

Early Season Tracksetting Protocol

This protocol guides tracksetting in the early season, which is the time from first snowfall until there is adequate snow depth for the PistenBully.

Tracksetting can begin anytime there after November 11th, when there is an accumulation of 10 cm or so.

The trails are divided into three sets of priority trails for the early season (see maps attached).

- Early Season: Broadway, Wetzin'Kwa, Logging Roads, Loop around stadium and biathlon, Hound Heaven, Pooch Paradise
- Mid Season; Wild Dog, Pine Creek 10k, Down the Mountain;
- Late Season: the rest.....

These priorities are based on how smooth and dry the trail surface is; the highest priorities are likely to be dry at the lowest snow depths and therefore should be set first. Trails that are not designated as early season have limitations to early season tracksetting; they are either too steep, have south exposures, have wet areas that require freezing, or are very rough and need deep snow before being set.

Due to limited volunteer time available, the focus of early season tracksetting will only be on the designated early and mid season trails. Once all of those trails are set, if there is adequate time, then trail preparation could focus on trackpacking or rolling other trails to establish a base. Due to wet areas, do not try to set Pine Creek 5km until there is a deep snow pack or a hard cold snap (creeks with open water that will be hard on equipment).

Tracksetting Sequence:

For all trails, tracksetting should proceed in the following order:

- Trackpack; If you are not sure of whether the trail is frozen, start with trackpacking.
 - Ensure that there is no open water; if there is open water “freeze in” branches, or use plywood to cover the water and shovel a small amount of snow to cover. There is a supply of scrap plywood and boards under the machine shed.
 - Any deep ruts should have snow shovelled so they do not interfere with subsequent tracksetting
 - If the trackpacking shows the trail is in good condition, proceed to rolling:
- Roll the full width of the trail. This allows frost to penetrate the ground and freezes in a firm base. Rolling usually requires 3 passes. Re-roll the trail once there is new snow and until there is a firm surface. Additional passes with the machine and roller make the base much firmer so don't be afraid to roll several times.
- Avoid passing the roller through open water; once ice accumulates on the roller it becomes very heavy and the ice is really hard to get off. The trail repairs have “dried out” most of the early season trails so it should be possible to avoid getting the roller wet. If there is a wet spot warn other operators and take action to freeze the section in.

- Once there is a firm base, that covers all ruts and high dirt, and a little fresh snow arrives (say 3 to 5 cm), its ready to use the G2 or Ginsu.
 - Do not try to set a classic track until there is a deep and firm enough base that the track pad will not hit the dirt. Set only a skating trail
 - Similar to the roller, 3 passes is usually needed. Multiple passes help improve the quality of the base.
 - Reset the trail even if there is only a trace of snow; it helps firm up the base.
 - Once there is a firm base, and some fresh snow, set a classic track
- Continue to set the trail at every snowfall until there a deep and firm enough base to bring out the Pisten Bully. The Nordic Centre Manager and head track setter will decide when trails are ready for the Pisten Bully and will communicate that to the Ginsu groomers. Some trails will be ready for the PB before others.
 - If the early season has resulted in a “hump” in the middle of the trail, you can carefully cut that down with the teeth but be sure not to hit rocks

Desired results; the goals here are to get a really firm base, that is dry and free from rocks or dirt. Leave lots of feedback to other track setters so they know what results you achieved and if any special effort is needed. Generally, send an e-mail to the early season groomers indicating what was done, how equipment worked, what the condition of the trail is, and recommendations for next grooming

When to ski; Early season trails are ready for skiing when there is little or no sign of dirt. Do not spread the word about grooming until approved by Executive; typically we will have “rock skiing” for a week or more, and used by ADP for training, before the trails are officially open. The Head track setter or Trail coordinator will keep in touch with coaches regarding what skiing is available.