European Roasterie Inc. We will be asking each skier to sell 20 bags of coffee to help meet the team needs, i.e.. transportation, wax, waxing equipment etc. After selling the minimum amount, the athlete can then apply 100% of the profits to defray the team costs that they may incur during the season. This could be used to help pay for their trip to Maplelag, or the purchase of any team apparel for example. This money cannot be applied to purchasing personal equipment such as skis. There are incentive gifts that will be offered for different sales levels achieved. If you prefer to not sell things for a fundraiser, you can take donations. We are looking for a \$120 contribution from each skier.

**Question:** Are there any great volunteer opportunities to further promote the sport within our community?

**Answer:** As a matter of fact, there is. A few years ago we started our own local chapter of the Minnesota Youth Ski League! It is a statewide program that has been around for a long time, and its focus is to get young kids to learn how to enjoy the sport of cross country skiing while learning technique. The program is being coached primarily by volunteer high school skiers from 1:30 – 3:00 on Sunday afternoons during January and February right at Staring Lake. Cost is only \$25.00 per child so spread the word in your neighborhoods about this great program. We are currently looking for adult coordinators for this program. I would be more than happy to share with you what that would involve, and offer assistance in getting you up to speed. Check out more info at MYSL.org.

**AGAIN THIS YEAR:** Any parents that would like to learn how to ski, Coach Boonstra will be providing free lessons during the MYSL sessions on Sundays in January and February at Staring Lake, even if you have no kids in MYSL. We will alternate techniques each week. Please let me know by voice mail prior to coming if you are interested.

**Question:** What are some priority issues from the coaches that we should be aware of?

**Answer:**

1. **Proper clothing** - including a DRY top to put on after workouts/races.
2. Have your **ski bag** and all **equipment LABELED** with a minimum of your name on it.
3. **Watch** - distance athletes should have a digital wrist watch to time intervals, recovery times, heart rates, and for getting to the bus on time.
4. Get in a habit of taking your resting **heart rate** BEFORE you get out of bed each morning, and record it - this could be a way to ward off illness.
5. Stay **hydrated** during the school day with WATER, not Coke or Dew

**Question:** How can I as a parent get involved?

**Answer:** There is a sign up list for healthy treats following meets that you can volunteer to provide for the team. You should plan on signing up for at least one event during the season because we have a big team, and the coaches eat a lot! See one of the captains' parents tonight to sign up for a date to bring treats. We will continue to have a few pasta dinners the night before some of the meets. Potluck style seems to be successful and less stressful for the host family. Again, see one of the captains' parents if you would like to get involved either as a host, or in organizing the meals. We are scheduling the Family Candlelight Ski for Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> at the Staring Lake Nature Center. Please see .....to offer your help in organizing this fun family event.

**Question:** My son/daughter is a bit unique because they don't share a lot of information about what is going on with the team. How do I find out information about upcoming trips, race times, results, pasta dinners, etc.?

**Answer:** Jeanne Mooty, is serving as this years webmaster. Please check out our website to get most of your questions answered. You can find this site at (<http://www.epnordic.com>).