

# UMPI Skiing

A newsletter of the of the cross country ski teams and cross country ski coaching major at the University of Maine at Presque Isle.

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## Go Team Greenland

Biathlon Youth/Junior World Championships hosted at the Nordic Heritage Center created a unique opportunity for University of Maine at Presque Isle students in the Cross Country Ski Coaching Program. These aspiring coaches had the chance to participate as staff members during the championships. Team Greenland has a developing national organization and was unable to send a national team coach to this year's World Biathlon Championships in Presque Isle. After contacting the local organizing committee looking for coaches in the United States, Team Greenland chose UMPI ski coach Kris Cheney Seymour to lead their team.

Students-coaches joined Cheney Seymour and had an amazing experience as they applied their developing skills on a world stage at a World Championship event. Individuals were assigned duties that included all aspects of such an event from transportation to wax service, race splits to team captain meetings.

Their personal experiences were chronicled during the week as the student-coaches kept an online web journal. The stories, photos and live audio feeds are available on the ski team web page under Cross Country Ski Coaching. The entries give an in the moment view of this rare opportunity.

“Student-Coaches in the Cross Country Ski Coaching Program had the unique opportunity to coach at the 2007 Biathlon Youth/Junior World Championships in Presque Isle.”



## First NCAA Division 1 Carnival

The Eastern NCAA Division I circuit can be a humbling arena for individuals and teams. The competition is both difficult and deep as the difference between a top ten finish and results on the second page may be less than a minute. The University of Maine at Presque Isle ski team had their first test at the opening Colby Carnival held in Sugarloaf, Maine. Junior Bjorn Bakken from Duluth, MN had the best finish for the UMPI team that weekend with a 7th place in the 20km Freestyle. The skiing Owls will continue with NCAA racing until the end of February when they will compete in the USCSA regional championships in an effort to make the National event also being held in Sugarloaf, Maine.

## Human Performance Lab at UMPI

Much of the science in endurance sports begins with precise testing to benchmark athletes. The goal is to help develop physiologic and biomechanical methods to improve performance. Dr. Sue Beaudet, a professor at the University of Maine at Presque Isle, recently spent a sabbatical at the Vuokatti Sport Institute in Finland. Vuokatti was chosen because of its specialization in the study of cross-country skiing and biathlon at a world-class level. While in Finland, Dr. Beaudet had the opportunity to be involved with the physiologic testing of Finland's most talented development skiers. Dr. Beaudet has brought her lessons back to the United States and will soon be implementing similar tests in Northern Maine.

Included in the new Gentile Hall Health and Physical Education Complex at the University of Maine at Presque Isle is a state-of-the-art endurance human performance lab.

This facility will create opportunity for the student and the athlete to be involved in every aspect of physical testing. The facility was created to benefit academic programs, the University Ski Team and the Maine Winter Sport Center. Currently, the new oversized treadmill and oxygen analyzers are being installed and the first testing will take place in a few weeks.

With the Olympic Training Center in Lake Placid no longer offering treadmill tests to skiers, Presque Isle's facilities will be one of few available in the country and the only one in the eastern United States.

Anyone interested in using the testing facilities should contact Dr. Beaudet at [beaudet@umpi.maine.edu](mailto:beaudet@umpi.maine.edu) or Kris Cheney Seymour at [krist.seymour@maine.edu](mailto:krist.seymour@maine.edu)



## California Snow Jobs

According to the California Ski Industry Association, the 28 ski resorts throughout the mountains of California will be hiring approximately 3000 to 4000 winter employees this season. As in other areas of the country, many of these jobs will be taken by foreign students with a three-month work exchange visa. However, in many cases locals are preferred because the season usually lasts longer than the lengths of visas.

Of course, the main perk for potential employees is the skiing benefit offered by all the resorts in varying discounts. The buzz is to look to the Tahoe areas for the best benefits which can include decent housing, reduced food prices, and even family ski benefits. The housing construction boom in this area also opens up more seasonal jobs off the mountains.

## Cross Country Skiing 101

By Brian Cazeneuve

Clipped into your skis, carbo-loaded, stretched, and properly attired, you're ready to go. So just how do you go? Skis don't come with ignition keys, and they sure make you feel awkward. You look at the snow. You look at your skis. You adjust your well-adjusted poles, looking for answers they don't have. Nothing. So try striding. Mistake. The wrong things moved in the wrong directions. Now you have a close-up view of the day's snow conditions.

*"If you've ever been in a sack race when you couldn't move each leg separately, you'll appreciate the importance of not allowing one ski tip to step on the other."*

If you've never been on skis before, forget about skiing for a few moments. Take some time to get used to your big slippers by walking on them. If you need to take exaggerated steps to move

your feet forward, so be it. Choose a flat piece of land and go for a stroll, picking your skis right off the snow as you would your feet off the ground. Then begin leaning forward and tilting left and right and start bending your knees a bit as you take each step. Don't worry about concepts such as "weight transfer" yet. Just get comfortable leaning over each ski. As you walk on the skis, concentrate on keeping their tips from crossing. Guide them straight and parallel. If you've ever been in a sack race when you couldn't move each leg separately, you'll appreciate the importance of not allowing one ski tip to step on the other. Also get used to the idea that your footwear has very little traction. Think of walking on a slippery floor with shoes. It's hard to describe just how your gait employs scoot-prevention, but if somebody tells you to watch out for the wet floor, you're just as likely to skid, but somehow less likely to fall because you're bracing for the sudden slide.

## Cross-Country Skiing Paradise Awaits You.

Cobalt blue sky, the cracking of trees in the early dawn air, a partridge exploding out of a snow bank, the muffled gurgle of water flowing under a frozen waterfall, the exhilaration of effortlessly gliding along. Cross-country skiing in Maine offers a wealth of possibilities.

The following is a sampler of one of the hundreds of cross-country ski locales in Maine. Maine has a wide cross section of types of skiing, terrain and vistas; from urban to wilderness, from sea to mountains, from families looking for a special shared experience to hotshots looking to hone their racing form.

### RIVERSIDE GOLF COURSE

Stressed out by work and need a quick post-work escape? If you work in the Portland area, keep your skis in your vehicle and give yourself a great end-of-the-day gift: fresh air, exercise and stress reduction.

Located 10 minutes from downtown Portland on outer Riverside Street, this 27-hole public golf course grooms nearly seven miles of trails over flat to rolling terrain. The trail is groomed 20 feet wide to accommodate both skate and classic skiers. A \$2 donation is appreciated in support of the Portland Ski Club. Park at either the North or South Course parking lots and ski from there.

A half-mile of trail follows along the scenic Presumpscot River, where it is common to see bald eagles searching for food along the river. Red-tailed hawks and deer are often seen as well, and the occasional coyote.

## Did you Know?

**The Most Vertical Drop in North America:** The current record holder for vertical drop is Whistler Blackcomb in British Columbia at 5,300 feet. But, Mount MacKenzie Resort, currently under construction outside of Revelstoke, B.C. will have 6,100 feet.

## Biathlon Olympic Trials

University of Maine at Presque Isle scholar-athlete Bjorn Bakken completed his first Olympic Trials as a first year senior with an impressive 10th place ranking. The trials were held in Fort Kent, Maine and the top five athletes from the United States won the privilege of representing their country at the Olympic Games in Turino, Italy. "I'm pleased with my first Olympic Trials," commented Bakken, "it gives me a clear focus for the next four years of training before the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver, British Columbia."



### Mike Soliday Student-Athlete Profile

Mike is a student-athlete from Madawaska, Maine in his junior year. He enjoys an active lifestyle of being outside and spends much of his time away from school working at his family business.

### Free Skiing

There is a joy in sharing your passion with others. University of Maine at Presque Isle Student-Athlete Matt Free has that opportunity. He has been working as the Healthy Hometowns youth ski coach for Presque Isle at the Nordic Heritage Center twice a week throughout the winter.

"If you've ever been in a sack race when you couldn't move each leg separately, you'll appreciate the importance of not allowing one ski tip to step on the other."

Matt skis with elementary school children of the region in a program that gives him the opportunity to develop his coaching craft and inspire others to engage in this fantastic lifestyle.

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Visit the Ski Team Webpage for news updates and information:  
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