



Annual Report to AGM March 22, 2021

President Dale Hjertaas

It was an interesting year. Coaches, program leads, the Board and other volunteers put a lot of time into adjusting to the pandemic. In some areas we were able to do so successfully, while ultimately other programs simply had to be cancelled. Above all else we wanted to keep skiers safe and are very happy that no cases of Covid have been traced to our club activities

We foresaw the increasing interest in skiing and planned to offer lessons to help new Nordic skiers develop and learn to love the sport. We did receive approval to offer some one-on-one lessons late in the year, but mostly this program was also cancelled.

We determined early in the season that the bus tours would not be safe to run. We planned an alternative, a drive your self but meet at a ski destination, with an Ambassador to provide trail advice and check that people got off the rails successfully. Unfortunately, as the Covid numbers increased and new health rules were put in place we concluded we had to cancel that as well.

We first delayed and then cancelled Jack rabbits and Bunny rabbits as Covid cases stayed high. Similarly, the under 6 and under 8 groups were dropped from the Nancy Green Program this year due to the difficulty of providing the level of assistance these younger athletes need while following Covid rules.

Enough bad news. There were a lot of good things.

Our Alpine Racing Team, Alpine Adaptive, Track Attack, Nordic high Performance and Biathlon Programs were able to continue but with limited numbers. Travelling for competitions was not allowed but virtual competitions were part of the training programs. If you read these individual reports, I am confident that you will be very impressed, as I was through the year, by the work and creativity by coaches and program leads to create effective programs. As one example, RART rented trailers to serve as warm up areas where athletes could stay socially distanced. Provincial virtual races were organized and virtual 4 hour loppets. It was great that we could keep training our athletes, but, to quote the Nordic Youth Report: *"perhaps the most important aspect of this past years on-going training sessions and inclusion of virtual-competitions, were that they allowed a sense of normalcy and socialization for these young athletes where many sports were cancelled or simply not allowed to operate."*

Regina will host the Saskatchewan winter Games in 2022 featuring all of our disciplines. We are excited at the prospect of having this event in Regina and are working with the Winter Games Committee on early planning for the events.

We provided high quality groomed trails and saw very heavy use of those trails. Numbers of skiers were clearly up substantially, both at White Butte and at trails in the city. We hope many of those new or returned skiers will be skiing again next year and will be able to take advantage of more club programs. We also groom walking trails at Kinsmen Park, Wascana and at White Butte and noticed large numbers of walkers taking advantage of these trails.

With real tours and loppets cancelled, we initiated a virtual loppet program which added to the enjoyment and provided extra motivation to some skiers, like me, to actually ski that longer distance. The Virtual loppet Facebook Page created a sense of community and encouragement. I am grateful to Leona for suggesting the idea and then delivering the program.

The web site and Facebook page have been very important communication tools, perhaps even more important this year than in other years. We have decided to put some effort into upgrading the website, to make it easier to navigate, especially from cell phones. That is a project which we will initiate this spring.

In the Nordic Facilities report you will see that we had some discussions about snow making. With climate change affecting the length of snow cover, snow making could extend our ski season. It is, however, an expensive undertaking. Gregg and I had a number of meetings with various parties to discuss the concept. We decided to pursue the idea slowly and learn from others. From the discussions came an offer from the City of Regina to provide truck loads of clean snow. We will discuss this in more detail in the fall with an intent to try it at Kinsman Park and hope that snow can give some trails a deeper base allowing a longer and better ski season. Gregg also notes that he has initiated work on a strategic plan for Nordic Trails. We believe this work will help us determine which are the most important actions to pursue to maintain and improve cross country skiing in Regina.

Besides disrupting programs, Covid created some extra costs. For example, it was no longer safe for groomers to share helmets and goggles. We are grateful for support from The Covid 19 Emergency Support Fund for Sport, administered by Sask Sport and Funded by the Government of Canada, for reimbursing us for the \$5440 cost of acquiring helmets and goggles for all our grooming team.

With an increase in numbers of skiers our membership is up slightly to 683. That is very good given how many programs we had to cancel. Nonetheless I have learned that some other clubs around the province have experienced large membership increases. I understand Prince Albert has increased its membership by at least 50%. I am not sure why new skiers have joined other clubs to a much greater extent than they join ours. However, donations in support of trail maintenance are up significantly so perhaps people in Regina choose to support us that way rather than with a membership.

On behalf of the whole club, I wish to thank all Board Members, coaches, groomers and other volunteers for providing us with ski trails and keeping so many of our ski programs going. It required much more work than in a normal year and we all appreciate your commitment and dedication.

2020-21 Biathlon Report

Merle Boyle

Interesting season: The Regina Biathlon Club operates under the COVID sport rules and regulations. These include 3 metre social distancing at practices for athletes under age 18, no competitions, no audiences, mandatory masks and advance sign up, etc etc. Thanks to Sask Elections for the supply of leftover PPE, and to Sask Sport for granting additional capital items needed.

Highlights of the season include:

- the completed installation of high output LED lighting on the 800 metre hill loop. This greatly improves the flexibility of when practices can be held, and allows for families to train during the week. Many thanks to members of the Regina Wildlife Federation (Gil White and Jim Gopfrich) and to Brian Ager Construction of the Regina Ski Club for their volunteer efforts to get this done!!! Matching capital grant provided by Biathlon Saskatchewan.
- Monthly time trial events were organized and participated to best simulate and compare provincial athletic performance.
- Coaching development of our parents to lead athletes in our fun sport.
- Hosted 2 PAL firearms safety courses for athletes age 12 and up. Another session is planned for spring 2021.
- Initiated planning to host 2022 Sk Winter Games. Venue enhancements are being applied for.
- Due to COVID, practices are limited by numbers, so the new normal is currently two to three formal practices on Saturdays and other practices occur with family bubble groups.
- Thank you to the Regina Wildlife Federation for the scheduling of summer range rentals and sharing of revenues amongst the associated clubs. These revenues are very important to the Biathlon Club operations. Thank you to the groomers of the Regina Ski Club for providing excellent trail conditions!

Looking forward to a “return to normal”.

Enjoying the warmer temperatures...

NORDIC FACILITIES

Gregg Brewster

Nordic trail establishment at White Butte Trails (WBT) & six City of Regina (CoR) sites by Regina Ski Club (RSC) volunteers began with early November snow & continued into March uninterrupted despite low snow conditions due to dedicated volunteer groomers & modern grooming equipment.

Pandemic restrictions limiting most winter public activities resulted in unprecedented increases in visitation of Nordic facilities at WBT & city trails.

WBT new (2019) trailhead shelter remained closed due to pandemic restrictions.

Snow making became a hot topic again as current Nordic ski venues became the focus of heavy visitation due to the pandemic, in conjunction with a low snow year. Qu'Appelle Valley Nordic (QVN) Biathlon Club started making snow in November at their Lumsden location on a small scale with plans for expansion & development of mobile equipment. Some initial planning between RSC, CoR & QVN was initiated, but more complete cost estimates & partnership negotiations are required. Follow-up is planned over the next several seasons. CoR offered to haul clean snow from downtown pedestrian areas to city trails as a potential short term fix. RSC is considering a test project at KP next season.

Saskatchewan Winter Games (SWG) 2022 planning for Regina was initiated. Science Center trails is the preferred competition site in order to increase exposure of Nordic skiing. However, lack of cooperation by Provincial Capital Commission (formerly Wascana Center Authority/WCA) that controls this site is presenting trail maintenance issues. The Douglas Park trail is a potential second site. Lack of terrain diversity is a problem, but the new building provides a better complementary indoor facility.

SWG 2022 Legacy Grant application was submitted by RSC for a replacement snowmobile & second E-track setter for Kinsmen Park Trails.

A E Wilson Park (AEWP) vegetation planning for xc ski trails was revived following CoR plans for an Off Leash Dog Park & Disc Golf course. Vegetation is needed to improve snow catch at this open wind swept site. Vegetation planning initiated in 2017 was interrupted by CoR waste water facility construction that involved major surface disruption (2019-20). Cooperation for integrated activity development by CoR was initiated but further attention is uncertain.

Site inspections of current RSC maintained Nordic ski trails were conducted in order to prepare a strategic plan to improve Nordic skiing within the city. CoR administrative changes resulting in potential cancellation of current annual funding to RSC, along with several inquiries to RSC about more city Nordic trails & the on going negotiations for future city snow making projects, prompted the need for such a document

Regina Alpine Racing Team (RART) Colleen Silverthorn

RART was able to run a training season starting Jan. 7 through to the end of Mission Ridge winter operations.

Our season started approximately six weeks later than normal as the government decided how best to approach skiing and ski hills in particular during COVID-19.

We were able to train in groups of eight all season, plus coaching. We had an excellent uptake for the race team with 26 athletes signed up, another increase in athletes moving from Nancy Greene to race, which has been a focus of our program.

We had a drop to 23 Nancy Greene athletes, primarily because we eliminated the U6 and U8 programs for the season due to difficulty meeting COVID restrictions with younger athletes that need more help. Some families also decided not to train with their younger athletes because of the increased

COVID restrictions.

RART rented two BOXX Modular trailers to use as warm up shelters for the season and is working with SaskAlpine to have those costs covered by COVID related grants.

This was necessary because we could not fit all of our athletes inside the clubhouse while adhering to COVID guidelines and Mission Ridge could not accommodate us because they were also under strict occupancy guidelines.

We are looking to pro-rate our fees for the season to capture the lost month of training and the absence of races due to COVID. That number isn't finalized at this point.

Our coaching costs were higher than normal this year as we had to add three additional paid coaches to the race side to adhere to guidelines limiting our training groups to eight. We are applying to have those extra coaching costs covered by the SaskAlpine grant.

We spent a lot of time developing COVID protocols and have found they worked well to protect our team and coaches. If needed, they can be adapted to our program next season.

Nordic Tours Kim Smith

With snow conditions ideal for Nordic skiing this season and many new enthusiastic people joining existing members of the Regina Ski Club, what could go wrong? COVID protocol ended up cancelling of all of our Nordic bus tours.

It should be noted that the dedication of the trip tour leaders prevailed. Advance booking of accommodation for over night venues, confirmation of booked members and organizing trip agendas still had to take place. Engelheim Bus Lines was even confirmed well ahead of time.

Then the repercussions of COVID "snowballed". Steps were taken to ensure that these trips would still be a go with overall safety modifications. Ambassador led convey trips became Plan B. Unfortunately, escalation of the virus diminished any chance of these trips taking place.

Let's look forward to hopefully resuming the tours once again next season, welcoming all back who have enjoyed them in the past, and also new members to brighter days in the future.

Alpine Adaptive AGM Report Gord Poulton

Programing

Covid had quite an impact on our programing this year. With the questionable opening of Mission Ridge and the resulting late opening date, resulted in very few opportunities for the program. We all so had to receive approval from Sask Health Authorities on how to work with our over 18-year-old participants and transportation guide lines.

Once we got approval to proceed the cold weather of mid-February was upon us, which resulted in more cancelled event days.

We were able to get 4 event days in this year with our existing members that joined for single day events.

Para Alpine Race

With the Pandemic all Sask Cup Race events were cancelled and the Para Alpine World Cup events in Canada and Europe were also canceled. This led to a training season for both Joshua Schramm on the RART race team and Kurt Oatway on the National Team.

Instructor Training

Again the pandemic had a huge effect on the CADS Instructor training that was possible this year. All in person training events were cancelled. CADS provided an on line training for course conductors on the Autism Spectrum Disorder and Cognitive Disabilities which Gord Poulton attended.

Fund Raising

The program was successful in obtaining a Sask Sport Equipment Grant and a Corporate Sponsorship Grant from SaskTel. These 2 grants will be put towards the purchase of a new Sit ski for the program.

Equipment Purchases

We placed an order last summer for 4 sets of new out riggers and repair parts for our existing Sit skis. We will be placing an order for a new Sit ski once the funds from the Sask Sport Equipment Grant arrives.

Social Director Report Leona Spruyt

Due to Covid -19, all in person gatherings were cancelled. This includes the Social/Registration evening usually held in November and the Potluck/AGM held in March.

It was suggested by Dorothy Josephson that we hold virtual loppets. With the board's approval, my role changed to that of Co-ordinator of Virtual Loppets.

The December loppet was named "Skiing Around the Christmas Tree" with thirty-five participants challenging themselves to ski a designated distance in one day. The January loppet, "Warm-Up to Winter" was changed to allow a cumulative distance for the month and/or a one day challenge. Forty-five members registered. The February loppet, "Families on Skis", included forty participants who chose a cumulative distance for the month and/or a one-day challenge. Due to about ten days of severely cold weather in February, it was extended to March 7, 2021.

The fees for a family for each event were \$25/family and \$10 for an individual.

Thanks to:

- Cheryl Bergen for setting up the Zone4 registration pages for all three of this season's loppets.

- Dave Wessel for adding Events on Facebook and posting the results and photo collages to the website.
- Karen Hardy for sending emails to ski club members promoting the loppets.
- Dorothy Josephson for sending completion certificates to the participants by email.

Trevor from Fresh Air Experience provided us with buffs for the swag bags. Other items included Christmas tree ornaments, chocolates, zipper pulls, Larabars, lip balm, bells with the Ski Club Logo and Tim Horton’s gift cards.

I created a private Facebook Page, “Regina Ski Club Virtual Loppets”, which provided an effective online community where photos, ski conditions in various areas and personal experiences with cross country skiing were shared.

Appreciation for the events and comments about the virtual loppets being a motivator were expressed by many.

Some have suggested we do virtual loppets again next season even if we can gather in person. The Facebook page will be continued next season and hopefully we will have a larger online and in person community.

Annual Membership Report Cheryl Bergen

	2020-2021	2019-2020
All Members	683	669
Adult Nordic Group Lessons	*	13
Alpine Adaptive	8	22
Alpine Recreational	137	125
Biathlon	21	28
Bunnyrabbits/Jackrabbits	*	89
Nordic Adventure Ski	*	7
Nordic and Alpine Recreational	17	32
Nordic Recreational	388	414
Nancy Greene	23	74
Track Attack HP Races	*	16
Alpine Races	26	-

* Program cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Communications Report Karen Hardy

There have been 21 emails sent out this season

One poster was printed for the December Skiing Around the Christmas Tree Virtual Loppet.

And one Sitzmarks was published in January.

In the last email people are sending in pictures of their spring skiing adventures to share.

Nordic Youth Programing Brennan Craig & David Brock

For the 2020-21 season the Nordic Racing and Jackrabbits board positions were combined to oversee Nordic Youth programming. This should help facilitate the continuity of the programs and help ensure a consistent integrated athlete development pathway for the club. Like all of the club's programs this year adaptations were made to follow health guidelines as set out by the SHA. Due to Covid we were unable to host a Sask Cup event this season. We were able to offer did some limited private lessons after receiving permission from the SHA. No Sask cup and limited lessons reduced our fundraising capacity, however, we received a generous donation for the second season in a row from a local trust that supports youth activity. The donation allowed us to continue to run our programs with paid coaches.

Regina was also chosen to host the Cross-Country Ski Events for the 2022 Sask Winter Games. Planning is under way and were hoping to really showcase our sport and our local athletes by running events here on our city trails.

The below is highlights of our individual programs as submitted by our coaches. The full reports are attached separately.

Jackrabbits: Due to public health orders restricting programming to groups of under 8 it was decided to cancel Bunny rabbits and Jack rabbits for the 2020-21 season. Prior to cancellation an Regina coaches did participate in on line coach training offer by the CCS.

Track Attack: Total of 8 athletes that participated in the program, out of the 8 athletes registered to the program 1 of them came from the REGINA BIATHLON PROGRAM.

As of today, Track Attack had a total of 70+ supported and structured sessions. Our goal for the season was to help the athletes develop according to the stage they are in according to the Long Term Athlete development phase that they are in (Learn to Train). This development phase has a focus on the athlete's motor skills and flexibility; increasing technical proficiency in all techniques and consolidation of movement skills.

Our season started on September 20th and will be ending next week with a Run Jump Pull evaluation.

Highlights for the season;

- Nordiq Canada Run Jump Pull evaluation X 3
- Waskesiu Camp
- Roller Ski Duathlon
- Moose Mountain Provincial Park (1 day ski trip)

- Echo Valley Provincial Park (multiple 1 day ski trips)
- Sask Cup Virtual Races
- Loppets
- Nutrition and Mental preparation Zoom sessions with CCS

Our athletes are aware that Regina will be hosting the Saskatchewan winter games in 2022. Since there is interest, we will likely meet once a month in the “off season” to evaluate and provide guidance on their goals.

We have 1 possible athlete moving up into the racing program for next year due to age. Our challenge will be getting new athletes in the program since there was no Jack Rabbit program this year due to Covid-19.

High Performance: COVID-19 had a marked impact upon our training and competitive season this past year. There were no formal races (e.g., Sask Cup/Nationals), but instead we used virtual loppets, and virtual time trials via the *Grapefruit Virtual Cup* series, and lots of outdoor training sessions. We had nine athletes and had to close registration once the Provincial Government mandated groups of athletes to a maximum of 8 or less.

Included amongst the highlights of our year are those of a non-competitive nature, such as the highest membership within the HP group to date (within allowable guideline numbers), and perhaps more importantly our ability to hold numerous outdoor activities that presented athletes some degree of safe socialization at a time when many others are struggling with isolation. We were able to maintain training programs and Covid-sensitive training sessions, including group sessions within allowable guidelines. So although our older athletes lost the opportunity to race against other athletes across Canada (i.e., Westerns/Nationals) and thereby gauge their competitiveness within their given age group, we were still able to help them develop as athletes.

Our High Performance (HP) athletes began their training season in early May with individualized skier/coach on-line communication to review the previous season accompanied with setting goals for the season to come, followed by the creation of individualized daily and weekly training programs. All athletes within the *Learn-to- Compete* category receive individualized daily and weekly training programs that are updated weekly.

In July we were allowed to meet once again as a team (max of 8), and so throughout July, August, September and into early October, 'dryland' coach-supervised training sessions were held three days a week involving roller skiing, biking, running, ski bounding and walking. Skiers were also encouraged to participate in the weekly Level 10 strength sessions.

By September, coach-supervised training sessions were increased to four weekly sessions with increased focus on speed and intensity as we moved closer to a race season. September highlights also included a Covid-friendly training camp in Waskesiu, which allowed skiers to socialize (at a respective distance) with other provincial skiers.

Our first on-snow coach-supervised training session was held on November 11th at Kinsmen park, marking the swift transition from dry-land to on-snow training. Despite tricky conditions, the early on-snow training is a time of building volume, refining technique, but also a focus on fun,

camaraderie, reflection, resetting goals and preparing for the upcoming competitive season.

During the winter-season we introduced Zoom-facilitated sessions on *goal setting, sleeping, motivation* and *performance* hosted and presented by the Sports Medicine and Science Council of Sk. However, in a season filled with many unique challenges and the steady progressive cancellation of local, Provincial, Regional and finally National races, we sought new ways of maintaining our competitiveness through the introduction and use of 'virtual competitions', that involved self-timed (but coach verified) or coach-timed events with individual times ranked against other athletes elsewhere. In this way, our Wednesday night Virtual time-trials nicely coincided the Grapefruit Cup challenge held in Saskatoon, thereby providing for each athlete, irrespective of age, a real sense of racing and performance-monitoring not only against themselves, but other skiers throughout the Province. We also introduced *Virtual four-hour loppets*, which was regarded by many athletes as a new competition highlight with some skiers achieving 60 plus km over a four-hour period. However, perhaps the most important aspect of this past years on-going training sessions and inclusion of virtual-competitions, were that they allowed a sense of normalcy and socialization for these young athletes where many sports were cancelled or simply not allowed to operate.