

RNST Coaches' postseason meeting minutes

Wednesday, April 3, 2019

Attendees: Joe G, Barry K, David H, John R, Bob M, Andy W, Mike T, Michael O, Henry W, Sarah J, Leah K, Kristen S, Don P, Peter w, Joan R, Joey K, Nick J, Paul E

Agenda/Minutes:

1. Mid-Season All-Team Away Ski Camp (our alternative to Maplelag this upcoming season) Update from John R.

- Next years ski camp conflicts with school finals needing to change typical ski camp date.
- Maplelag did not have capacity for the RNST on other dates.
- Assessed Lakewood and Heartwood as alternates.
- A decision was made to hold the ski camp at Heartwood, Jan 10, 11 & 12.
- RNST Winter Ski Camp
January 10 - 12, 2020
Heartwood Conference Center
near Trego, WI
heartwoodconferencecenter.com

2. Captains Voting Results (John R.).

- Isabel Field, Maddy Perry
- Adam McPhail, Jacob Ratelle
 - Action: Leah and Don will notify the candidates on results.

The next 6 topics (plus their subtopics are from David)

General: Coach input on:

3. What worked well this past season and what are areas that could be improved:

- Skier groupings (A-E,X, 1,2,3)
- Coach assignments to groups
- Coaching plans: for on-snow, for indoor
- Use of Mailchimp for coach updates
- How we used the Dome: stations, captains leading sections, yoga
 - Action: Don, Leah or Andy will provide captains guidance/list on warm up exercises.
- Races: Away (Winona Dec, Maplelag, Winona Jan); Home (Invitational, Essex tt)
- Practice locations
- Registration and First Year Equipment Orientation
- End of Season Banquet
- Other:

4. Do we need to increase awareness of RNST to keep membership at or above current levels?: More information sessions at Rochester and nearby schools (JM boys and girls would be a prime candidate)?

- HS hold information nights that we may be able to take part in. or communicate with the cross country teams in the fall. Also recommend reaching out the school athletic director. Based on team participation, focus should be on JM.
 - Action: Open lead

5. Should we do anything more to ensure skiers in the elementary program set their sights on RNST?

- Would be beneficial as a feed for the program. Decision Recommend to wait until man-made snow making is available.

6. Do we have the right mix between learning to ski, having fun, and training to race?

- Yes

7. Are coaches interested in continuing Coach-the-Coaches sessions: dryland and/or on-snow?

- Yes
- Decision Recommend to send another smaller group (3 to 4) of coach's to the CXC camp.

8. Are there any new elements you think we should add to our program?

- No discussion.

9. Captains' Feedback (what went well and suggested improvements from our '18-'19 captains). Don and Leah.

- No negative feedback. **Action:** See summary (#20) below.

10. A Citizens' Race Combined With a RNST TT (Mike T).

- Great idea! Need to find a time that does not conflict with other events. Skinny skis has a good list. Suggest a \$10 entry fee. **Action:** Mike T. to lead initiative.

I sent a feeler to a select set of coaches to see if a Citizen FUN-raiser race is something we'd consider for next winter season.

It could be a pre-Birkie or post-Birkie "no-Frills" race, and probably just a 5K course.

Based on Feedback I think a Saturday mixed RNST TimeTrial *plus* and Open Citizen race at Essex would work best. We have established courses from past years time trials, it doesn't inconvenience the public, and can use the little red barn for registrations (similar to the annual 7K Essex run that John Resman does.)

Combining it with an RNST Time Trial reduces extra setup and grooming, though there will be course degradation and timing issues with that.

If we publish it on the RASC site and Rochester Nordic Ski Trails FB page, plus some fliers at each park, I think we could get a bunch of skiers (and entry \$\$).

I *think* we'd have all-comers, from serious racers to locals just wanting a fun winter outing. (RNST kids would ski free and use it as an optional lettering race.)

We *could* GO BIG and get the City and Parks Department involved and use it as a fundraiser for the new Gamehaven park. Maybe we start small in 2019/20 and if successful, go BIG.

I am willing to head up the planning, volunteers, contacting City, etc.

11. Special Needs Focus/Idea (Bob M)

A coaches email mentioned "kids with autistic tendencies". Maybe as coaches we need to figure out sooner rather than later that we're dealing with someone like that. I think it was back in 2013 that I spent a lot of time with a kid and got almost nowhere. I had Michael and Jim Bennett work with him as well and they didn't do much better. Since then, I see that someone has taught Meta how to skate ski and he is actually getting a letter. Is there anything we can do to make some of these situations be better experiences for both the kids and the coaches. Maybe with Kristen as an intermediary to the parents (not meaning to make more work for Kirsten).

- Once able to identify a special need skier, have identified coaches better fit/trained to assist.

12. A Couple Questions to Ponder (Bob M)

Are there any provisions in Rochester for kids younger than 7th grade to get started with skate technique? I talked to a woman in a class I'm in at the DAHLC and she would like to get her twin boys started on skating. They are currently in 4th grade. The whole family does classic. She did the Kortolopet for the first time this year and did pretty well (moved up a few waves).

I know of someone who likely wants (still has to check with his wife) to get rid of a NordicTrak ski machine. Don't know yet if it's a giveaway or whether he wants something for it. Is anyone interested?

- Outside of RNST program scope. For now, no further discussion/action.

13. An email to Joan regarding Athletes Safe Sport Training from US Ski and Snowboard with thoughts/history from David:

We had a brief discussion of Safesport at the beginning of season coaches meeting - with the question of whether we want to implement that training for all coaches and all skiers in the program. I think the feedback last fall was neutral...we could revisit the topic at the EOS meeting this week.

- Appears it should not impact skiers. Should we require coaches to complete? **Action:** David to look into if/what is required.

14. A Groomers' Meeting hosted by Andy (and at Andy's).

I (Andy) would like to get all the groomers together for a post season meeting to discuss grooming, equipment and communication. I'm thinking later this spring to gather at our farm for some adult beverages and a hike around the property.

- **Action:** Andy to set time / date

15. I (Barry) had requests from several parents to do another Waxing Demo night next season. We have not done one lately, but I will gladly recruit a couple coaches (or Henry W. will talk a professional waxer into coming down) for an evening demo.

- Suggest having the session for RASC vs focus on RNST. **Action:** Barry to follow up.

16. FYI - In closing, at our EOS Skier Banquet, our captains collected \$165 as a Thank You to all coaches (which we donated to the RNST treasury for team development).

17. Paul Ehling needs to step down from his current role as RNST liaison to RPS (Roch Public Schools). We are looking for someone to take his place (in exchange of perhaps, a less active coaching role for the team).

- Five primary responsibilities that do not require being a teacher or employer of Rochester school system. Paul said he would help mentor and transfer responsibilities. **Action:** A replacement for Paul is being looked into.

18. SNS Binding system will become obsolete in the next 2-3 years with implications for RNST fleet of skis (Michael).

- Pursue working with suppliers regarding some form of assistance on the transition. **Action:** Michael & Rob.

19. Any other topics? If Not, meeting adjourned. Thanks all and have a nice off-season. See you next fall.

- Sarah. The women's ski meets were a success! Hoping to do more next year.

20. Captains Summary (presented by Don)

RNST 2018/19 Captains Summary (Arianna Werts, Ingrid Wilder, Erik Jensen. Alex Gay)

Practice Content

- Enjoyed the division of groups as it allowed everyone to get effective practices!
- Thought that there was a good mixture of practice types (intervals, hills, skills, games, and freeskiing) that allowed for practice to help make everyone better skiers while still having fun!

- Everyone enjoyed free skiing days and when we had them they seemed productive and most people used them in the correct way
- Had lots of fun at the olympics and heard nothing but praise about it from other skiers! Practice length
- Thought practice lengths were good
- Liked how we extended outdoor practices as daylight allowed as it offered more time to ski! Division at practices
- Liked the division (groups 1,2,3, and beginner) as it allowed for efficient and fun practices! ● Also liked how in the dome we were separated by grade as it gave us the opportunity to connect with people outside of our ski group!

Captains Practices

- Captains practices went well and we had a good sized group of kids show up!
- We liked including a slight bit of running in the first half of practice and than finishing with a game!
- Good opportunity to meet kids and do some team bonding before the season began
- Practices were a good length being around an hour (4-5)

Maplelag

- Maplelag was an amazing and great time as always!
- Heard lots of good things from other skiers about how great of a time it was
- Warmer weather was nice and it allowed skiing to be slightly more comfortable and enjoyable than in past years
- The Aly Welch group (top 8 females) on the last day was super inspiring and fun and I've heard good things from all the girls in the group about what a fun time it was
- We felt that ski sessions were good, other than the occasional complaining about switching groups and all the small issues that come with having that many skiers with such a variety of experience
- The sprint relays and time trial were fun and it was encouraging to cheer on and watch teammates in both races!

Communication

- Thought the emails as well as remind were great and allowed the information to get to skiers timely
- Remind was great for quick messages and a good way to get people to see in a short amount of time

Sweatshirts

- Sweatshirts went well and we got a lot of compliments on the design this year!
- Had to create a second order due to demand and people wanting more after the first order was complete
- As always collecting money from people can be difficult as people forget and don't bring it back in a timely matter, but I have no solution to make this better as it always happens with orders

Photography

- We would also like to thank the wonderful parents and volunteers that took photos throughout the season and at meets! We really appreciated it and the pictures were wonderful!

Coaches

- We love the coaches!
- Thought you were fantastic and thank you for all the hardwork and dedication you put into this team!