
Birkebeiner Bulletin

Volume 38 No 4
October 2015



Official Newsletter of the Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club

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Bulletin copy closes the 1st of each month — May to October

'Changing of the Guard' Our Junior Girls dominate National Senior Championships - Falls Creek



Left: Casey Wright had an impressive Nationals weekend. Second Aussie in the Sprint and first Aussie in the 10km (F).



Left: Katerina Paul defeated all comers in the Open Womens Sprint title just pipping Swedish skier Maria Graefnings by 'have a look at the photo'. Katerina was also third Aussie in the 10km (F).



Office Bearers 2015/16

Officers

President	Ronice Goebel
Vice President	Blair Hume
Secretary	Doug Hamilton (03) 5754 1826
Treasurer	Ann Bellingham
Social Secretary	Kerry Lucas

Committee Members

Margaret Trnka
Jim Gargan
Ian Franzke
Allan Marsland
Michelle Forrer
Alice Hamilton
Penny Goebel
Nick Wright

Volunteer Positions

Bulletin Editor & Website Administrator	Paul L'Huillier
Membership Secretary	Helen L'Huillier
Clubhouse Stewards	Tony Keeble & Megan Benne
Ski de Femme Co-ordinator	Ronice Goebel
Skidoo Steward	Ian Franzke
Bush S&R Victoria Delegate	Ian Franzke

Sub-Committees

Race Committee	Margaret Trnka (Secretary) Michal Trnka Ronice Goebel Nick Wright Paul L'Huillier
Junior Committee	Michelle Forrer (Convenor) Ronice Goebel Kate Prest
Search & Rescue Committee	Ian Franzke (Convenor) Jim Gargan
Club reps. on Hoppet Board	Bill Little Ronice Goebel
Hoppet Race Committee	Bob Flower (Chairman) Allan Marsland (Race Director) Helen L'Huillier (Secretary)

Membership Report

Helen L'Huillier – Membership Secretary

Total members 356 (consisting of 4 associate search & rescue members, 5 individual juniors, 9 honorary life members, 54 individual adults and 73 families.

We welcome the following new members to the Club:

- Oldrich Sadilek — Bairnsdale
- Fran Wellington — Mount Beauty
- McMillan family — Albury NSW
- Harvey Marriner — Melbourne
- Oldis family — Melbourne
- Aimee Watson — Barooga NSW



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Sport and recreation

Clubhouse Rules

Tony Keeble & Megan Benne

Please note that our clubhouse is for **day use only**.

We do have a few rules:

1. No skis or waxing inside the building. (Waxing can be done in the skidoo shed next door, or in the Windy Corner Day Shelter waxing room.)
2. Use the shelves and hooks for your belongings, keep the benches clear for people to sit.
3. No outdoor footwear or wet clothes upstairs.
4. Clean up after yourself - no dishes to be left on the sink.
5. Take all your rubbish home. We do not have a rubbish bin in the clubhouse.
6. Lock the door if are the last person to leave, even in the middle of the day, to keep our belongings safe while we are out skiing.



End of Season BBQ by the Lake

Kerry Lucas - social secretary

On **Sunday November 22, 2015** the Club is holding its annual end-of-season BBQ in the picnic area by the lake in Mount Beauty from 5.30 pm.

I do hope you and your family can come.

We will provide the meat (and veggie burgers for those who prefer them), as well as bread and sauce.

You'll need to bring your own chair, cutlery, plates, drinks, plus, for families, a salad and a sweet to share (singles and couples - please bring a salad OR a sweet to share).

Please tell us how many of you will be coming and how many need vegetarian food. If you don't reply, we will assume you are not coming so we don't over-order.

RSVP by Tuesday 17th November to Social Secretary Kerry Lucas, email <km.lucas@bigpond.com>, SMS 0407 814 114, or telephone (03) 5754 1341.

For those of you who don't live locally, there is much to enjoy about Mt Beauty and Falls Creek at this time of year.

- Swimming in Mt Beauty's solar heated pool or in the river.
- Fishing and canoeing in the pondage, the Kiewa River or up at Rocky Valley Dam
- Cycling on- or off-road, mountain bike trails, High Plains aqueducts, BMX track.
- Hiking and picnicking at Bogong Village or on the High Plains
- Four wheel driving.

Why not stay for the weekend? There are motels, apartments, cabins, camping or caravan parks. Visit <<http://www.mtbeauty.com>>



AGL Energy Scholarships – Hoppet 2015



From left: Jarrah Forrer, Darcie Morton, Damon Morton, Katerina Paul, Casey Wright, Callum Watson & AGL CEO - Mount Beauty Simon Kelly Tommi Silvester and Leila Pammer (absent)

Late breaking news — Kerry Lucas has been approached by the Club to submit designs for a **Club Warm-Up Jacket**. These will be submitted for committee approval and be available for ordering prior to winter 2016.

Editor's note: Kerry is a professional designer and manufactures a range of custom printed cycle kits, XC Ski gear, swimwear and more. Her business name is *SACUL Team Sportswear* and operates from Tawonga South. Contact details are: email <km.lucas@bigpond.com>, mobile 0407 814 114, or telephone (03) 5754 1341.



Profile

Ronice Goebel – XC Commitment

Paul Kovacs



As Ronice Goebel puts it, she had “an urban upbringing.” However you never would have guessed it; nor would you have guessed that Ronice didn’t start skiing until she was 20. “Apart from Christmas cards, I did not know anything about snow.” None-the-less, as soon as Ronice got a taste of the white stuff there was no turning back. “At Uni, the student union ran a

ski trip to Baw Baw and I was hooked after day one. We were poor students, so I bought those good old ‘mica-based’ XC skis that were the latest back then. I just knew I loved this thing called snow and skiing, and it was so fun adventuring with friends.”

Eventually Ronice moved to the northeast after a fortuitous meeting and to further her love of the alpine area. “I was a leader on a Mountain and Ski Tour Leaders Course and met Rod Withers, an artist and Jaffa’s father! After meeting at Luna Park to plan a hiking trip to Tassie and then having a great time there, I guess we got on pretty well. Rod had relocated to Harrierville and a job came up at Bogong Outdoor Centre which I applied for, and here I am.”

The move to Bogong village only poured more fuel on the fire and drove Ronice’s passion for skiing and all things outdoors. “As a young teacher I was in a dream job. I loved being in the mountains and I loved teaching in the outdoors. And yes, after an urban upbringing, I loved winter and skiing and getting to know the Bogong High Plains. Life was an adventure and still is. There were a lot of experienced people I learnt from and it was a fabulous opportunity to learn all manner of things.”

After a long teaching stint at Bogong, Ronice jumped valleys and started teaching at Bright P-12 College. Ronice was a key member in creating the School’s ski team and almost single-handedly started a Nordic ski program at the school to go along with the already existing downhill program. “Naturally I took on the Outdoor Education program, developed courses and got involved in the life of the community that included XC skiing! Bright is predominantly DH ski focused, but had a good school ski program and we somehow developed a passion for XC and built a hub of people, (including the Kovacs family!) so keen that we did really well at Interschools and got kudos from that. I also helped run the primary school ski program that let kids ski, build things and have fun so they wanted to keep doing it. Looking back, cross country skiing was also a less expensive way for people to enjoy skiing as it was more accessible and inclusive.”

Alongside her work in Outdoor Education, Ronice has been a very active member of the Victorian Ski Squad and the Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club (currently the president). Ronice has also been the manager for the Vic team for a number of years now, leading trips overseas and organising camps within Victoria. The team has grown now to roughly

50 athletes, which is a huge credit to her and many others. “Yes it’s huge now. The Vic Squad was resurrected by Keebs, (Brian Keeble) and Finn (Marsland) back in 2002 and I got involved when my daughter Jaffa was in the squad. I think Keebs asked me to organise a BBQ and here I am today. Initially it was small, but with huge enthusiasm from Jacinta O’Neill and JC Legras (who is still coaching), it has now expanded to about 30 skiers in the team and 20 young skiers in the development squad.”

Ronice attributes the booming growth within the Vic team to the families and the positive atmosphere within the group. “Its growth is testament to the families enthusiasm and inclusive approach to junior sport that is based on fun, friendship and challenge. It also reflects the program that includes four off snow camps including a surf camp at Anglesea, adventure camp at Millgrove and Lake Mountain, and a biennial training camp overseas to North America. We also have lots of athletes who are fantastic role models coming back, who get involved in coaching.”

It seems that over the years, Ronice’s passion and love for the snow and all things outdoors has only grown stronger. Ronice has spent the last few years travelling around the world competing in cross-country and Worldloppet races. She has found herself in some fairly far-flung places. “Loppet races can take you places you might otherwise not venture to. After skiing the Sapporo (Japan) and Demino in Rybisk, Russia, I’ve now completed all 16 Worldloppet races. They are all memorably crazy in some way and after doing the first 10, I had an inexplicable obsession to complete them all. Satisfaction is being amazed at the relief I feel at the finish line, especially after the 90km Vasaloppet (Sweden), the fascination of being in new cities and cultures, especially when travelling solo, and definitely gaining insights into the world of Loppet events and making new friends as a representative of the Kangaroo Hoppet Board.”

As Ronice slides past 60 in style, she reflects on her earlier days of skiing. “I was not in a club and I did not know anything about track skiing. We just went exploring and camping in the snow with friends. Could I turn? Well, eventually the telemark turn changed the way we went down hills. I look back and wonder how come I’m still alive.”

As for her days in Bogong, she still does a lot of casual relief teaching at the Centre and is now passing her skills along to the next generation, although she admits “I was rather green back then” and now “greener in different ways” with the modern world.

Still, Ronice happily reminds me she was born in the year of the horse and I guess she is still happily galloping along at a pace few can keep up with.

Article submitted with thanks courtesy of the publication
This Week in Falls Creek & Mount Beauty





AUSXC Cocktail Night – October 16



On Friday October 16 the Ski & Snowboard Australia Cross Country Ski Team is putting on an end-of-season Cocktail Night in Melbourne. Featuring food and drinks, a team video, images from throughout the year, a silent auction and some short speeches, the evening is a great opportunity for athletes, coaches, officials, parents and general ski enthusiasts to discuss and celebrate the year together without wearing lycra, hats or glasses.

All funds raised from the night go towards athlete international expenses, including for World Cup, the 2016 World Junior/U23 Championship in Romania, the 2016 Winter Youth Olympic Games in Norway and the inaugural World Cup Tour of Canada. In the past two years XC Towards 2018 project has raised over \$25K/year, with the two major contributions coming from this Cocktail event and the Sundeck Cup at Perisher.

Skiers past and present are all welcome. If you can't make it on the night, tax deductible donations can also be made via the [Australian Sports Foundation XC Towards 2018](#) project page.

When: Friday, October 16, 7:00pm

Where: 28 Glassford St, Armadale, 3143

Tickets: \$45/head, book online at www.trybooking.com/IUQH

Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/events/1483786391935048/

For Tax Free Donations

Active Link to [Australian Sports Foundation XC Towards 2018](https://asf.org.au/project/xc-towards-2018/)
<<https://asf.org.au/project/xc-towards-2018/>>



Birkie Bits

by Nordic Ned

Timing Conference in Melbourne

Three of our club members are attending a timing conference in Melbourne on 17/18 October conducted by Race Results - Australia. This is the company the club purchased its new timing system from this season. Michal Trnka, our chief of timing, will be accompanied by Brian Scott and Phil Thomas who are keen to learn the system to support the club.

Allison McArdle coaching in Canada

Prior to our winter Allison headed to Canmore Alberta Canada to take on a coaching role. We believe she plans to be there for three years. Allison, all the best from the Club.

Nine Birkies in 2015 National Team (see page 12)

Led by seniors Phil Bellingham and Paul Kovacs the Club is well represented in the National Team. Congratulations to you all.

National Team Happenings Update

Click [\[HERE\]](#) for an outline of what has been happening training camp wise with the national senior, junior and development teams. Information on teams selection, overseas program and who are the overseas team coaches etc.

Hoppet Calendar Photos Competition

Show us what you love about Falls Creek and you could have your photo appear in next year's Kangaroo Hoppet 2017 souvenir calendar!

One lucky photographer will win a 2016 season entry pass to Falls Creek.

Click [\[HERE\]](#) to enter.

Local John Bailey represents Australia in World Masters Short Course Triathlon Championships - Chicargo USA

John and Trish travelled to the USA recently to compete in the World Masters Championships as part of a large team of master triathletes. They plan to spend an extra month travelling in the USA/Canada and catch up with one of their sons. John congratulations on your selection.



Snow, Trek & Travel 2015 Mini Series

Lynn Maree Cullen

Sunday 30th August was our final Snow Trek and Travel Wodonga' Mini Series for 2015. The weather was fabulous for the final day which saw 28 participants - ranging from under 7 years to under 15. At the completion of the race, the presentations were held. Each participant received a special Snow Trek and Travel Mini Series diploma and six participants received a special Telemark Nordic Ski Club medal for competing in all three Snow Trek and Travel Mini Series races for 2015. Overall we had 78 children compete across the three races. The TNSC medals went to: Louise Prest; Emma Prest; Arana Benne Keeble; Amity Marantelli; Jorja Cullen and Nicola Baines.

Next year we hope we can have more children who achieve this, especially some boys!!!

Telemark Nordic Ski Club would like to thank our sponsor Snow Trek and Travel Wodonga, for their continued support in providing all of the great spot prizes this year and assisting TNSC in the promotion of cross country skiing for children and families.

Thanks to the Birkebeiner NSC for the use of their skidoo for track marking and transporting of gear to and from the Nordic Bowl.

Editor's note: Birkebeiner would like to thank the Telemark Nordic Ski Club for reintroducing these Mini Series events. 2015 was the second year after an absence of many.

Birkies need to keep supporting this series. It's a great introduction to racing.



Internationals claim Hoppet titles

MORE than 1000 competitors from 24 nations braved the strong winds and early morning fog to compete in the 25th running of Australia's Worldloppet event - the Kangaroo Hoppet - at Falls Creek on Saturday.

The weather conditions caused the 42km main event to be reduced to 34km and the 21km Birkebeiner was reduced to 17km.

Switzerland's Valerio Leccardi claimed his third Hoppet victory in six years while the first woman Maria Graefnings from Sweden added a second Hoppet title to her win from 2012.

Leccardi went to the lead of the main pack early on and pushed the pace and by the 5km mark only 2014 Australian Winter Olympian Callum Watson was able to follow - but by the 12km mark Leccardi had broken away as the solo leader.

Watson from Sydney finished second with fellow Olympian, Phillip Bellingham from Mt Beauty, in third.

On the women's side Slovenian Winter Olympian Barbara Jezersek was the runner-up for the second year in a row, ahead of the first Australian Casey Wright from Launching Place.

Both Bellingham and Wright live and work at the YMCA Howmans Gap Alpine Centre at Falls Creek

during the winter, training at the Ski & Snowboard Australia National Team Training Centre.

Just three seconds separated fourth from seventh in the Hoppet, with Australian Nick Montgomery edging out three-time Australian Winter Olympian Anthony Evans, Andy Pohl from New Zealand and Graefnings.

Graefnings had a mishap midrace, snapping off the tip of her pole, however, she quickly received a replacement pole from four-time Hoppet winner Ben Derrick of Falls Creek, who in turn received a pole from the crowd to ski on for ninth overall.

After Jezersek and Wright on the podium Lauren Fritz from the USA was fourth for the second year in a row, and 2015 Australian Junior XC Skier of the Year Xanthea Dewez from Wangaratta was fifth.

In the 14km Australian Birkebeiner it was neck and neck all the way between Kat Paul from Taggerty and Gabi Hawkins from Vaucluse.

As the 2015 Australian Sprint Champion, Paul may well have held on for a sprint victory anyway, unfortunately this wasn't put to the test as Hawkins fell with 100m to go and third place went to Ellie Phillips.

In the men's race Damon Morton from Marlo made it three wins in

a row after a close race with Liam Burton from Jindabyne, with Seve de Campo from South Yarra third.

In the 7km Joey Hoppet the winners were Darcie Morton from Marlo and Jarrah Forrer from Mt Beauty.

The Kangaroo Hoppet was also the fifth event in the 2015 FIS Australia New Zealand Continental Cup (ANC).

With three races in the series remaining Jezersek is well ahead in the women's standings, 130 points ahead of Wright.

The men's ANC is much closer with Bellingham now just 16 points ahead of Watson.

Full results: www.hoppet.com.au.

Congratulations to event director Allan Marsland and members of the Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club of Mt Beauty for 25 years of running such a successful event.



HOPPET'S TOP TRIO: Australia's Callum Watson, 2nd, Switzerland's Valerio Leccardi, 1st, and Australia's Phillip Bellingham, 3rd.

PHOTO: Mike Top Shots
WINNERS: Switzerland's Valerio Leccardi (left) claimed his third Kangaroo Hoppet title, while Sweden's Maria Graefnings won her second title.

PHOTO: Graeme Bottomley



FINANCIAL HELP: (from left) Jarrah Forrer, Darcie Morton, Damon Morton, Katerina Paul, Casey Wright, Callum Watson, received the AGL Energy in Action \$500 Scholarship from AGL Head of Hydro Simon Kelley. The scholarships are awarded to the first U18 and U14 in the 7km Joey Hoppet, the first U23 in the 21km and the first Australian's through in the main event.

PHOTO: Chris Hocking





Great Positives in Nordic

Paul Kovacs



Last weekend I drove up to Windy Corner, put on my boots and headed out to the Nordic Bowl for a ski race. This time, however, I didn't worry about which skis I was going to race on, what the wax was; I didn't put on a race bib and I didn't even power out the start gate. This time, I was on the other side of the fence and I was part of the volunteer crew instead of a racer.

When one thinks of ski racing, it's hard to think beyond the ski racers, their coaches and tech staff, and perhaps their parents. But ski racing is much more than just the racer. To hold a ski race involves dozens of people, each with an important role—from timers to course marshals, bib collectors to announcers, plus those who set up and take down course markings. Often they are the ones taken for granted or forgotten when the podium celebrations begin. But without them, there would be no race. After my volunteer experience as the announcer at last weekend's Junior Nationals, I certainly appreciate race officials and volunteers more than ever!

Ski racers are tough cookies, but sometimes we (yup, myself included, I fully admit) can be downright pansies when the sun isn't shining and the tracks aren't crisp on race day. But to their incredible credit and with much admiration, the people behind the scenes stand out in wind, hail, and high water to put on a race. At Junior Nationals last weekend, Saturday dawned in a haze and you could barely see, as there was too much fog and rain. The rain was constant all day, followed by a mixture of rain and basically white rain on Sunday. Not fun to race in or stand in. Nevertheless, the race was still on, so after a morning ski I got the mic and began announcing.

The races, although under very trying circumstances for all involved, went off without a hitch. In-between calling names and start bibs, I looked around at who was there helping and it occurred to me that nearly all the volunteers there, bar perhaps a few, had no or very little connection to the race. They didn't have kids in the event. They were simply up there helping as a member of the Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club. When you realize 20 or 30 people were willing to stand in the rain for a few hours

creating a race for 100 kids, it's quite impressive and a wonderful gesture. The nordic skiing community that fosters that kind of love and participation in the sport is a special and rare thing.

Over the two-day event, it reaffirmed to me just how great all the clubs and organizations involved in nordic are. From Melbourne to Albury, each club is important and simply the lifeblood of our sport. I look forward to next year's races and maybe they'll let me back on the mic again.

During the weekend, I also noted the positive relationships between kids and their parents. In so many sports, we often hear of unpleasant issues involving parents and umpires, or parents from opposing teams, or that there are huge on and off field dramas that are ruining kids sports. On the other hand, the nordic parents seemed to be about as chilled and mellow as it gets. Overall everyone was simply happy and enthusiastic about participation and just "having a go." Given the weather, just starting was an accomplishment! For the entire two days I only came across one parent who had a quiet grumble to volunteers about a miscommunication that they had heard. I'd say that's a pretty good success rate! I'll remind you too that this last set of races was the final two races in the selection process for one of the Youth Olympic Games positions, so quite a lot was on the line! To race as a junior for your country overseas is a big deal! Yet common courtesies and camaraderie was shown. However, "mellow" and "chilled" parents does NOT mean disinterested or disengaged. On the contrary, they were fired up and cheering, but the cheers were for everyone and not just their own children.

My final note on just a few of the many wonderful aspects of nordic is the freedom kids can have on the nordic trails. Out at the Nordic Bowl, on the edge of the High Plains, you can head out and ski for days in almost any direction. The beauty of Nordic is parents let that happen to a lesser extent. Kids are often allowed to frolic and adventure by themselves happily for hours through the snow in the bowl or up the sides of the hills while their parents head off skiing, socialize or in some cases join in the snow play with the kids. There is a happy sense of freedom where finding an adventure is encouraged and everyone finds his or her way back eventually unharmed and with perhaps a story of a journey to tell.

Article submitted with thanks courtesy of the publication
This Week in Falls Creek & Mount Beauty



Volunteers at Junior Nationals: From left: Ronice Goebel (TD), Paul Kovacs (Announcer), Brian Keeble (Chief of Start), Roger Blackwell (Starter) and John Bailey (Starter's assistant)



Injured skier winched to safety

By VANESSA BURGESS

AN Albury skier who sustained leg injuries following an accident on Mt Bogong was finally hauled out to safety last Thursday.

The 43-year-old male who was skiing with a group of friends called for help on Tuesday night at around 6pm and search and rescue crews from Falls Creek Ski Patrol, Birkebeiners and local SES personnel from Bright and Tallangatta reached the man in the early hours of Wednesday morning.

Senior Constable Chris Morris from Victoria Police Search and Rescue said rescue crews including local police and SES crews from Wodonga and Seymour as well as local crews and Victoria Police Search and Rescue worked tirelessly to get the man to safety.

"The male sustained a possible broken leg and fractured hip and was located about 650 metres down a gully near Cleave Cole Hut," he said.

"Rescue personnel stayed with him and made sure he was stable and when they were able to they began the process of winching him up the gully.

"It was a very slow process due to the technical nature of setting up all the anchors and ropes on the 30 degree slope.

"They were only able to move him about 50 – 70 metres each time so it took them around six hours to get him to the top of the ridge."

Bright SES deputy controller Graham Gales said weather conditions made it impossible to winch the man to safety.

"A helicopter made a couple of passes over to see if he could access the area, but the cloud cover made it impossible to winch him out," he said.

"When rescue crews got him to the top of the ridge they had to drag him across to Eskdale Point and then belay him down to Michelle Hut 50 metres at a time."

Snr Con Morris said ideal snow

conditions had enticed people to head out for some back country skiing and encouraged anyone thinking of heading out to make sure they were well prepared.

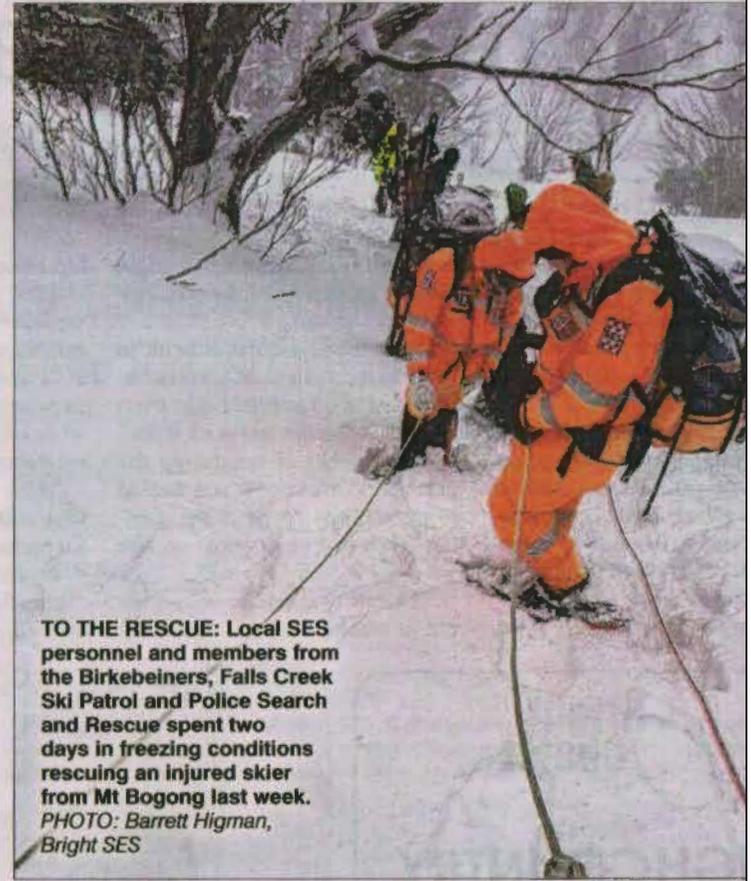
"The snow conditions are fantastic at the moment and I ran into about nine people who were up at Mt Bogong for some back country skiing," he said.

"Back country skiing can be dangerous and bad weather conditions, where visibility is on and off makes it easy for injuries to happen – people need to be prepared for any situation."

Sen Con Morris also praised the efforts of local volunteer search and rescue crews.

"All the volunteer crews but especially Birkebeiners and Falls Creek Ski Patrol were just fantastic," he said.

"They are invaluable in what they do and they're usually the first to respond and get to the person and stabilise them before anyone else gets there."



TO THE RESCUE: Local SES personnel and members from the Birkebeiners, Falls Creek Ski Patrol and Police Search and Rescue spent two days in freezing conditions rescuing an injured skier from Mt Bogong last week. PHOTO: Barrett Higman, Bright SES



ASSSTC

Heath Matheson

Mount Beauty Secondary College Snowsports Co-ordinator

The **Australian Secondary School Snowsports Team Championships** (ASSSTC) is a unique three day team competition in its 48th year that ran from the 5th-7th August in near perfect conditions.

Schools can enter a team of up to sixteen students and from this they try and fill nine places that count for points in each of alpine skiing, snowboarding and cross country skiing. This means being prepared to have a go at your non-preferred disciplines is vital to a successful team and makes the competition a lot of fun! Graeme and Judy Bottomley and Valerio Leccardi set the cross country course and Steve Crowley's team at Falls Creek Ski Lifts provided a fast and fun skier/boarder cross course on Route 66 and a great giant slalom course on Father Fosters.

This year, Snowy Mountains Grammar School took out the Premiership Cup along with the cross country and

alpine skiing trophies. Local school Mount Beauty Secondary College won the Snowboarding and placed third in the Cross Country and Alpine skiing, resulting in second overall.

It was year 12 student Kenton Ford's sixth and final year in the competition where he was a key contributor in all three disciplines including recording the fastest snowboarding GS time with a badly bruised forearm he received after earlier knocking a gate in the skier GS. He has been a great ambassador for the team and leaves big shoes to fill.

The competition is looking for more schools to compete. If you have a school snowsports team that might be interested for 2016 please send Heath Matheson, snowsports coordinator at Mount Beauty Secondary College an e-mail <matheson.heath.a@edumail.vic.gov.au>.



*Start of the Distance event at this years ASSSTC event. Heath giving the instructions with Judy Bottomley offering support. Thanks to Graham Bottomley and Valerio Leccardi for setting the course.
Photo courtesy of Graeme Bottomley*



Mid-Season Dinner at Rio's



From left: Michelle Forrer, Eric Stovall (Finnish coach), Alice Hamilton & Jarrod Quinn



From left: Sue Philby, Russel Mitten, Sandy Coleman, Ronice Goebel & Allan Marsland



From left: John Bailey, Liz Harvey, Ken Harvey, Marg Hayes, Bruce Wharrie, Kerry Lucas & Oldrich Sadilek



From left: Doug Westerman, Brian Keeble, Jim Crebbin & Phil Evans
All photos courtesy Trish Cross



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**Cross Country Skiing
National Team Selection 2015-2016
Provisional Teams as 19 September 2015***

	Men	Women
World Cup Team (FIS Points or WC)	Phillip Bellingham ■	Jessica Yeaton
Continental Cup Team (FIS Points Only)	Callum Watson Paul Kovacs ■	Aimee Watson ■
AUS U23 Team (% or FIS Points)	Nick Montgomery ■ Jackson Bursill Alasdair Tutt ■	Casey Wright ■
AUS Junior Team (Junior Australian Selection Races)	Damon Morton Liam Burton Hamish Roberts Abe Wright ■ Finlay Clarke ■ Seve de Campo Matthew Bull	Kat Paul ■ Lilly Boland Gabi Hawkins Stella Ajani Ella Jackson Darcie Morton Nelle Forster-Berghuis

* Pending acceptance of team invitation and signing of SSA Athlete Agreement.

■ Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club member



Hoppet 25

a poem by Bruce Wharrie



Ode to the great crosscountry ski race, the Kangaroo Hoppet, a challenge that has been called a Sloppet, or a windy Whoppet.

The yearly race is in the later part of August, a ski tour in which you must try your utmost.

The route has long grinding ups and

wild downhill curves,

enough to test your strength, and to outwit your nerves.

It's the race that generates so many experiences and lasting friends, so we are here again justifying the money on the best skis we spends.

An early wander into the Hoppet entry office and extensive gift shop, checking your starting number beginning alphabetically at the top.

Following the trails so carefully and meticulously groomed overnight, ensuring that our big yearly ski event turns out just right.

And now for the big day; the big, big day, time for Australia's best and craziest to come out to play.

The drive up the Falls Creek road of many twists and over three hundred turns, one last space at Windy Corner carpark is NOW the most of your concerns.

Up to the anxious filled Nordic Bowl looking across to the glistening start hill, testing the snow, its glide, your wax and the air with a slight chill.

Lining up in the starting paddocks, just like lambs to the slaughter, the gun goes off, we all charge forward, as fast as possible over the frozen water.

Then down to the squeeze point where there is usually a crash, avoidance at all costs, slow down or make a sideways dash.

Around the corner and over to Sun Valley loop, watching those racing 'afast' in the leading group.

Past the gnarly snow gums, and up that nasty Sun Valley climb, over the dam wall, now flat out speed going for your best time.

Out to the Watchbed and up the "Paralyser" and feel your muscles strain, across the Park, grab a drink and lolly for the next uphill will see much pain.

Heathy Spur next with its exposed views of Mt Nelse, and later the Falls Creek resort below getting ready for big drop downs using skid turns, and a good dose of ploughing the snow.

A quick view of the big Rocky Valley Dam, until whoa! down the side, corner after skidding corner but careful of the ever quickenin' glide.

Across the dam wall, up a slight rise and down but maybe not over the finish line yet, because it's back around Sun Valley, then to Watchbed and Langford's almost to get.

Around and along the Two Pauls' with lesser climbs but your heart is beating faster, you're almost spent, just a few more almost flat kilometres lest a fall or other disaster.

The last uphill and the legs are screaming, the snow seems so much slower, the arms are totally wasted just like a finishing Olympic rower.

The finish line is there, not much further to go, the crowd is loudly yelling for you, just one last push and glide and across the finish line as your name is announced on cue.

Whether we are a super fast racer, international loppeteer, citizen skier or just an cross country ski tourer, that moment of crossing the finishing line, with all those cries of encouragement, definitely makes you a full foot taller.

And nowŠ

We all wish the Hoppet day brings calm weather and blue skies, and look forward to the final finish descent to all the encouraging cries.

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Ode to the big Kangaroo Hoppet, a ski race turning twenty-five, the race that for the rest of the year in preparation will keep us alive.

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Ski de Femme

Alice Hamilton & Ronice Goebel

It was a beautiful sunny day with blue sky, no wind and great snow conditions for the 27th Ski de Femme organized by Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club on Saturday August 8th.

About 80 women of all ages and abilities showed up for the coaching clinics thanks to our local skiing identities and national team members including: Alecia Phillips, Casey Wright, Kat Paul, Esther Bottomley, Belinda Phillips, Ann Bellingham, Anna Trnka, Ellie Phillips, Michelle Forrer, Alice Hamilton, Kate Prest and Finnish coach Eric (Erica) Storvall.

After the coaching session, there was a great atmosphere with cups of tea, chatting and scones and yummy pikelets lovingly prepared by some of our members including Penny Goebel and young helper Emma Prest.

Nearly everyone went in the races as you just had to participate to be eligible for the great spot prizes! There was a choice of 5km, 2.5km and 1km races with the course organized by our reliable race committee including Brian Keeble and Nick Wright. Esther, Casey and Ellie battled it out in the 5km race while many other women enjoyed the opportunity to just participated in a low-key race.

The feedback from skiers has been positive as usual, with many women thrilled to receive a few tips in a friendly atmosphere.

The Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club really appreciates the generosity and willingness of local businesses to support this annual event on the winter calendar by providing great spot prizes. Thanks to:

- Falls Creek Resort Management
- YMCA Howmans Gap/Windy Corner Nordic Centre
- ALTA (JC Legras)
- Casey Wright (coaching session)
- Rocky Valley Ski Centre
- The Organic Touch
- The Beauty of Yoga
- Sweetwater Brewery
- Sassy Road
- Foodworks, Mount Beauty
- Mount Beauty Bakery
- SACUL sportswear
- The Hoppet Race Committee
- Snow Trek & Travel, Wodonga



From left above: Belinda Phillips and friends and right, Eric trying to hide.



Pre-season Junior Rogaine

Michelle Forrer & Ronice Goebel

With the Junior Development Camp being cancelled due to lack of snow, a rogaining event in the Big Hill mountain park was planned in conjunction with the Victorian cross country squad. The Tuesday afternoon saw about 60 juniors in total searching for 44 checkpoints throughout the park with most teams covering 10-15 km.

Junior Birkie team results

- Mia, Lou Lou, Jess and Kate - 50 points
- Axel and Jules – 120 points
- Ayla, Arana, Emma and Jamie – 170 points
- Amy, Zoe, Josh, Lucas, Hannah, Dean and Paul – 280 points
- Josh, Sebi, Isaac and Cath – 400 points
- Dylan, Ash and Liam 520 points

Thanks to Tony and Brian Keeble for their help with placing out the checkpoints.



From left: Isaac Richardson, Harry Silvester, Josh Tanzen, and Cath Richardson. Photo courtesy of Ewen Silvester

Early Season Instruction Clinic with Eric



From left: Nick Wright and far right in red jacket Eric. Others in the clinic were: Megan Benne, Cath Richardson, Tony Crapper, Andrew Prest, Fiona Spring, Jeanette McLaren and Robyn
Photo courtesy of Kate Prest