
BIRKEBEINER BULLETIN

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Official newsletter of the Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club

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This Issue:

AGM	1
Pictures from the BBQ	2
Club House Survey Results	3
Vasaloppet China	4
Buckland, Kerr Tribute	5
Sapporo Ski Marathon	6
Working Bee	7
Reports from our Grant Recipients	
Casey Wright Report	8
Phil Bellingham Report	10
Paul Kovacs Report	11
Anna Trnka Report	13
Clubhouse working Bees	14
Pre-Season Activities	17
Coaching Course	18

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AGM

The Annual General Meeting will be held on May 20th at 7:30 in the auditorium. Be there.

Photos from the BBQ 23rd of November



Marsland and Coleman families enjoying the BBQ



Long standing BNSC members tucking in



Brian Keeble checking the vege burgers



The salad table was popular



Junior Birkie members tucking in



Michal & John talking to Kerry who organised the BBQ



Two of our youngest BNSC members, Keiron and Angus, having fun with Sandi

Photos courtesy Trish Cross

CLUB HOUSE SURVEY WRAP - RESULTS - ARTICLE

SUMMER GREETINGS BIRKIE MEMBERS

There is movement at “the station” aka club house.

Thanks to Tony Keeble for the “Club House Survey” and getting the ball rolling, and to Paul L’Huillier, Jim Crebbin, Brian Keeble, Trish our trusty secretary, and others for work and feedback so far.

Below is a summary of the Survey and feedback from those who responded. The Survey and other observations have given us direction and the impetus to take some action to alleviate practical concerns where feasible that are also within the terms of the lease. (Whilst BNSC built and raised funds for the clubhouse, it currently has a 5 year lease arrangement with FCRM and is not in a position to expand the club house. We have applied for funding to assist with a Bushfire Compliance Project that will see recladding and double glazing of the lower level among other things)

The survey summary extracts common threads and responses. As Tony says, *“the key message to members is that we listened, we have made some changes to address some of the concerns in the kitchen, overall members didn’t want to change the usage patterns and agreed that working together with clear communication is appreciated and is what made the club inviting and friendly”*

In particular, comments related to kitchen crowding, access and storage. The kids’ corner was deemed a success. Heating concerned some, and there was some discussion around having ‘members only’ times. But overall, most people are happy and in favor of not too many rules. To quote some “I like the current self-regulating system. I wouldn’t like too many rules.” “There is a real community feel and I wouldn’t want to change that.” As Bill Little has observed, “We can reinforce the tread lightly, do unto others as you would have them do unto you notion”. To that end, communication continues to be important.

Collective suggestions have been considered. SOME ACTIONS you may see over this summer include.

- ⇒ Remodeled kitchen area to address crowded kitchen issues.
- ⇒ Fridge (to Mt B Men's Shed) and stove gone. To be replaced by new bench top and shelving. A mini fridge will be located below bench top.
- ⇒ Extra micro wave
- ⇒ Hot water urn system to be investigated and installed.
- ⇒ More storage area options to be investigated.
- ⇒ Access options to clubhouse being explored with FCRM.
- ⇒ The purchase (or building) of two ski racks that can be easily moved to the front of the clubhouse during Winter (and moved easily for grooming). The old wooden one needs replacing.

For those of you attached to the stove, it may be possible to get a single hot plate.

DON'T FORGET, IF YOU ARE AT FALLS CREEK, THE CLUB HOUSE IS ACCESSIBLE FOR SUMMER USE, BUT THE POWER WILL BE OFF.

Vasaloppet China

Helen went to china and represented Kangaroo Hoppet at the Vasaloppet China, their entry into Worldloppet. A short report and photo that I stole from the Hoppet website are reproduced below. There is more on the Kangaroo Hoppet25 Facebook page. Check it out.

I am back in Australia after a fantastic week in China. Thanks to the organisers for their great hospitality. I had a wonderful time. Completing the 25km (short course) Vasaloppet China Worldloppet classical ski race was a highlight, but there was so much more packed into the week: fabulous ice sculptures in Changchun, tours to the Great Wall and the Forbidden City, banquets with amazing entertainments, and making new friends. Helen L'Huillier



Buckland and Kerr Tribute

In July the S&R section was involved in the search for and later retrieval of Martie Buckland and Daniel Kerr. The families have donated a bivvy bag to the S&R section for use in further searches. This page has reproductions of the cards that they sent to us.



To the members of the Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club, with thanks for your heartfelt support, love and generosity. From the Buckland & Ahern families. We are extremely grateful for the tireless effort you put into the search and recovery of our loved ones, Martie and Dan. Though we never met you, we know how instrumental you were in the operation and we thank you so much for your time and respect. Warm Wishes Sally Buckland.

View over Bogong High Plains taken by Martie during his Australian Alpine Walking Track journey in 2012/13



BNSC and S&R

Thank you very much for all your hard work looking for and then the retrieval of Martie and Dan off Eskdale Spur in July

Martie and I have spent many a happy day snowboarding on Mt Bogong and it holds a special place in my heart. Even more so now.

Hopefully you won't have to use this bivvy bag in a rescue, but if you do it, like Martie, will not let you down.

Thanks again, Alex Turner.

Snow on Mount Bogong

Thomas Gordon Buckland Education Trust Fund

Martie Buckland and one of his best mates, Daniel Kerr were snowboarding at Mt Bogong in Victoria when they were tragically killed by an avalanche on the 10th of July 2014. Passionate adventurers Martie and Daniel loved the outdoors and this can be seen in the photography taken by Martie on many of their trips. The Education Trust fund is dedicated to Thomas, the son of Martie Buckland for education and ongoing medical expenses. Thomas was born profoundly deaf and now has a cochlear implant. Since then he has done amazingly well and his hearing and speech prognosis for the future is excellent. Thank you for your kind support.

For more information visit: www.facebook.com/pages/Thomas-Gordon-Buckland-Education-Trust-Fund

Sapporo Ski Marathon

Ronice completed the Sapporo Ski Marathon as did a few others. Her report is below along with a photo I stole from the Hoppet website.

Hoo hoo - I did it. The Sapporo marathon that is. Started with big Japanese drum session to get us pumped I suppose. Really fun day but super rough for any of us punters in second paddock or later - first 10 km skied in 20cms sugar and then the down hills turned into perilous luges. I only got knocked over twice. Started snowing, and there was a lot of climbing - then, got to 48 km mark and thought yay, only 7 km to go, but suddenly a sign said 500 metre to go - only 50km, not 55km race!! Love that feeling of relief at the finish line. Great yummy Miso and vege soup at end. Fun bit is probably the socializing and the camaraderie that's underpinned by the common self imposed suffering.!!

Only one Loppet race to go - Russia here I come. About to have a bath, then go look at shops and bright lights and find a Sapporo beer. My Japanese is rather poor - Itchy Knees - That's how we remember one and two according to sister Karen I think, but prolific Arigato is a real hit.

I've checked out several XC ski "grounds" on Honshu and Hokkaido, travelling a lot of kms on the Shinkansen (fast rail) and conclude the Japanese don't do XC like we or Scandinavians - they are so disciplined (but have highest suicide rate in the world) they are happy to go round and round in circles, training on 5km. Anyway, there's lots happening and it's surprising the people who try and talk to you. So far impressed by - Japanese are incredibly polite, speak in quiet voices and so do I now, follow rules, love ONSENS (hot springs and baths), DO NOT speak on phones on public transport, and there is NO rubbish anywhere, and apart from a few odd culinary preferences, the food is FABULOUS. Subway system is brilliant. (Shame about Myki) There is a whole city of shops underground that you could spend a few days in, and packaging has been turned into an art. Everything is recycled meticulously.

But what did I do on my rest day? Caught a bus out of town to the AINU cultural centre - the AINU are the indigenous people of Hokkaido, unrelated to the Japanese and have been all but wiped out - same - taken advantage of, assimilated, discriminated, but trying to reclaim cultural roots. Then I went to ODORI Park where the famous Ice Festival will be on in Feb. Thousands of people, including the army, are preparing the sculptures, some are 2-3 storeys high. Then I came back to hostel, and went swimming! Now that was novel - skating through snow and ice covered streets to get to pool. Swimming customs are quite different and for a start, the pool was having a rest so not allowed in pool until 7, then disturbingly, you have to swim on the right, not the left.

Well, that's a long enough essay, so Sayonara from Hokkaido. I fly to Tokyo for two nights then off to Munich.

Hope summer does its thing, and the tennis addicts can refocus on some other distraction!

Cheerio

Ronice



Mark Zagorski and Ronice after the 50km race.

Working Bee

The Club conducted a very successful working bee on Sunday 18th January with 19 club members attending.

The Falls Creek Resort Management (FCRM) has agreed to undertake a total revamp of the cross country trail signage system at Falls Creek.

Geoff Sorensen has been appointed by FCRM to manage the project and has developed a timetable which should result in a high percentage of the system being in place before the start of the 2015 ski season.

The first stage of the project was to remove most of the existing signs, poles, fencing and gates and to reposition some poles in preparation for the new signs to be attached. This was done at the working bee.

Attendees were

Brian Keeble (Working Bee Co-ordinator), Greg & Allison Beanland, Andrew & Kate Prest, Russ & Ann Bellingham, Charles Clark, Steve Swan, Norm Michener, Doug Hamilton, Koarina Lindell, Ian Franzke, Blair Hume, Jim Crebbin, Bob Flower, Paul Gray, Allan Marsland, Geoff Sorenson (FCRM)



Most of the crew.



Geoff Sorenson (FCRM) doing serious work with some horsepower.



Working hard or posing for the camera?



Some hard yakka.



Jim and Russ, hard at it.



Greg Beanland (left), Doug Hamilton (front) & Bob Flower (back)



Blair Hume

Reports from our Grant Recipients

Casey Wright ,20, Launching Place

Dear BNSC,

I would like to thank you for your help and support over the 2013/2014 Northern Hemisphere winter.

This season I spent the majority of my 5 months away in Idaho, USA, skiing with the Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation (SVSEF). For those of you who met Tom Smith during the last Australian Winter, this is the team who he is associated with. I spent the month of February in Sweden with the Australian Ski Team, preparing for and competing at the Falun World Championships before returning to Idaho.

While in America, I got the opportunity to compete on the USSA Continental cup, which is also known as the Super Tour. My season started with a number of races in West Yellow Stone and Bozeman, MT, as part of this tour as well as a Canadian NorAm race in British Colombia. It is a very different experience racing in US compared to that of Europe. The most noticeable difference was the fact that I could actually be competitive with these girls. Instead of trailing at the back of the results lists, I was able to finish in the top 30.

After Christmas I made my way to Houghton, Michigan, for the US Senior National Championships and what would be my coldest 1.5 weeks of my life! Despite daytime temperatures below that of Mars

(yes that's right!! The weekly high was -15°c) I had a great 4 races: 10km skate individual start, classic sprint, 20km classic mass start and a skate sprint. The highpoint of these championships would have to be my classic sprint where I managed to finish the time trial in 25th, and subsequently progress through to the finals.

I had a few weeks in Sun Valley to thaw out before I travelled to Sweden to prepare for what would be my first Senior World Championships and first time skiing against the best in the World. Since I had not achieved the full qualification for the Championships I was required to have a top 10 finish in the 5km skate qualification race to secure a spot in any other races. Exceeding all of my expectations, I managed to podium in 3rd position, less than half a second in front of fellow Birkie skier Anna Trnka. Following this race I got the opportunity to race in the Team Sprint with Jess Yeaton and the 30km classic mass start. Unfortunately due to some very fast skiing by the Norwegians in the 4x5km relay, I did not get to start my leg. These championships were by far the highlight of my season/ my skiing career to date! Not many things can top skiing along side the fastest skiers in the world and in front of 60,000 screaming fans!

I returned back to Sun Valley following Falun to wind down, enjoy some very sunny and warm spring skiing, and get ready for the final races of the season, the Super Tour Spring Series Finals. This year they were held in Sun Valley, which was a fantastic experience to be able to ski in front of the home crowd. The skate sprint was my best race, after I qualified in 12th.

Once again, I would like to thank you all for your support of not only myself but all of the athletes through the Birkie Grants. I am very much looking forward to seeing you all out on the trails this season.

Casey Wright



US Senior National Championships
Classic Sprint Quarter Final

Falun World Championships Team Sprint



Phil Bellingham, 24, Mt Beauty

This season wasn't all I was hoping for unfortunately. I put a lot more into my training and preparation this year than I had done any other year previous but unfortunately for a lot of the season I didn't quite have it, and it took me a while before I was racing at my best.

In early October I first headed back to Sweden where I rejoined my coach and the Dala Sports Academy in Falun. I had a solid couple of months of really good training there and tested really well in both the VO2 and the strength tests, everything was looking positive for a good season. Cal and I kept training hard through the first couple of early races in preparation for the first block of World Cup races (as these were the focus) so naturally we didn't race super well there but this was to be expected. I then rested properly and prepared accordingly for these world cups but unfortunately my results didn't follow the plan and unfortunately I was still racing at around the same standard as I was the previous year, if not a little slower, so after five weeks of racing my season was not off to a great start and I was a little less than impressed to say the least.

I then went on to race the Tour De Ski but my results still didn't pick up much there.

After the Tour I went back home to Sweden where I had a solid couple of weeks training and trying once again to find that special recipe of training or something that would make me race fast.

The next stop was the World University Games in Slovakia and this was where I had my first solid race of the season. In the sprint I qualified 5th and then went on to take 8th in the finals. I feel I should have skied a little better in the finals but made some school-boy style errors tactically and ended up missing a spot in the final by just 0.1 of a second. Jess Yeaton and I also had a go at the mixed team sprint and took a 13th place there so these competitions turned out to be a good boost to the spirits which was well needed

Uni games finished up and it was back to Sweden to start a small training block before the World Champs and the final World Cups of the season. I put in quite a few K's in this short training block which was making me feel like I was in good shape. Unfortunately in the final world cup before the world champs I was back to racing slowly and once again, less than impressed with the situation but tried to push it aside and concentrate on the oncoming Championships.

The World Champs was a bit of a mixed bag I had a couple of OK results in the classic sprint and then the 15k skate, but nothing special. Then in the team sprint with PK I had a really great race, I had a couple of moments where I was able to gain places and actually moved into 2nd at one point. I was wrecked by the third leg but in the first two legs I've never felt faster in my life! I could even tell in the warm-up with the way my body was working that I was finally feeling strong. It was then the following week where I had the best result of my season in the World Cup in Finland, finishing in 37th just 0.7 seconds outside the finals and Top 30. I had a similar feeling in this warm as I did at world champs and was stoked to finally lay down a solid result although unfortunately this was the last skate sprint of the world cup season so I was all out of opportunities to better this...

This was basically the end of the serious competition season but I had the Red Bull NordiX event left to race before I headed for home. I had another good race here and managed to win the B final to take 5th spot, unfortunately I couldn't defend my best trick competition title and got narrowly knocked off there but it was definitely a good way to finish off a long season.

Since the end of the season I had a couple of weeks off in Bali and Thailand catching a few rays of sunshine but am now I am back in Mt Beauty working and playing footy before the start of another long Australian winter.

I would like to take the opportunity to once again thank the Birkebeiner Nordic ski club for its ongoing support towards my skiing, it is a great help and goes a long way towards helping to have a successful season.

Regards,
Phil

Paul Kovacs, 24, Porepunkah

Dear BNSC members,

I hope this trip report finds you all well and getting excited for the up coming Australian winter!

The northern hemisphere season for me was full of firsts and lots of new experiences. Before I left Australia I had to endure a very long and tedious visa application process to the United States. After finally securing a long-term athlete visa I jetted off to my new race team based in Bozeman, Montana. The Bridger Ski Foundation is a huge program encompassing all forms of snow sports including freestyle skiing and snowboarding. The Nordic program is around 100 members from juniors to Master skiers and everything in-between.

My first two sets of race were relatively local, but highly competitive national series, 2 in West Yellowstone and 2 in Bozeman itself. All four races went really well and I set a few personal best in my first two weeks of racing! I was really happy with how it all was unfolding. After a training block I traveled to Alaska to have Christmas with my girlfriend and her family. I competed in a few local races in Anchorage before flying back down to meet BSF for US Nationals in Houghton, Michigan. I have never been so cold in my life, over the course of a week it snowed around a metre of snow but it was constantly -18 and blowing hard. During the races athlete were pulled out by officials because they were displaying signs of frostbite and hypothermia. It was very tough racing and I suffered.

After nationals I took a few days off back in Bozeman recovering from a cold before flying to the east coast of America to Craftsbury, Vermont. The entire East has had an epic winter with metres and metres of snow falling. The City of Boston has gotten more snow this year than most of the western states which is normally famous for powder skiing. I flew in and out of the east 4 times and all four times I was severely delayed and once I had to spend 36 hours waiting out massive storms. I had some good races in Craftsbury, qualifying for classic sprint heats for the first time this season.

I then packed up once again and flew to Sweden to join the Australian team. The team was on a training camp and it was great to arrive and join in with the team again for some quality work. The mens team was fantastic to be a part of and the energy and vibes the guys had going was great. After a few weeks of solid training the senior athletes headed up to Ostersund for a Swedish World Cup. The sprint course was extremely unique with the course going up the spectator stands and through a spectator tunnel. It was a fantastic race to be a part of. The 15km Skate race was on a very challenging course with some very tight corners, made tighter by very icy tracks. I had a frustrating race there.

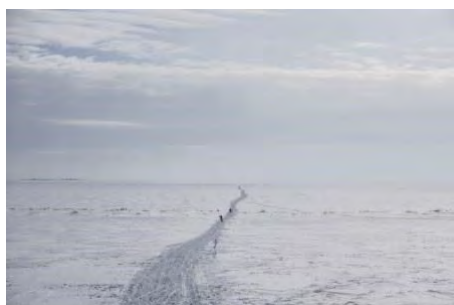
After the weekend we headed back down to Falun and the 2015 World Championships. The championships were a very mixed result for a lot of athletes I think and definitely myself included. Sadly a lot of the athletes got a stomach virus which knocked them out of many of the races. The highlight for me was by racing with fellow BNSC member Phil Bellingham in the team sprint. It was a fantastic race for both of us and we were in contention for much of the race and only on the final exchange did we slip off. The organizers sold over 200,000 tickets for the races so it was amazing racing in front of so many people all cheering and going crazy. A really fun event to be a part of!

After that I headed to Alaska for two weeks of R&R with my girlfriend before flying to Sun Valley and the final races of the season. For a few days I lived with Tom Smith, last years BNSC guest coach be-

fore rejoining BSF. Spring series was a lot of fun and some really fun racing. Over a week we raced a sprint, 15km, 4x5km relay and a 50km mass start. It was a lot of fun and as the name states it was beautiful and sunny! I'm now back in Alaska for some of the summer to train with some elite athletes up here. I also managed to squeeze in a trip to the Arctic Circle to live in a Native village for a week, teaching the local children there to ski. It's an amazing experience and very rewarding to pass on my love to skiing to others.

As you can probably gather this years trip was fairly crazy with lots of travel and racing, successes and disappointments. Without BNSC's support each year I would struggle to make ends meet. So thank you very much BNSC for your ongoing support and I look forward to catching up with you all this winter in the club house!

Cheers



Skiing 55km from Noorvik to Selawik above the Arctic circle.



Boats on the Kobuk river waiting for the summer melt. the Brooks range in the background as the sun sets at 11:00pm



Helping some of the 1st graders rejoin the class.



Phillip Bellingham and I with the wax team after our 23rd in the Team sprint at World Championships



Racing at my "home course" in Bozeman, Montana for the Bridger Ski Foundation.

Anna Trnka , Tawonga South

I began this year's trip flying out on New Year's Eve with team mate Aimee Watson and arriving in Prague, on the 1st. Aimee and I planned to spend the first week staying in the Czech town of Bozi Dar and training in Oberwiesenthal, Germany where we would be racing the following weekend. We stayed in Prague the first night where my passport was stolen from the hotel. I decided to go on to Bozi Dar anyway. Unfortunately the German border guards were quite disgruntled to learn that I had been traveling across the border, sans passport, all week so after nearly being put in jail and spending a few hours in the immigration department in a nearby town, I had a spontaneous trip back to Prague the day before the races to get emergency travel documents.

Oberwiesenthal put on the usual show for the races that weekend; 4 degrees and raining with the snow disappearing fast. I was tired from the eventful week and really hadn't skied enough. I felt slow in both events but for what I perceived as bad races, the results weren't horrendous. After the races my Dad, who was conveniently in the country, picked me up and we took a little road trip to Vienna to get an emergency passport.

I spent the next 10 days in Ramsau, an amazing Austrian ski resort and raced in Lackenhof, a small town 2 hours away. The races in Lackenhof were definitely an improvement on the week before but I still had work to do.

After Austria the next stop was Strbske Pleso, Slovakia where the World University Games were being held. The uni games schedule was pretty intense with us racing pretty much every second day. The 5km classic was my best event and last chance to fully qualify for the world championships. It was a stellar day, the course was tough and steep which suited me, I had great skis from our wax techs and I finally felt like I'd gotten to my previous form technique wise. Unfortunately I was lacking that final spark necessary for an amazing race to get the A qualification criteria. After some hard deliberation I decided to stay and fly to Sweden the following week to try and compete at the World Championships anyway.

The next 2 weeks were spent in Gronklitt, Sweden where I was just trying to get myself into that peak form both physically and mentally. The highlight was definably going to Polar World where they had polar bears, snow leopards, wolves and heaps more.

Going into World Champs the intention was for me to start the 5km qualification race and the sprint with the hope of doing more if I came top 10. I skied quite well in the 5km, not at my best but I was pushing hard the whole way and finished in 4th place, which allowed me to do more races. Surprisingly I had a great classic sprint the next day coming 57th/ 94. However by the time I got to the Skiathlon 2 days later I was pretty spent physically and mentally. I raced quite poorly and ended up getting lapped out. After this I decided to change my flight how and leave a week earlier and left the next day to go and spend some time in Czech with my Family.

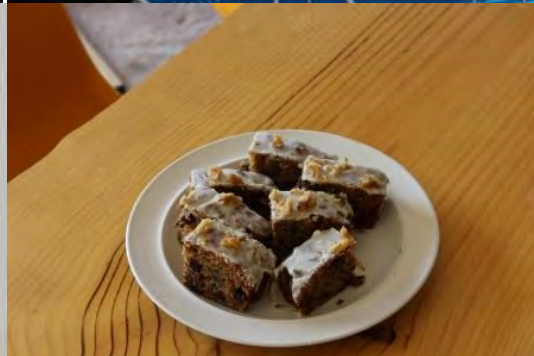
Thanks again to the BNSC, without your support throughout my whole skiing career I would not have made it to my second world championships.



Club House Working Bees.

There have been a few working bees at the clubhouse to replace windows and cladding. On the 10th of March Jim Crebbin, Phil Evans, Paul Gray and Bill Little removed some weather boards and replaced the bottom two windows and on the 1st of April, Jim Crebbin, Russ Bellingham, Doug Hamilton and Bill Little covered the north wall with sarking in preparation for the new cladding. These photographs are an indication of what went on.





Meg's cake is yummy

Jim Crebbin, Rob Boland, Mike Smith, Paddy Honey, Phil Evans, and Bill Little went back on the 12th of April and put most of the cladding on. These photos are a record of that fairly long day.





Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club – Pre Season activities 2015

Date	Event	Details/Contact
Sunday 26th April	Bright Fun Run	5, 10, 21km events starting from 8:45am More info: http://www.brightfunrun.com
Sunday 3 th May	Nail Can Hill Run - Albury	11.3/5km options For further details: http://www.nailcanhillrun.com
Sunday 10th May	Buffalo Big Walk Meet at park entrance for 10am start/carpool.	Michelle Forrer 0417206672 BYO Mothers Day picnic lunch at the top.
Saturday 16 th May	Mount Beauty Half marathon, 10km, 3 km	Starts at 10am. http://www.mtbeauty.com/mt-beauty-half-marathon/
Sunday 24th May	RAMBO Mountain Bike event. Big Hill Mt. bike park Mount Beauty	Kids 1 hour, Sport 1.5 hour or 3 hour enduro mountain bike (10am). See Team Mount Beauty website/facebook for details.
Sunday 31 st May	Big Hill Rogaine (on foot)	Big Hill mountain bike park. 3pm Michelle Forrer 0417206672
Sat/Sunday 6/7 th June	Queens birthday	Opening of the ski season – Yipee!

Coaching Course.

Ski and Snowboard Australia - Cross Country (SSAXC) is again offering a coach education opportunity for teachers, club/school volunteers and parents in the North East of Victoria. A modified Cross Country Ski Coach Level 0 - Dryland will be held in Mount Beauty on Sunday 17th May 1 - 5pm. This course covers ski striding and hill bounding techniques and training activities, followed by a rollerski workshop covering some great activities that challenge young skiers in a safe and fun way. No prior knowledge or experience is required. The objectives of the course are to give people working with young skiers at the inter-school and club level knowledge on the latest ideas on ski technique, what to look for and how to go about improving technique along with a tool bag of ideas on activities to use in training.

The course has received great feedback from people who have attended in the past 3 years with 99% of participants finding the course content and materials highly relevant and very useful.

SSA Cross Country is seeking support from the clubs and schools in the area to encourage people to attend the course. Any time we can put new ideas into the community we aid the improvement of the sport and ensure that our young skiers are developing a passion for the sport. The cost of the course is \$60 inc gst. The club will subsidise members half of the cost. This will be limited to the first 10 participants. Registration is through the SSA website. Or by following the link below:

<https://eventdesq.imgstg.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=main&EventDesqID=12907&OrgID=2083>

Please let the secretary, Trish (trishacross@bigpond.com) know if you have enrolled.