

Snow News IS Good News

Newsletter of the Nooksack Nordic Ski Club

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JANUARY 2023



Cougar Loop, early December

Club Meeting – Meet with NNSC on Zoom!

When – Tuesday January 10th

Check your email or the NNSC website for details and an invitation.
<http://www.nooksacknordicskiclub.org/meetings/>

Meeting starts at 7:00 PM.

Who - Everyone is welcome!

Visit Our Website for the Latest Information: www.nooksacknordicskiclub.org

MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Tuesday, January 10, 2023: 7:00 PM

Two-part meeting – join a panel of club members to discuss:

1) Status of Salmon Ridge

Sno-park Trails. Hear an update on the conditions of our local sno-park trails. What will you find when you drive out the Mt. Baker Highway? Grooming? Snow conditions? We'll also do a quick tour of the website, reminding you where to find current information – maps and conditions.

2) Time for a new pair of

skis? What should you be considering? A discussion of the different types of cross-country skis, where you can shop for them, why you might want one type over another and what to look for as you shop. After the presentation, there will be an opportunity to ask questions, chat, and to find out a bit more about our club. Everyone is welcome!

The meeting is by Zoom - we'll open Zoom at 6:45 to give you a chance to get connected, check your settings, and maybe chat a little before 7:00.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88337119438?pwd=MmluajZHSFE3VnEvakJkYy9wUEVCdz09>

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION OF THE MEMBERSHIP PERSON

Send out reminders to everyone who hasn't paid their dues yet – and strike those who didn't pay last year either off the list. (And a special thank you to those who have paid already.)

Want to beat me to it? You can pay online (<https://www.nooksacknordicskiclub.org/membership/join-renew/>) or print out the form at the end of this newsletter and mail it in to the address supplied.

Thanks,

PETE TRYON
President, NNSC

THINKING ABOUT GETTING SOME NEW EQUIPMENT THIS YEAR?

Check out a couple of pages on our website:

- [Equipment Page](#)
- [Choosing Skis](#)

And if you'd like to talk to someone, feel free to sign up for a mini-lesson! It could take place by telephone/Zoom, or maybe in Pete's garage. Sign up at [Mini-lessons](#)

THE WIND

The day's forecast looked unpromising, but I had to work the following day. My options were stark: sit around at home and continue to monitor my increasing girth....or ski. I chose to ski. I can always resume girth-monitoring duties another day.

I arrived just in time for my customary crack of noon start. For some reason, people were leaving in droves as I arrived. I found a good parking space, stepped outside....and got knocked to my knees by the wind. Hmmm. I managed to get geared-up while cowering behind my van. The snowflakes felt sharp, as if capable of leaving little puncture wounds where they struck.

Suitably attired, I stepped from my shelter and headed into the maw of the tempest: steady snowfall, shrieking winds, bad visibility and thoroughly scoured snow surfaces. Where did all the snow end up, if not on any of the aspects I skied? The clatter of graupel hitting my hood at 60+ mph made it hard to concentrate, but there wasn't much to concentrate *on*--just one foot in front of the other, with a wide stance and a low center of gravity to keep me upright.

I headed for Swift Creek Trees, famous refuge in times of bad visibility, high avalanche danger and wind. Those winds, which elsewhere seemed approximately from the west

and north, were here blasting straight up the drainage from the east. I dropped in anyway, thinking the winds would surely dissipate below the crest.

Uh, no. I headed straight down the fall line on the steepest slope I could find, but found it difficult to maintain forward momentum. I fought my way through the trees into the open avalanche runouts beyond to change back to uphill mode, more afraid of falling trees than of avalanches. I carefully felt my way back uphill, then down through the deserted ski area to my car and called it a day.

Downhill traffic on the Mt. Baker Highway was ridiculously slow, almost congealed--other drivers perhaps taking the hint from two vehicles which had slid out on curves and were displayed precariously perched at the tops of steep drop offs. There were many, many police wearing various style of hats, tending—one can only assume—to patrons of the beer garden and other ski area festivities.

I stopped shivering somewhere in the neighborhood of Deming. Once home, I checked the local avalanche center's telemetry reports, which indicated winds blowing locally from almost all points of the compass at a steady 50-60 mph with higher gusts. There was also, apparently, a foot of fresh snow, although I couldn't find it. Where *did* all that snow end up?

By dinnertime the sense-memories had begun to fade--

howling winds, stinging graupel, obscured vision, uncertain balance--and I began to regret not taking another lap, or maybe cadging a ride on the ski area lifts. People write books about this sort of thing, I thought: the cognitive distortions, the twisting of facts into self-serving narrative arcs, the heroic journeys into places of transformation....at which point I fell fast asleep, as one does.

MARK HARFENIST

SQUAMISH BC

The Cross-Country Ski & Snowshoe Trails at Whistler Olympic Park in Callaghan valley were calling, and the conditions were exceptional on Dec 5 and 6 despite limited snowfall. Just outside of Squamish BC, this park is not to be confused with the downhill and Alpine ski center at Whistler Mountain. The site of the 2010 winter Olympic Nordic ski events, the park is still a training facility and hosts multiple competitions each year, including the upcoming FIS World Juniors U23 in January. The ski jump hill was being groomed and there were several athletes practicing on the biathlon range as we skied by to the glass encased ski lodge (a lodge just for Nordic skiers - who knew???).

Our itinerary. We left Monday morning for the two plus hour drive to Squamish and then

another 20 miles to the Olympic Park. We arrived and were skiing by 11 on beautifully groomed and tracked trails with blue sky and sunshine overhead. A small section of expert trails was still closed but there were plenty of trails to enjoy, including a subset designated as dog



Kelli Kreiger and Debra Noonan

friendly. They have three sources of snow; nature made, manmade and stockpiled snow in a huge straw covered berm for emergency use. At present there was enough base to bring out the good skis and enjoy the wooded rolling hills with mountain views. Very few skiers were out, and everyone had big smiles and hearty greetings when passing. Back to Squamish for the night with a return the next morning to explore a different section of trails. Back on the road in midafternoon to be home for dinner on Tuesday with tired legs and a happy heart.

DEBRA NOONAN

CLASSICAL SKIS – WAXED AND FISH SCALE

Disclaimer: I thought to write this article on Dec. 17; a day that I had a delightful classical ski down Razor Hone after snowshoeing up Huckleberry. I'm typing the article, looking out my window on Dec. 23; the rain is freezing on everything it touches, the ice is building up in layers on snow and branches alike. I can only cringe when I think what the next few days will bring to our trails. But I'm going with the Dec. 17 thoughts!

In the 'good old days', life was simple. Skis were wood, you waxed them so that you had 'kick' and all was good. I joined several friends for a day ski (on an established trail) up the Canwell Glacier in the Alaska Range during the spring of 1974. Tom showed up with his new orange Trak No Wax skis with blue plastic bottoms and a fish scale pattern. They looked funny! They sounded funny! They didn't glide all that well. Oh, we laughed! We poked fun at him. We then left Tom to his own devices as we chose our klisters and waxed our skis. Where was Tom? He must have started up the trail. It didn't matter, we'd catch up to him. Hours later, we were really thinking it must be time for lunch – but we hadn't found Tom yet. Just then, we heard a shout and looking up, saw Tom at the top of a long rise, leaning back on his pack, drinking something from his bota bag. Struggling up the hill, we then sat down to lunch – and we had to admit that those new-fangled skis had something going for them.

I then spent 35 years skiing groomed trails in Alaska, moving from wood to p-tex bottoms and learning a little of the art of waxing

– layering different colors, base wax, klisters, different brands, corks, thick dabs, torches, etc. Then, retirement – and a move to Bellingham, and more to the point, skiing at Salmon Ridge. After one winter, it was time to buy a new pair of skis: skinny fish scale classical track skis. Rain or shine, ice or crust, fresh snow or dirt, friends at Razor Hone or 'racing' in the Ski to Sea: pull them out of the ski box, put a little maxi glide on the base, and you are good to go! But last week, I looked in the ski box at my old pair of Fischer SCS classical skis and thought 'Oh, why not...' I dabbed some purple kick wax on over whatever was there from years past, gave them a pass with the cork (put the wax in my pocket in case of further need) and headed out on the trail. It was wonderful! So smooth! So fast (relatively speaking)! So quiet (except for the 'slap-drag' an old friend tried to coach me out of)! I had forgotten how nice it was.

Let's not forget our old waxable classic skis. Let's get them out and use them. I have boxes of old wax. Tubes of old klisters. Let's meet at Salmon Ridge (White Salmon would be better) for some non-fish scale ski trips. Wax up and talk about the good old days and then go for a ski (and only poke a little good-natured fun at friends who come along with their noisy waxless skis).

Note: no mention is made of the new 'skins' – I suppose I should go try them out sometime...

PETE TRYON



STATUS OF OUR SKI TRAILS

Oh my! Beautiful snow. Grooming. More snow. Cold. Classical tracks. Crisp skis through magical snow-covered trees. We had a delightful early December start to a wonderful ski season.

December 23-26: Ice storms, 2 inches of rain, 50 degrees. Wind.

What are our trails like now? As I type this, we don't know. Over the last decade, we've seen the first grooming as early as December 6th (this year) and as late as January 10th (White Salmon) / February 5th (Razor Hone) (two years ago). That year, we went on to have good skiing throughout February and much of March, with some of us still skiing in April. I'm guessing that right now, things are sloppy and not very good. But it could cool off, rain could change to snow, and we could have great skiing, any day now! So hope for the best, check the website for word of the latest conditions and stay flexible. And there's always the Ski-to-Sea practice trail in May!

With the rapidly changing conditions and the long drive to the trails, we are always looking for the latest information. If you are out for a ski, how about sending me a report of grooming and snow conditions? You could practice your creative writing and become published! We also appreciate reports of downed trees that need attention. Email me at ski@tryonhayes.com (or other regular addresses).

When ready for some different trails and grooming, remember, the Canadian border is open! There are dozens of ski areas to explore; some are at higher elevations and/or far north with

consistently good snow.

<https://www.nooksacknordicskiclub.org/trails/where-to-ski/if-i-had-three-days/>

If you'd like to peruse all the Salmon Ridge grooming data since 2015, check out our report at:

<https://www.nooksacknordicskiclub.org/trails/grooming-and-conditions/multi-year-grooming-summary/> .

PETE TRYON



AN INVITATION

As trip coordinator I have had to deal with the sad fact that the Nooksack Nordic Ski Club has not offered ski trips since the start of the Covid Epidemic. As the epidemic has not abated, that policy has not changed. We can continue to ski with others, just not on a club trip.

Last season I soloed the cross-country trails of Idaho and Montana. I had a great time and have two trips planned to British Columbia this season. The first to Logan Lake, B.C. on the nights of January 23,24,25. This will be essentially a club trip without the club. I (we) will be staying at the Highland House B&B. The second trip will be to Vernon, B.C. on the nights of February 6,7,8, 9. The trails of Silver Star and Salmon Arm need three days to explore. If you are willing to pay for fuel and share the housing costs and don't object to a 73 year old male skier of modest ability, we might have a ski vacation together.

To Inquire, contact me at:
kurt.duey@gmail.com

This is how we do trips now, so cheer up and go to [meetup@nooksacknordicskiclub.org](https://www.meetup.com/nooksacknordicskiclub.org) to connect with other local skiers. A recent Covid test is encouraged.

KURT DUEY

FUTURE MEETINGS

February 14
March 14

Nooksack Nordic Ski Club Membership Application and SnoPark Order Form

Use this form to purchase SnoPark permits, join the club or renew your membership. Sign and mail to the club with your check. Or, bring it to the next meeting.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____
Street/PO Box City State Zip

Phone 1: _____ (Home, Cell, Work) Phone 2: _____ (H, C, W)

Email 1: _____ Email 2: _____

Dues and SnoPark Information

Check Membership Level: \$20 Individual _____ \$35 Household _____ Amount \$ _____

SnoPark Permit – Vehicle License Required for Permit: _____ \$50 SnoPark Fee \$ _____
Vehicle License

Optional Donation – we are a 501(c)3 \$ _____

Total membership + SnoPark + Optional \$ _____

Please read this agreement carefully before signing and dating:

In signing and submitting this form, I recognize that cross-country skiing involves strenuous activities, is potentially hazardous, and involves inherent risk. I knowingly and voluntarily assume all responsibility and risk for my actions and my family's actions while cross-country skiing, during travel related to Nooksack Nordic Ski Club (NNSC) activities, and during use of facilities and equipment. This includes, but is not limited to falls, collisions, effects of weather, conditions of equipment and trails and other areas while skiing or participating in NNSC activities. I hereby for myself, my heirs, administrators, or anyone else who may bring claims on my or my family members' behalf, covenant not to sue, release and discharge the NNSC, its Board and Committee members, and all related organizations or individuals, from any and all claims of liability for death, personal injury, or property damage arising from my or my family members' participation in NNSC activities.

Name (Print please): _____

Signature: _____

Other family member(s): _____

Other signatures: _____

Date: _____

I would like to receive Snow News is Good News newsletter by: Email: _____ U.S. mail: _____

Select Club Tasks you could help with:

- Serve on NNSC Board _____
- Clear brush from trails _____
- Find speakers/programs _____
- Put up trail signs and sanican base _____
- Help with Ambassador Days _____
- Write an article for "Snow News" _____
- Audit NNSC financial records _____
- Write a grant, or, fundraising _____
- Lead a ski trip _____

Please make checks out to: Nooksack Nordic Ski Club and mail with this form to:
 Nooksack Nordic Ski Club, P.O. Box 28793, Bellingham, WA 98228

Deposit Date
Sno Park #