

NORDIC SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2023 BVCCSC AGM

OVERVIEW

The Nordic Skills Development Program is a community sports organization that provides opportunities for all members of the Bulkley Valley Cross Country Ski Club and our communities to develop their skills in Nordic Skiing and Biathlon. In 2022-2023, program fees, fundraisers, and grants from Gaming BC, BVCF, CCBC, ViaSport, BVCU and NWSDA allowed us to renew our contract with our Head Coach, Andrew Brisbin. In addition, we rehired a program coordinator, Denise Kelly, to contribute expertise and facilitate communications and program organization. The NSDP continues to rely heavily on volunteers who provide coaching, program oversight, race support, and share in the many tasks of building and maintaining our ski facilities in order to keep the programs affordable.

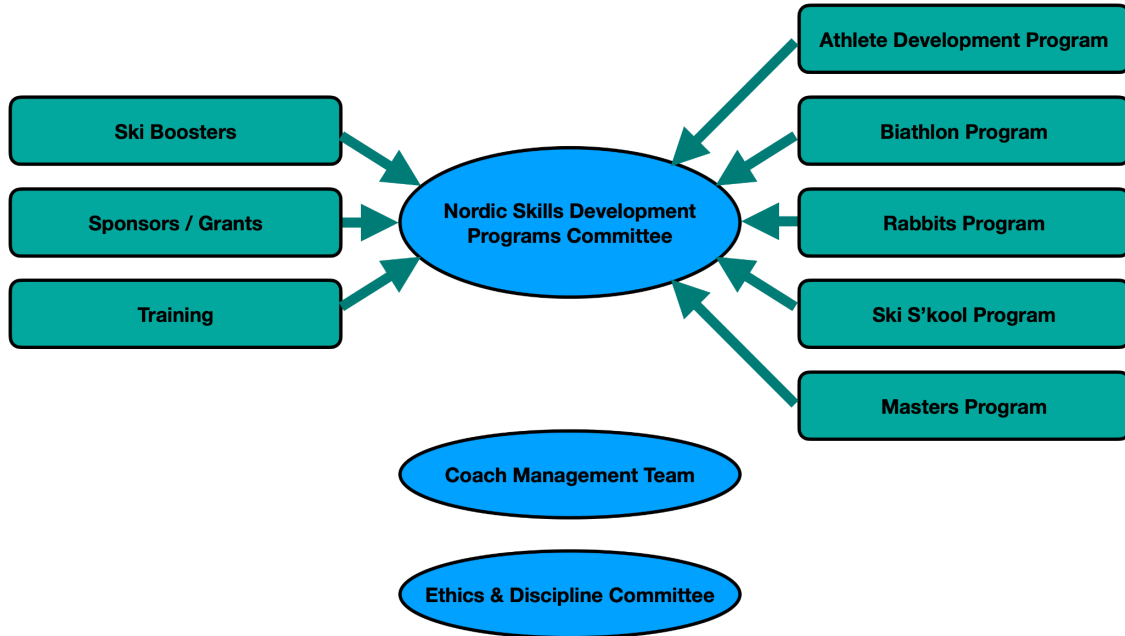
Last year, our skills development programs included:

- Nordic Skiing
 - Skills Development Programs
 - Bunnies (ages 4-5)
 - Rabbits (ages 6-10)
 - Athlete Development Programs
 - Track Attack 1 (7-10)
 - Track Attack 2 (10-11)
 - U14 (ages 12-13)
 - U16 (ages 14-15)
 - U18 (ages 16-17)
 - Ski S'Kool Program (ages 5-13)
 - Master's Performance Program
 - Master's Drop In
- Biathlon
 - Youth Biathlon - Recreational
 - Masters Biathlon - Experienced
 - Masters Biathlon - Coached



PROGRAM COORDINATION

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

PROGRAM	LEAD
Nordic Skills Development Program	Sarah Sacharoff, Stephen Wickham
NSDP Coordinator	Denise Kelly
Athlete Development Program	Andrew Brisbin, Patrick Williston, Helene Fleury, Ryan Chapman, Richard Alton
Masters Performance Program	Andrew Brisbin
Biathlon Program	Lea-Marie Bowes-Lyon
Rabbit Program	Sue Pearce
Ski S'Kool	Denise Kelly
Masters Drop In	Cobey Oliemans

PROGRAM SUPPORT

FUNCTION	LEAD	ROLE
Ski Boosters	Shannon Pearce, Diana Cullen	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide support and services for families on behalf of the NSDP, including Biathlon• Coordinate NSDP fundraising activities
Coach Training	Denise Kelly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support coach training for all NSDP Programs
Sponsorships/ Grants	Stephen Wickham Denise Kelly Sarah Sacharoff Jen Chapman Cobie Oliemans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coordinate program grants for the NSDP, including Gaming Grant and Viasport, CCBC Grants, NWSDA, Nordiq Canada, BVCU
Wax Team	Andrew Brisbin, Sandy MacLean, Patrick Williston, Josh Wimbush, Chris Werrell, etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Led by Andrew Brisbin and Sandy MacLean. Coordinate club wax and equipment purchases and wax support for race events

OTHER COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE	PURPOSE	REPRESENTATION
Coach Management Committee	Oversee Head Coach contract, hiring and performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Sarah Sacharoff● Ryan Chapman● Patrick Williston● Chris Werrell
Ethics and Discipline Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Provide code of conduct for NSDP coaches and athletes.● Resolve disputes using BVCCSC Dispute Resolution Policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Sarah Sacharoff● Jen Chapman● Steve Wickham● Andrew Brisbin
NSDP 5 year Visioning Committee	Met a number of times in the past year to reassess the financial needs of the program in the next 5 years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Sarah Sacharoff● Ryan Chapman● Steve Wickham

HIGHLIGHTS - 2023

Our Head Coach, Andrew Brisbin led the club until the end of February 2023 at which time he left the club to rejoin the Saskatchewan coaching team. Andrew's contract was monitored by the Coach Management Team (Sarah Sacharoff, Ryan Chapman and Patrick Williston).

Andrew's responsibilities include:

- Oversight of the BV Nordics Athlete program from U10 to U18 in alignment with Nordiq Canada's Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model.
- Facilitation of BV Nordics Masters Performance Program
- Development of annual and monthly training plans for ADP athletes
- Facilitate athlete participation in local through national races.
- Mentoring of volunteer coaches through the provision of coaching clinics and periodic involvement in volunteer lead practices.
- Provide leadership, wax determination, and direction to volunteer coaches.
- Participate in Local and Provincial Training Camps.

In the late spring of 2023, the CMT was able to secure Andrea Stapff as our new head coach for the 2023-2024 season, starting mid August 2023. Andrea comes to us from Strathcona Nordic Club with a wealth of experience and enthusiasm.

Denise Kelly was rehired as NSDP Coordinator for 2022-23. Denise coordinated coach and officials training clinics, grant writing and was instrumental in



coordinating the Ski S'kool Program. In addition, Denise helped coordinate registration, fundraising and managed our NSDP website information. Denise has been rehired for 2023-2024.

Some of the season highlights include:

- Andrew Brisbin organized a BV Nordic Summer Camp in August of 2022.
- Expanded summer training programs available for TA1-U18 athletes in Summer 2022.
- Andrew Brisbin and Steve Wickham organized a very successful regional Snow Camp held in December 2022.
- Andrew Brisbin coached the Masters Performance program, which ran at capacity, meeting twice a week to practice during the winter season.
- Team dinners and team events while at races. The athletes loved these. Time Trial Tuesdays. This year, Andrew created regular racing opportunities on Tuesday nights with the goal of normalizing racing for athletes and giving them more race experience. Masters Performance athletes were often invited to attend these evenings as well
- Biathlon Beginner Masters coached sessions with a group of very keen participants
- BC Winter Games - 6 of our athletes attended, Zone 7 led by BV Nordic coach Helene Fleury. Jesse Wimbush wins a gold medal!
- Whistler and Revelstoke BC Cups - 20+ BV Nordic athletes at each. Strong wax team support with some challenging conditions.
- Kelowna BC Champs - 30-40 BV Nordic athletes. We were without a head coach at this race. With strong leadership from parent-coaches Ryan Chapman, Chris Werrell and Sandy Maclean as well as all of the BV Nordic coaches and parents that were in attendance managed to support the racers very successfully.
- Nationals - 2 BV Nordic athletes attended, Ava Wimbush and Finlay Gagnon
- Prince George Biathlon BC Cup - Attended by 6 masters, 3 of which competed in their first biathlon race
- Canadian Biathlon Championships - 2 masters athletes attended, Callie Lancaster and Lea-Marie Bowes-Lyon winning medals in all 4 of their races
- Coaching Development continued with NCCP courses. 3 coaches have completed the Train to Train Dryland and 3 more are certified at the Community Coaching Level. We canceled the Learn to Train On Snow, as we didn't have enough participants.

The club has one athlete on the BC Nordic Ski Team, one athlete on the BC Development Squad and one athlete on the BC Talent Squad. Competitive adult biathletes include Callie Lancaster, Bryan Swansburg and Léa-Marie Bowes-Lyon.

The 2023 Rabbits program was overall another successful year; we had 86 kids total; 51 bunnies (ages not quite 4 to 7) and 35 rabbits (ages 7 to 10). Notable items from the season:

- No sessions were canceled due to weather



- We added a bunnies/rabbits category to the Chris Dahlie open. 12 participated in the “official” race, and 28 participated in the less formal “bunny shuffle”. The goals had been to make these kiddos feel a part of the fun and show their parents and families what a race day feels like. All in all it felt like a success. Thank you to the race organizers for integrating our little skiers into the fold. I hope to do it again this year.
- Other special events included:
 - Night ski
 - Chinese New Years theme
 - Games Day
 - Bunny Shuffle at Chris Dahlie open
 - Season-end finale Bunny Parade at the Wetzin’kwa Loppet
- Coaches and volunteers make the program a success. Sue Pearce, the coordinator, continues to twist arms to find enough of both. She tries her best to make coaching a (relatively) simple and rewarding experience, and will continue to do so.
- This year felt a bit harder than years previous to get parents to commit to the (very few) volunteer roles; it’s something that will likely continue to be an issue, and Sue will continue working to recruit.
- This will be Sue's final season as Coordinator. She is actively seeking a “co-coordinator” for this season, someone to shadow into the role who can take over next year. Any help from the club in recruiting something would be greatly appreciated.
- 2024 Goals:
 - More kids! Can we get 90 this year?!
 - Enough coaches! (ideally coach:kid ratio of 1:7, and a couple “spares” to cover absentee coaches) For 90 kids this means 13-15 coaches.
 - Participation in local races
 - More cross-over/encounters with the older age groups*
 - *Time change to 1100 start; this will help to enable this
 - Find someone to take over as coordinator
 - Endless smiles and high fives.
- The bunnies and rabbits program is so fun, and is such an energizing program and Sue is honored to be a part of it.

The biathlon program grew this year with the addition of 4 youth recreational athletes. The masters program continued to be popular with 6 athletes returning and 3 new athletes joining the program. Sessions began on snow in early December and ran all winter on Saturday mornings until the end of March. The program and coaching was led by Lea-Marie Bowes-Lyon with support from Bryan Swansburg and Callie Lancaster. A 2-day cadet biathlon competition was held for the first time at the nordic centre in mid-January. This competition was organized and run by cadets following negotiations with the club and provided revenue to the club.

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Skill Development	2021	2022	2023
Bunnies (4 - 5 years)	17	39	51
Rabbits (6 - 10 years)	17	34	35
TOTAL Skill Development	34	73	86
Ski S'kool			
Schools	6	7	10
Student Visits	1451	1273	1302
Athlete Development Summer			
Track Attack(U10)/U12		21	8
U14		11	9
U16/U18		11	14
TOTAL Summer		43	31
Athlete Development Fall/ Winter			
Track Attack(U10)/U12	26	33	33
U14	13	14	9
U16	11	5	16
U18	3	7	4
Biathlon - Bantams (10 - 11)	0	0	0
Biathlon - Midgets (12 - 13)	0	0	0
Biathlon - Juvenile (14 - 15)	0	0	0
Biathlon - Junior (16 - 19)	0	0	0
Youth Biathlon	0	0	4
TOTAL Athlete Development	53	59	66



Masters			
Biathlon - Masters - Experienced	3	3	3
Biathlon - Masters - Coached		7	6
Masters Performance		12	15
TOTAL Masters Athletes	3	22	24
TOTAL Masters Performance Waitlist		n/a	14



Finances

A significant portion of the funding for a paid club coach comes from the BC Gaming Grant, for which we are very thankful. For 2022-2023, Steve Wickham was able to increase the size of our annual gaming grant from \$22,500 to \$29,500. In addition, BV Nordic NSDP has enjoyed continued support through two 3 year grants to help with the transition to a full time full year head coach, the CCBC Head Coach Grant and the National Winter Sports Development Association (NWSDA) Grant. This year was year two of these grants.

BV Nordic NSDP was awarded a three year grant towards our Ski S'kool Program from the Bulkley Valley Community Foundation (BVCF) beginning in 2021-22. This grant allowed us to decrease the cost to participate in the program and also helped cover some of the expenses of running the program.

NSDP also raised funds through the pursuit of other grants and Ski Booster fundraising activities. The Ski Boosters raised funds through ticket booth, extra lodge cleaning, and event catering. Other forms of income were an account at the local bottle depot that allowed bottle donations to be made to the program and an optional NSDP donation field in the zone 4 registration.

We were able to make some significant purchases this year of some new Ski S'kool skis, new test skis for the wax team and new loaner rifles for Biathlon.



Volunteers

It is safe to say, our program does not exist without the generous commitment from our volunteers.

A big thank-you to our ADP and Rabbits coaches and Ski Boosters for this year, without whom there would be no ski program.

Thank-you to Patrick Williston, Josh Wimbush, Helene Fleury, Stephen Wickham and Sandy MacLean (U16/U18); Adrienne Rosenberger, Matt Beedle and Shannon Pearce (U14); Ryan Chapman, Jodi Preto, Andy Rosenberger, Chris Werrell, Richard Alton, Dustin Hersee and Erin Williams (Track Attack).

Thank you to our Rabbits coaches led by Sue Pearce - Benjamin Laurie, E. Havard, Niels Erasmus, Erin Williams, Gabe Newman, Jordy Guillon, Kara Przewczek, Kristen Brewer, Lauren Boddy, Malcolm Johnson, Mark Wong, Roger McMillan, Ryan Chapman, Tabby Tanda, Vaughn Ellis, Arlynn Kooger

Shannon Pearce, Diana Cullen, Amy Klepetar, Georgie Watts, Arlynn Kooger, Jen Chapman and Titia Donker made significant organizational contributions towards Ski Boosters.

Many thanks to Léa-Marie Bowes-Lyon, Bryan Swansburg and Callie Lancaster for coaching the Masters biathlon program.

And a big thank you to the many other parent volunteers that helped out in numerous ways throughout the year.

Looking Forward - 2023

We welcome back volunteers leading our different ski programs. Rabbits will be led by Sue Pearce. Diana Cullen will be leading Ski Boosters. Denise Kelly will coordinate the Ski S'kool program and will be our program coordinator. Lead volunteer coach roles will be filled by Helene Fleury, Matt Beedle, Ryan Chapman and Dustin Hersee.

The biathlon program is working to build renewed interest in the sport amongst youth. The youth program will be tailored based on registrations. The masters biathlon program will welcome the masters from last year's coached program into regular practices and new masters will be able to join as space permits.

Andrea Stapff has been hired as our head coach, overseeing the ADP and Masters Programs.

Cross Country BC (CCBC) has granted us one more year of the Head Coach Grant,



\$8,000 in 2023.

The National Winter Sports Development Association (NWSDA), granted NSDP \$10,000 for three years towards our head coach wages. We still have 1 year left of that award. They merited our club based on our proven ability to develop competitive skiers and coaches based on long term development planning.

With two paid employees under NSDP's wings, we are doing financial planning out 5 years into the future. Our aim is to provide stability for our program by finding a sustainable balance of fees, grants and fundraising while closely managing our expenses. We are very fortunate to have a sizeable reserve which has allowed us more confidence through this transition.

Starting in 2022-23 our Fall/Winter Fees included race waxing for all of ADP and Masters Performance athletes. We plan to make small incremental increases in our athlete fees yearly, in order to fund our expenses. Our fees are still low in comparison with other BC clubs that have full time head coaches.

