

Spokane Nordic News

Skijoring at Mount Spokane is doggoned fun

Diana Roberts

Skijoring. First, how do you say it? Second, what is it?

It's a Scandinavian word; so pronounced correctly it's ske-yor-ing, but most people around here say 'skē-jōr-inj. The word means "ski drive" and the sport involves a person on skis being pulled by 1 or 2 dogs, sometimes by a horse or even a motorized machine.

While skijor racing is growing in popularity, most people get into the sport as a way to enjoy outdoor exercise with their dogs and to strengthen the bond be-



Friends skijor Linder Ridge Rd. on a bootie-cold day.

tween them. OK, insert "develop patience" because skijoring often involves untangling lines and waiting while your dog waits for a slower friend...

Any dog weighing at

least 35 lbs and that pulls on the leash is a good candidate for the sport. While some people fear it will exacerbate leash-pulling, skijor training often helps a dog learn that pulling is appropriate only when she's

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A message from Spokane Nordic president, Tom Schaaf...

Spokane Nordic will be busy in the off-season



We are in the wind-down stage of a great winter at my house. The boys both had a lot of fun with the ski team, Dawn picked up some Langlauf hardware, and we finished the season with a wonderful trip to the Rendezvous Huts.

Looking at my soggy lawn I'm not really ready for the activities of Spring quite yet, but the time has clearly come. I have to plan out all of the gardening and maintenance so I can get it done before Lake Season arrives!

The Spokane Nordic board is planning out the next few months as well, as we want to be ready for next winter well before the snow falls. As you can imagine, it's really hard to think about winter in the middle of July.

I've spoken in the past few newsletters about the things we want to accomplish in the near future: secure Linder Ridge Road, nail down a new grooming machine, and start on some interesting additions to our trails like a terrain park and another warm-

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**SNSEF:
Spokane Nordic
Ski Education
Foundation**

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The Spokane Nordic Ski Education Foundation is your very own non-profit group that works with the Mt. Spokane State Park on trail grooming, sponsors Spokane Nordic Kids and the Mt. Spokane Nordic Racing Team, makes facilities improvements and keeps an eye on the future of the Mount Spokane Nordic Area.

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**On the web:
www.spokanenordic.org**

His ski season didn't quite go according to plan

George Momany



Breathing.

Many of us take this simple act for granted. Unless you have asthma or other lung disease, we notice it only when exercising, or maybe when holding our breath underwater.

So it came as a rude surprise when in mid-November I found myself lying on a grassy curb. At first I was in shock, my brain overwhelmed with painful input. But as the seconds passed, my inability to breathe replaced the shock.

Soon I was feeling my chest wall for a puncture or crush wound; my windpipe seemed normal. As the tendrils of panic entered, I wondered if I could get help before I passed out.

But to my relief, my throat began to relax and air started squeaking back into my chest. It was a full minute

before I could wrap my mind around what had happened.

It was a clear, dry morning when I rode to work. I was riding over some leaves tossed out into the street by homeowners as I stood to crest the last hill.

My last memory was of seeing some sticks covered by leaves. In the next split second, my helmet was hitting the pavement with the entire force of my body right behind. No time to put out a hand, no time to roll with the fall. My only thought was to move off the road to avoid the touch of a car's tire.

Once again breathing, but gingerly, I put my bike back together and painfully leaned on it for support. No cars, no people, just dark houses in the early dawn.

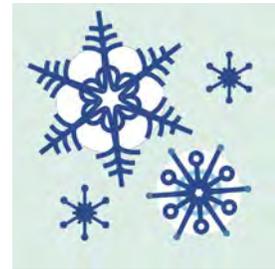
You could blame it on a mild concussion, but first I walked, and then rode the final half-mile to the hospital. X-rays would show I had fractured three neck and back bones, and two ribs.

In the ER, the doctor and nurse asked me if I needed pain medicine. I said I didn't care; at least now I could breathe.

Off work for a month, pain meds for a few weeks, no skiing for the entire season. Bad luck. No nerve damage, no paraplegia. Good luck. Still, I miss my friends on the mountain and time on the trail.

So do me a favor next time you go up to the Nordic area. After your skis are on and you're heading out from the lodge, stop for a second, inhale the cold fresh air, and appreciate breathing...

George Momany is Past President of Spokane Nordic.



Skijoring

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wearing a harness. Also, skijoring isn't a "free ride" for the human, but a fit dog can increase the skier's efficiency by about 25% up hills and more on the flat – enabling her to keep up with a stronger ski partner. Being pulled along may help the skier improve skills such as balance, step turns, and moving at higher speeds.

I've been skijoring at Mt Spokane for 8 seasons; initially on Linder and Mica Rd when they were multi-use trails. As these trails have been incorporated into the Nordic system, we've been able to skijor them on Sundays and Wednesdays after 2 pm. Along with other skijorers, I've loved having a completely non-motorized experience this winter! Judging by the smiling faces we see

and the questions we're asked, most skiers are happy to share the trail with skijor dogs.

Like humans, some dogs are more outgoing than others. My fellow loves to greet anyone who smiles or talks to us, but many dogs are more focused on the trail. However, if you meet a skijor team and don't want a greeting, keep your gaze ahead and the skijorer should read your body language and urge his dog "on by."

Skijorers are instructed to pass other skiers with courtesy, but please assist by making it clear which side of the trail you're using. Also, if you're in the slow lane and a skijorer calls out that they're overtaking you, please keep your pole tips down and to the out-

side – they're sharp and right at dog eye level as you complete your swing.

Other areas with skijor access include McCall, 49 Degrees North, Loup Loup Pass, and the Rendezvous area of the Methow - where dog-friendly trails are a big draw for skiers. If you would like more information about skijoring times and etiquette for Mt Spokane, email Diana Roberts at skijorspokane@yahoo.com.

Diana Roberts and her dog, Murungu, work together to strengthen the human-animal bond by visiting hospice patients, dancing at retirement centers and community events with the Ruff Revue canine freestyle group, and helping their feline friend, Nyuchi, bust the myth that cats can't learn tricks.

2010-2011 Junior/Nordic racing team news

George Bryant



The snow was plentiful all season long. The team took advantage of all the kilometers and varied terrain on the Mt Spokane Nordic trails. Skiing 2-3 times a week and dryland training for

another 2 or 3 times started the process of becoming a ski racer. With the help of Jud Ford and Wyeth Larson coaching the junior team, Matt Haloran and George Bryant coaching the racing team, the development of all the skiers was visible throughout the season. The spring and summer months will give everyone a chance to keep improving their fitness and have some fun while learning some new training techniques.

Racing at the Western States Championship against teams from Oregon, Idaho, Montana as well as Washington, Spokane had 19 racers competing in J6-J3. Although it was cold, we had a great spirited time, racers, parents and coaches.

The J3 recruits had a breakout season, competing with racers from around the West and showing their mettle, as well as their medals!

We had one skier graduating this

year, Scott Strong, who has been skiing/traveling with us for the last 5 years. His commentary and skiing will be missed.

With a young team, only (3) J1 skiers for next year, a core of dedicated skiers will make for some exciting racing and training next year. Spokane is planning to bid for a JOQ race again next season.

The Junior/Racing page on the website, www.spokanenordic.org, is currently being revamped. Please look for information for training opportunities and a schedule for weekly workouts as well as links to video and racing news.

Junior Olympics

I recently returned from Minneapolis, MN, where I was trip leader for the PNSA JO team. 31 skiers and 6 coaches gathered with about 450 skiers/coaches from across the country to race for national titles.

This was the first urban race venue for Junior Olympics. Together with all the athletes housed in the same 29-story hotel in downtown Minneapolis made for never a dull moment for either the skiers or the coaches. A late winter storm dropped enough snow to give a good base to hold up over a week of racing/training. The terrain was

challenging with sharp technical turns and an ever modulating altitude, short rests but not too long of climbs, with an occasional steep short climb. Fortunately, there was plenty of oxygen to breathe being at only about 900 ft.

Kick-waxing was typically challenging -- being in March and at low altitude -- and surprising because of what worked for the conditions. Glide being yellow, but temps varying from 18F to above freezing! Both klisters and zeros worked in most of the conditions, depending on who was skiing them.

Pat Madden,OJ, skiing for Bend Nordic, raced into the "B" Finals in the sprint, plus a sixth place in both the classic and skate distance races., earning All-American honors. PNSA had 2 other skiers who placed in the top 30 of the J1 male.

The PNSA managed to keep its place, 6th overall, among the 10 division teams, but it was a fight to get past Mid-Atlantic and Far West. The top 5 divisions fielding full complements (42 skiers) plus automatic qualifiers, those who raced at JR worlds, are typically too strong because of numbers for us to compete equally with.

Next year's 2012 Junior Nationals (official name change) will be at Soldier Hollow, Utah.

A message from the president...

Continued from Page 1

ing hut. We also will be scheduling trail days to keep our current infrastructure in good shape. Keep an eye out for announcements on trail days and plan to come up.

To meet our goals (and your expectations) for our trail system requires a broad membership among the skiers at Mt Spokane. We experience the "public radio conundrum" whereby the users of the trails don't have to support Spokane Nordic, but without our work they wouldn't have much of a trail system.

To work on our membership base, we hired our first paid staff person last year. Liorah Wischer has done great work on defining our needs around IT,

events and messaging, but she is moving on to a new adventure with the birth of her daughter. We will be building on that experience to hire a new membership coordinator this year. If you have ideas on how to reach out to the non-member skiers, please let us know.

Meanwhile, enjoy the spring skiing. We should have a decent base for a while, and with luck we will have some clear skies and good picnic weather while the snow lasts. I hope to see you up there if the garden lets me sneak away.

-- Tom Schaaf



Thanks for a great season!

Spokane Nordic would like to thank the following individuals for their volunteer time and tireless efforts in making the 2010-2011 ski season a good one:

- **Trond and Alison Liaboe** for leading Nordic kids
- All of the parents/volunteers who helped out with the Nordic Kids program
- Our coaches and their assistants: **George Bryant, Matt Halloran, Jud and Lael Ford** and **Wyeth Larson**
- **Paul Buckland** and **Inland Empire Paper Co.** for allowing us to ski on Linder Ridge Rd.
- Rangers **Steve Christensen, Jerry Johnson** and **Clayne Perrins** and their crew for their support of Spokane Nordic, their Snow Line reports and for setting track when the big groomer wasn't available
- **Robin DeRuwe** and **Fitness Fanatics** for supporting Spokane Nordic
- **Wright Alcorn, Al Pokorny** and others for organizing the Selkirk Nordic Series ski races
- **Tim Ray** and the **Langlauf Board** for organizing our largest community race
- The women who organized the **Souper Bowl Snowshoe and Ski Event**
- **Karen Momany** for organizing refreshments at the Banff Film Fest
- Groomer operator **Ken Johnson** for his outstanding work in grooming the Nordic trail system and getting about 150 fallen trees off the trails
- The **mechanics**—**Chad Sellers, Shane Yarbrough, Kenny Wines, Jeremy Joy, Kenny Johnson, Keaqn Toner, Doug Sage** and **Warren Arcano** for keeping the groomer running all season
- **Kyle Lee**, who kept the lodge in great shape
- **George Momany** who helped secure the grant for the new groomer
- **Art Bookstrom** and **Jack Benedetto** for organizing and executing the trail maintenance work
- All of the volunteers who helped with trail maintenance including **Sam Schlieder** for consistent long-term trail-maintenance work
- **Jim Downing** for splitting firewood for the Selkirk Lodge and the Nova Hut every year
- **Chris de Forest** and **Chris Oxford** for building shelves and peg boards inside and on the porch and front of the Selkirk Lodge
- **Tom Frost** for updating his map of the trail system to show the Linder Road segment of the trail system
- **Tricia Gissele** and the **Nordic Ski Patrol**
- **Liorah Wichser** for helping promote Spokane Nordic in the community
- All who donated their time, energy and/or financial support
- Those who came and shared in the good fun at the Snow Ball pot luck and Moonlight Ski tour
- And to any and all folks we may have inadvertently missed, **THANK YOU!!!**

2011 Spokane Nordic trail work schedule

Art Bookstrom

Please mark your calendars for the following SENSEF trail-work days at Mt. Spokane:

Sun. June 19, Sat. July 16, Sun. Aug 14, Sat. Sept. 17, Sun. Oct 2, Sat. Oct 15

We gather in the parking lot at the Selkirk Lodge between 9 and 9:30 a.m. and work until about 3 p.m. Bring gloves and a lunch. We'll bring tools and safety gear for cutting trees, limbs, bushes and weeds. Nevertheless, if you have a truck, off-road SUV, favorite chain saw or any other favorite tools, bring them too.

We now have about 40 km of cross-country ski trails to maintain. It's surprising how many trees fall across the trails and how fast the alders, willows and conifer seedlings grow in and along the sides of our trails. Also, at least 150 trees fell across the trails this winter and some of them need to be trimmed back from the edge of the trail.

We're scheduled to get a newer, bigger, wider groomer, so our trails will have to be at least 20 feet wide. This will require removal of quite a few trees as well as some dirt work. Park employees probably will do most of it with machines. However, there will be finish work to be done by hand, and they do appreciate volunteer help, especially in these times of State budget-cutting. Besides that, it's fun to spend the day working with friends at Mt. Spokane, so I hope you'll join us when you can.

Call Art Bookstrom at (509) 624-9667 for updated information, transportation, etc.

The Recreational Skier

Time to reflect on 2010-2011 season

By Susan Mulvihill

Boy, it's hard to believe the ski season is rapidly coming to a close, isn't it? I always have a tough time dealing with this time of year since I love skiing so much. But since I am an avid gardener as well, I really have the best of both worlds: I ski until it's time to garden, and I garden until it's time to ski again!

How did your ski season go this year? I made nearly 40 ski trips although I was certain there would be many more than that, considering how snowy it was at the beginning of the season. Funny how Mother Nature likes to mess with our minds that way!



Having the unexpected bonus of getting to ski on Linder Ridge Rd. this season was a real treat. This trail is on land owned by Inland Empire Paper Co., which closed this trail and others on their land to snowmobiles. Because Linder Ridge Rd. is so close to Selkirk Lodge and reasonably level, it is an ideal trail for folks who are just learning to ski or for those who would rather avoid a lot of hills. I have to admit that when I'm skiing on that trail and Mica Rd., I feel like I'm up in the Methow because the trails are so long and fun to ski on.

This season, I enjoyed skiing on the trail as part of a large loop (Selkirk Lodge to Linder Ridge Rd. to Mica Rd. to Twin Lakes and back to the lodge). And if you got to ski on Linder Ridge and Mica roads on bright, sunny days, you could see for miles and miles. Wow. While I'm hoping to squeeze in a few more trips up to the mountain, I'm also thinking ahead to a few end-of-the-season tasks that we should all be doing:

1. All skis need to have "storage wax" put onto their glide zones. This keeps the bases from drying out during the off-season and protects them. Even so-called no-wax skis should have storage wax applied to everywhere but the scales. I use yellow CH10 wax for this purpose and melt it onto the skis in a thick layer. On my waxable classic skis, I also clean off the kick zone and cork in some base binder as a protectant.
2. It's time to take stock of any equipment that needs to be replaced or upgraded so we know what we'll need when the ski swaps take place in the fall.
3. What about keeping a ski journal during each season? That's something I do, which might seem a little obsessive/compulsive (hey, I admit it!) but I find it very useful. I use mine to jot down things I want to remember for next season, waxing tips I've picked up from other skiers, training ideas and so on.

Once the ski season is officially over, don't forget to enjoy the mountain during the warmer months. Mt. Spokane State Park is awesome for hiking and mountain biking, and huckleberry-picking in late summer. I love looking at the wildflowers and all of those pretty vistas from the trails.

As I write this, there are 77 inches of snow up on the mountain. Now if I can just sneak up there for a few more ski outings before I call it quits for the season, I'll be a happy woman.

Susan Mulvihill is a member of the Spokane Nordic board and can be reached at inthegarden@live.com.

Meet your Spokane Nordic organization

Officers:

President: **Tom Schaaf**
Vice President: **John McCarthy**
Past President: **George Momany**
Treasurer: **Lisa Sunderman**

Board:

Jack Benedetto
Art Bookstrom
Jud Ford
Matt Halloran
Trond Liaboe
Susan Mulvihill
Darryl Potyk
Dhruvi Shukla

We need your input!

Next season, we will be getting a new groomer for the Nordic trails at Mt. Spokane State Park. Ranger Steve Christensen and Inland Empire Paper Co. are evaluating which groomer would best serve the Nordic community: one with a 10-foot tiller or one with a 14-foot tiller which would require widening some of the trails.

1) What type of trails would you like to see: the current width we have been grooming, or 14-foot wide trails with double track set on each trail?

2) What suggestions do you have for improving the Nordic area with regards to recreational skiing?

Please e-mail responses to **George Momany** at gmmomany@yahoo.com. Your opinion is important to us!!



SNSEF
P.O.Box 501
Spokane, WA 99210

Spokane Nordic
 Ski Education Foundation

Spokane Nordic Ski Education Foundation teaches the public how to Nordic ski, does volunteer trail work on state and private land in cooperation with Mt. Spokane State Park and other agencies, and hosts ski competitions to develop the skills of amateur athletes.

_____	_____	_____
Name	Phone	Cell
_____	_____	_____
Mailing address	City, State	ZIP
_____	_____	
E-mail	Additional info?	

Yes! I want to support Spokane Nordic Ski Education Foundation (SNSEF).
 Choose one or more of the funds listed below:

- Spokane Nordic Annual Membership:** SNSEF members receive informative newsletters, are invited to special events, have opportunities for ski lessons, meet-up groups, and more! Annual minimum: \$25 for 2010-2011 \$ _____
- New Trails & Grooming Fund:** Help fund trail maintenance and upkeep of the snowmobile used for grooming. Trail expansion in the works! \$ _____
- Nordic Kids:** Support the program that gives children and their parents the opportunity to learn, develop and enjoy cross-country skiing skills together. Parents and other adult volunteers lead groups of kids in fun activities designed to teach the fundamentals of technique. \$ _____
- Racing Team:** Support the Nordic racing team at Mt. Spokane. SNSEF hosts Junior Olympic trials for aspiring racers throughout the region. Currently seeking sponsors for the "racing" van. \$ _____
- Susie McDonald Fund Student Scholarship:** Help provide ski lessons and equipment for families who need a little financial assistance. \$ _____

Date: _____ Total SNSEF Contribution: \$ _____

Thank you for your support!

Mail your tax-deductible donation to:
 Spokane Nordic Ski Education Foundation
 P.O. Box 501
 Spokane, WA 99210

Find more information about our programs online at: www.spokanenordic.org
 E-mail questions about membership and contributions to: members_dev@snsef.org