

BC Para-Nordic Update



Para-nordic skiing in British Columbia

There is an active community of para-nordic skiers in BC and we would like to share news of our latest activities with CCBC members.

It is our hope to inform and interest members of the CCBC and ultimately lead to the recruitment of more para-nordic skiers, coaches and volunteers and possibly future creation of more para-nordic programs within BC's clubs!

TRIP REPORT:

CCC Para-Nordic Development Camp

Four athletes and four coaches from BC attended Cross Country Canada's Para-Nordic Development Camp in Canmore Nov. 23rd to 26th. This was the first year CCC hosted one all-encompassing camp for athletes from across the country — last year a Western and an Eastern camp were held. It is believed to be one of the largest gatherings of para-nordic skiers in Canada ever, with over 20 athletes and nearly as many coaches and support staff in attendance. Emily Suchy (Revelstoke Nordic Ski Club) participated in last year's Western event and this year was joined by Andy Lin (Nordic Racers), Kevin Priebe (Nordic Racers) and Sarah Mehain



(Sovereign Lake Nordic Club). Also in attendance were coaches Tony Chin, Mary Brennan, Andrea Bundon (all Nordic Racers) and Debbie Koerber (Revelstoke Nordic Ski Club).

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During the camp, the athletes had the opportunity to work with National Para-Nordic Team coach Robin McKeever and Paralympic champion, Colette Bourgonje. Colette was particularly helpful to the sit-skiers — sharing with them her countless tips and tricks for navigating race courses. Robin worked with each athlete to find techniques that would play to their strengths. Other CCC athletes and coaches were on hand for a variety of activities such as providing athletes with a chance to try biathlon including the electronic Eko rifles that emit an audible sound for blind biathletes!

For the coaches, the camp was an opportunity to meet with others working with para-nordic athletes and share ideas and resources. Tony Chin facilitated the new NCCP module for Coaching Athletes with a Disability and 10 coaches took the course. A coaches' round table discussion topped off the the camp.

The camp ended on Sunday with a short time trial for all participants. For Kevin and Sarah, this was their first ski 'race' but they impressed the coaches with their efforts. Emily and Andy drew on their



experiences at last winter's BC Winter Games and fearlessly attacked the challenging Canmore course.

It was a great preview of season to come! A big thanks to Tony Chin for his efforts in organizing the camp, to CCC for hosting and to CCBC for financially supporting the delegates. More photos are available on CCC's Para-nordic skiing Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Canadian-Para-Nordic-Skiing/Le-ski-paranordique-canadien/172523322787571>)

ATHLETE PROFILE:

Andy Lin

Andy Lin is a newcomer to racing but this 16 year-old is looking to make up for lost time. A student at Burnaby South Secondary School and the British Columbia School for the Deaf, Andy was recruited to skiing by Nordic Racers Coach, Tony Chin, and was one of four para-nordic athletes who competed last winter at the BC Winter Games. More familiar with



the badminton court than the ski trails, Andy admits the experience was a little daunting. "I was not well prepared for the anxiousness that came with racing," he explained but he enjoyed the experience, meet some great people and left the Games eager for more.

This year Andy kicked off the season by attending Cross Country Canada's Para-Nordic Development Camp in Canmore, Alberta. It was just a few short days but he believes the experience he gained there will prove invaluable to his development. "It was wonderful to meet all the pros and my skating technique especially improved — thanks to Robin." That would be Para-Nordic National Team coach, Robin McKeever. Robin spent considerable time with Andy helping him find the skating technique best suited to him given that he skis without poles due to his impairment. All of the coaches at the camp were impressed with the way Andy tackled the big climbs that make Canmore's race course famous.

- 2 Next up for Andy is the BC Cup #2 at Telemark. Andy's goals for the season are to improve his glide and his endurance.

PN Event Calendar

★ **Jan. 5, Feb. 9 and Mar. 10: Skiing is Believing Clinics**

Whistler Olympic Park

The Nordic Racers Ski Club will be hosting three clinics this winter for people with disabilities and their friends and family. These clinics are meant to provide individuals with a positive introduction to cross country skiing. More information available by emailing adaptive@nordicracers.ca or at http://www.nordicracers.ca/skiing_is_believing_intro.html

★ **Jan. 10-21: IPC Nordic World Cup**

Telemark Resort, Cable, WI

The Canadian Para-Nordic National Team as well as a squad of para-nordic development athletes will be heading to Cable, Wisconsin to compete in the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) Nordic World Cup. Andrea Bundon (Nordic Racer Ski Club) will be attending as a guide for Ontario skier and 2010 Paralympian, Margarita Gorbounova. Find out more about the event and follow results at <http://www.nordicworldcup.us/index.html>

★ **Jan. 12-13: Teck BC Cup #2**

Kelowna, BC

Several para-nordic athletes from across the province will be competing at the Teck BC Cup #2 hosted by the Telemark Racers in Kelowna.

★ **Feb. 20-22 : Para-Nordic Development Camp**

Whistler Olympic Park

A camp for para-nordic athletes from BC will be held at Whistler Olympic Park from February 20th to 22nd (with an opportunity to participate in Sigge's P'ayakentsut Loppet on February 23rd). Details TBD. For more information contact Tony Chin a v2tony@gmail.com.

To find out more about para-nordic skiing in BC and how you can get involved as an athlete, a coach or a volunteer, please contact Courtney at adaptive@nordicracers.ca and she will direct your inquiry.

All photos courtesy of Cross Country Canada.