



KONGSBERGER NEWS

JANUARY 2007

CALENDAR ...

Club Meetings. First Tuesday of every month, starting at 7:00, at the Nordic Heritage Museum. If you were tired of the perennial vacuum cleaner discussions, we have moved on with our lives, so it's safe to return. Lots of interesting stuff happens at the meetings, and the best way to find out about it is to show up!

RACE SCHEDULE ...

The Gunnar Hagen was a great success, but we can't rest on our laurels—we still have two more races to prepare for! If you forgot to volunteer at the Gunnar Hagen, or if you raced it and now are looking for your chance to participate behind the scenes, here is your chance. Contact Jeff Hashimoto at st-race@kongsbergers.org, or Terry Hiatt at terryhiatt@earthlink.net, and let them know how you can help.

Stampede: Sunday, February 18

Our 15k and 5k free-style races, both starting at 11:00. Jeff Hashimoto is the Race Director, Terry Hiatt is the Race Secretary, Don Brooks is the Chief of Course, and your humble editor is the Volunteer Coordinator. I will be organizing a potluck dinner for those volunteers and racers who stay at the cabin on Saturday night before the race; more details will be posted later on the Kongsberger Yahoo group email list.

SCHEDULE CHANGE: The kids' race will be on Saturday, February 17, at 1:00 pm.

Ozbaldy: Sunday, March 4

The primo endurance event in Washington, 50k free-style, starting at 9:00. Susie Main and Dale Bohm are the Race Directors, and the other volunteer positions are wide open so far.

SILVER STAR ...

Those who make the annual trek to Silver Star for Thanksgiving know that conditions can change literally overnight, and sure enough that's what happened again this year. Two weeks before Thanksgiving, the mountain's webcam showed green grass and open bike paths. But then it began to snow, and it snowed continuously the whole time we were there. As the week went on, it got colder and colder too, so the skiing became just more fantastic every day.

A number of Kongsbergers were spotted on the trails or carbo-loading in the Cariboo bakery, including Ozzie and Joan Nordheim, Gil and Berit Lund, Volker and Gail Elste, along with older daughter and future famous sportscaster Kyra and cool father Guenther (who is 80 years old and just had an article published in *Solar Physics* magazine!), Paul and Val Karas and son Michael (who is busy with the school/work/sail trifecta this year), Karen and Jeff Clarke (with pocket dog) and daughter Kirsten, Kent Murdoch, Jon Fewster, the Gazis-Hashimoto family, the Boveng family, the Ostrom-Spiegel family (all those talented little Kongsberger kids, smoothly and fluidly skating up the trail with no poles and big smiles), new member Martin Rosvall (no one actually saw him; he rocketed past too fast!), Einar and Marlys Svensson (who clearly don't look like terrorists, since they talked their way into Canada without their passports), the Newton family (celebrating Lisa's birthday), Jim Slyfield and Elizabeth Bailey, and your humble editor.

GUNNAR HAGEN ...

Western Washington has been hit with some interesting weather in the last month, from record rains to record winds to record snow to record cold, so we didn't have any idea what to expect for this year's Gunnar Hagen race day. Amazingly enough, it turned out to be an Extra Special Blue day, with temperatures in the teens (in the teens!), bright blue skies, no wind, and crisp firm tracks that held up all day. Nobody born since World War II has seen a GH day like this, although Dave Newton says we had similar conditions in 1936.

We had a total of 131 finishers in the 10k and 30k races, including a number of day-of-race registrants who woke up, checked the conditions, and decided it looked like a great day for a little ski. Full results are posted on our website. Race Director Jeff Hashimoto put his high school teacher/cross country coach skills to work to create a finely tuned race machine that allowed him the luxury of jumping in the race himself. He was ably assisted by Chief of Course Joe McNulty, Race Secretary Val Karas and Volunteer Coordinator Elizabeth Bailey.

Many other race volunteers helped to keep the machine running smoothly, including Berit Lund and Aase and Kaare Gjolmesli, doing their usual bang-up job in the kitchen keeping all racers well-fed and happy, and Angie Greig and Keith Ritland, handling timing duties smoothly and effortlessly. Glen Tomchik, Anna Louise Waerness and Marlys Svensson managed the parking lot, and Leslie Duffy, Susan Bogert, Shirley Newton, and Susie Main manned the registration desk. Many thanks to all of our volunteers, especially those I have forgotten to name here, who do such a great (and mostly invisible) job of putting on a race!

Special thanks to Tim Melbourne, who wins the Events Committee's New Member of the Year award. With the ink barely dry on his initiation fees check, he jumped right in and took on the kids' race and made it a super-fun event for 18 kids, an excellent turnout considering we were missing our regular Tucker, Lindahl and Ostrom-Spiegel kids. We held the kids' race the day before this year, and it turned out to be a great idea—lots of kids who showed up with their families to ski were attracted by Neil Bransfield's music system and all the excitement and commotion in the stadium area and decided, "Hey, I want to do that too!"

Thanks also to Jon Fewster, who coordinated with our wonderful sponsors, Marmot Mountain Works, Nuun, Essential Baking Company, Suunto, Nordic Ultratune, Nordic Saga Tours, Winthrop Mountain Sports, Atomic, Toko, Second Ascent, and Einar Svensson. And thank you also to Ruben, the world's greatest groomer, who set those perfect, knife-sharp tracks along the course.

NEW MEMBERS ...

In the November and December club meetings, the members voted to accept two more new members into the club. Martin Rosvall, sponsored by Peter Boveng, was given an honorary two-year guest membership with full cabin privileges. Martin is a theoretical physicist from Umea University in Sweden and is in Seattle for a post-doc fellowship through the Swedish Research Council, which is keeping his brain pretty busy. But he also has time to do a little skiing ... enough skiing, in fact, to have earned top-20 finishes (overall, not age group!) in three world loppets last year (including 18th place in the Swedish Vasaloppet), and to be ranked 128th in the World Cup series in 2006. We can only hope our new Amabilis loop will be challenging enough for him!

In addition, we added the Melbourne family to the roster, sponsored by Jeff Hashimoto and Carey Gazis. Tim Melbourne and Anne Johansen are both Nordic skiers who moved to Ellensburg in 1999. Both are professors at Central Washington University, Anne in chemistry and Tim in geology, where he works with Carey. They have competed in many Kongsberger events, as well as other races up at the Pass and a few in the Methow and BC. They have two sons, Magnus (7) and Nils (5), both of whom are already fearless wizards on skis. In addition to racing, Anne, who moved to the US from Norway in 1991, and Tim tell us they wish to raise their children within the Nordic ski culture and the values it engenders, so they've certainly come to the right place!

Be sure to welcome our new members and introduce yourselves when you see them at the cabin or on the trails!

HEADLAMP SERIES ...

Last year's informal Wednesday night racing series at the cabin turned out to be a great success, reflecting pent-up demand for mid-week skiing and a desire to use that fancy new headlamp you got for Christmas. This year the series is back, and sponsored by Marmot. Races have begun, and will continue every Wednesday night through March 14, starting at 6:30 pm. Brent Turner has posted a schedule on the KSC website, complete with alternating classic and skate nights, a pursuit night and a couple of sprint nights. Bring your own headlamp (and if you have an extra, throw that in your pack too, because for sure someone will forget theirs!), along with a snack and dry clothes for after. The cabin will be open and warm for pre- and post-race activities, but be sure to clean up after yourself and keep it neat. Marmot will be providing prizes and a gala end-of-season barbecue at the last race in March and, just between you and me, attendance is the way to win this series!

Keep in mind that the trails will not be groomed on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday during the month of January, while the state works on hiring another groomer to replace one who quit (not Ruben, thank goodness!). We are hoping that some of the club's silent heroes, who come to the cabin on Wednesdays to ski and drink coffee and do enormous amounts of much-appreciated-but-not-always-noticed maintenance work, will be able to run the track sled around the course, but there are no guarantees: be prepared to ski in any conditions, and whining is not acceptable!

OVER AND OUTHOUSE ...

Remember that huge windstorm last month? Intrepid Gunnar Unneland stayed overnight at the cabin during the storm and reported the next morning that a gigantic tree had fallen across the men's outhouse, completely destroying it and leaving nothing standing but the door. Lucky thing he wasn't in it at the time! There is no definite decision yet on what will be done to permanently replace or repair it, but for the time being, a plastic porta-potty has been installed over the old hole, thanks to heavy manual labor by Ozzie and Joan Nordheim (with help from Kent Murdoch and Maria Balsamo, who showed up to ski and ended up hauling!), Kaare Gjolmesli and Paul Kaald.



And speaking of huge windstorms and gigantic fallen trees, kudoes to Glen Tomchik, Max Limb and Keith Ritland, our chainsaw wizards, who risked bodily harm to search out the trees that had fallen across our trails during the storm and cut them up enough to move them out of the way. Kudoes also to Ozzie Nordheim, Paul Kaald and Neil Bransfield, who spent a recent rainy/sleety/snowy Wednesday digging the timing shed out of a frozen snowbank, setting a track for the Wednesday night racers, and clearing out some more fallen trees. Thanks, guys; you are awesome!

RACE RESULTS ...

Methow Pursuit. A bunch of Kongsbergers headed over to the Methow for the two-day Pursuit, and Martin Rosvall skied away with the overall first prize. He won the 15k classic race on the first day in 46:28, then was edged out by Brad Bauer in the 30k skate race on the second day, finishing in 1:07:31 (behind Brad's 1:06:53). Other Kongsberger medal winners include Michael Karas, third in the MS class in 52:41/1:15:04/2:07:45; Kent Murdoch, second in MM3/MM4 in 51:20/1:08:17/1:59:37; Rune Harkestad, right behind Kent for third place in 49:55/1:10:56/2:00:51; Ginny Price, the winner of FM5/FM6 in 1:04:28/1:25:31/2:29:59; and Max Limb, third in MM7/MM8, 1:05:30/1:28:35/2:34:05. Also along for the fun were:

David Evans (54:46/1:13:57/2:08:43),
 Brian Dumais (57:55/1:16:29/2:14:24),
 Robert Hardwick (1:00:11/1:22:12/2:22:23),
 Peter Spiegel (58:32/1:16:18/2:24:50),
 Tom Lenchek (1:04:23/1:27:31/2:31:54),
 Heather Patrick (1:06:23/1:27:51/2:34:14),
 Paul Karas (1:07:27/1:27:02/2:34:29),
 Sam Baker (1:07:36/1:34:52/2:42:28),
 Dan Weinstein (1:14:21/1:32:39/2:47:00),
 Gil Lund (1:15:06/1:34:26/2:49:32),
 Mary Drobka (1:21:33/1:48:15/3:09:48), and
 Robin Pederson (1:31:54/1:47:27/3:19:21).

CABIN ETIQUETTE REMINDER ...

We have this discussion every year about this time, but it bears repeating: we have new members, and some of our existing members have short memories. The cabin belongs to you and me and all of us, and while it's a warm and cozy place to eat your lunch and hang out with your friends, your mom doesn't live there and, bummer, there is no paid housekeeping staff! That means we all have to do our part to keep it warm and cozy, and in case we've forgotten what our part is, here is a little reminder: there are a lot of people sharing the kitchen and dining room, so even if it's your habit to leave your oatmeal pot to soak all day in the sink when you're at home, or to drop your wet gloves and hats and packs on the dining room table, please be considerate of your fellow club members and don't do it at the cabin! There are plenty of nice new shelves in the kitchen for your hats and gloves, and in fact, the drying room in the basement is an even better place to put your stuff, so it will be toasty and warm for your after-lunch ski. Dumping stuff on the tables or under the woodstove is gross; it's not the way to get stuff dry, it's just a way to irritate people. A little consideration and thoughtfulness go a long way in this wicked world, and your efforts are always appreciated. Thanks!

SOMEONE ELSE SAID ...

"His triumph had nothing to do with fame and everything to do with the fact that, down that last stretch, he *went* when he could have eased up. And it is a victory (or a failure) equally available to the less genetically endowed stuck in the middle of the pack. As with writing a book, exactly one person knows if you've given it your best shot, or if you've been satisfied with something less."

Bill McKibben, "Long Distance"

