

WMAC SNOSHU-NEWS

WORSHAM'S BEGINNER GUIDE TO SNOWSHOEING

The great thing about snowshoeing is that there is nothing highly technical to learn about it in order to do it. If you can put one foot in front of the other, you can snowshoe. If you like trails and the woods you will love snowshoeing on them in winter.

First I suggest you go to the WMAC Snowshoe website:

<http://www.runwmac.com/snowshoes/default.htm>

Then I suggest you go to the Schedule. Check the schedule, see what is coming up and visit the race sites. There are "hot links" on the schedule page for each individual race:

To get started you will find that the WMAC events are VERY friendly to new and first-time snowshoers. Each will have loaner snowshoes provided by Bob Dion, the owner of Dion Snowshoes. The applications online tell you to call ahead for loaners, and I would do this. All of the early races are of a distance that is perfect for newcomers.

You will find that the people at these snowshoe races are very friendly to new people, and they will welcome you enthusiastically. Afterwards they provide a cookout with things like hot soup or chili and/or hot dogs.

You will also find the whole range of abilities. Some of the best racers almost seem like they are just running in regular shoes. Then there are the middle people like me, and there are people who kind of "hike" the courses slowly and persistently. All are equally respected, and all have great fun. We even have a 76 year-old guy, Richard Busa, who participates and has for years.

I'd suggest getting to one of these events at least an hour early to get your loaners and put them on and trot and walk around on them to get the feel. Go in deep snow and shallow snow to see how your legs have to work in each.

When the race starts don't jump out like a jackrabbit. Think more in terms of slow and steady at first until you get a feel for a pace comfortable to you. Passing is hard in a track, so if someone is behind you ask if they want to pass. Likewise, if you want to pass someone say something like, "Can I pass when there's a chance?"

I'd suggest going to a couple of races where you can get loaner shoes and see what it's actually like before buying snowshoes. I started snowshoeing in early '98 at the North-South Pond Shuffle. Knowing what I know now I'd make the following recommendations about buying snowshoes.

Don't start looking until you see what kind of snowshoer you are. You won't get knowledgeable advice at stores. I am biased, but recommend Dion Snowshoes. Bob Dion is a pioneer in WMAC in both trailrunning and snowshoeing. After a number of seasons of the WMAC series, he gathered information from everybody he knew of all ability levels that were in the races, and designed his own line. He personally tested them by running on them countless hours himself. He guarantees them and is at

every race providing loaners. He has modified his design based on how his shoes have performed over the recent years. He is not like a store that won't know what to do if you go back to them with something broken. He is there and he WILL be there, and he knows what he is doing. Look at:

<http://www.dionsnowshoes.com/>

I started with a pair of LL Bean, then got Sherpas, then got Dions.

For Xmas I got a pair of Dion's racer model. My older Dions are what he now calls the beginner model. However, they are not called "beginner" because they are a lesser status. They are just a good general purpose durable snowshoe that could be used for any purpose from racing to hiking. I still use them a lot. I do recommend the secure fit binding though.

Bob is very talkative and loves to help people with information. For lots of info though, I would talk to him post-race. You can see all the models he makes, and their price is very reasonable.

If you attend North-South Pond, Greylock, or Curly's be sure to ask someone to point me out and introduce yourself.

As far as where to snowshoe for fun without racing, anywhere you could run on a trail or forest road would be a good place to snowshoe. State parks with forest roads are good unless they have been packed too firm by snowmobiles. Some may be already groomed by snowmobiles if you like that, but it has to have some "give" rather than be packed like ice. I prefer ungroomed trails myself. A meadow or golfcourse would be good. That way you can make loops wearing down a track. Woods with ups and downhills give you more protection from wind though. You can even explore woods not on a trail too. Hemlock forests and those with mountain laurel provide good protection too.

Write with any questions, and explore that WMAC website.

Bob Worsham - bobworsham@charter.net



Early action from "I Love Woodford"

PEOPLE YOU SHOULD KNOW...

AN APPALACHIAN TRAIL THRU-HIKER... LARRY DRAGON

In February of 1998 Larry Dragon showed up for our first official snowshoe races (South Pond and Hawley Kiln), held on the same weekend. He really hasn't been away since, discounting last year where he only made it to one early event. There was a reason for his absence, however. Larry was about to fulfill a lifelong dream of thru-hiking the Appalachian Trail from Springer Mountain Georgia to Mt Katahdin, Maine.

As a snowshoer, Larry has participated at 31 total WMAC events, sitting in 19th place all-time, having accumulated 1643 points. Larry's best performances, if judged by finishing place, are as follows;

- '00 Greylock Glen 5th place overall
- '00 Saratoga Winterfest 12th place overall
- '00 Moody Spring 10th place overall

Knowing Larry a little bit though, I am sure he would juggle the idea of "best" versus "favorite" races, and we could expect different answers. To get away from the black and white of numbers, I offer the following reflection regarding Larry.

It was at the 2000 Greylock Glen Race, the one that had us competing in 38 below zero wind-chill. I had the pleasure of "racing" Larry along much of the course, trailing him by 20 feet or so. It seemed as though I just couldn't gain on the big guy no matter if we were going up, down or flat.

Finally, on the long downhill about a mile from the finish, I began going for broke and giving it my all. I felt as though I was in a different body, when suddenly I snagged my snowshoe in something that sent me flying through the air and crashing into a snowdrift. To this point in the race, Larry and I were going at it pretty hard. As I sat there stunned, Larry actually stopped, then did even better by coming back to check on me. I told him I would be fine, I just needed a minute. It was a really beautiful gesture for him to stop his race, a gesture I haven't forgotten. More than anything else, this is what I recall about Larry Dragon. Unselfishness.



Larry Dragon, March '02 at Hawley Kiln. Photo by Farmer Ed



Starting the journey, Springer Mountain Georgia. Photo from Larry Dragon.

Following are excerpts from Larry's trail journal. Our hopes are that this will allow insight into the man and his emotions as he hiked along his 2000-mile journey.

Day 1, Amicalola Lodge to Springer Mt. Shelter, 9 miles.

"...After hitting the breakfast buffet I decided I would walk back down the 600+ stairs to the visitors center. I wanted to get the full affect of the trail."

"...As far as time goes I'm not sure about it. I have a watch but keep it buried in my pack. I think I'm trying to get away from time."

Thursday, July 14, 2005

Trip Miles 1504

Sharon Mt. Campsite to Sages Ravine Brook; 20.80 miles

"...I'm in MA now and it feels good to be in my home state. I'm very tired, so I'm off to bed!"

Sunday, July 17, 2005

Trip Miles: 1567

Upper Goose Pond to Gulf Road, Dalton, MA; 21.60 miles

"...After about an hour it started to rain... and rain it did; poured actually! We stopped at October Mt. Lean-To until it let up a bit."

"...I reached Dalton and cruised into Angelina's for dinner... too wet, too dark and too tired to go on."

Monday, July 18, 2005

Trip Miles: 1576

Gulf Road, Dalton to Cheshire, MA – My House; 8.30 miles

"...I stopped at the Cobbles and took some time to reflect on what I have done so far. It is a strange feeling to hike right through the town you were born and raised in. It almost seemed like I could sense a change in the smells in the air as soon as I walked into Cheshire. There really is no place like home!"

PEOPLE YOU SHOULD KNOW... continued

Friday, July 22, 2005 **Trip Miles: 1587**
Cheshire, MA to Wilbur Clearing; 11.00 Miles

"...My Last morning to wake up in my own bed. I got everything all locked and secured and said all my good byes. I visited with my mom before heading out. After being home I realized I really miss the people in my life, my girlfriend, my family, my friends, but I don't miss all that society has to offer and I don't miss not knowing what is going on in the world."

"...I made it to Mt. Greylock and stopped for some drinks and pictures. It is pouring, thundering and lightening. It figures the rain would wait until I go back out. I'm meeting Jewels in the morning, she will hike with me for a couple of days."

Sunday, August 07, 2005 **Trip Miles: 1804**
Beaver Brook Shelter to Eliza Brook Shelter; 9.10 miles

"...I woke this morning to an awesome sunrise over the White Mountains. It was fairly cold last night probably because we were sleeping at over 3600 feet. Jewels and I headed down the steep rocky decent with a beautiful waterfall, which followed the trail all the way down to the bottom. At the bottom I just couldn't resist, I had to swim in an ice-cold pool, very refreshing. Almost forgot I turned 45 today!"

Sunday, September 11, 2005 **Trip Miles: 2155**
White House Landing to Rainbow Stream; 15.80 miles

"...At about 4:30 AM we were awakened... we had discovered that you could see the Northern Lights so we went out. It was very cool, we also saw several shooting stars as well."

"...We enjoyed several views of Mt. Katahdin today, about 16 miles the way a crow flies or about 30 hiking miles."

"...We only have 3 days left. I'm just several nights away from being finished. It is going to be hard to stop hiking."



Ending the journey, Katahdin, Maine. Photo from Larry Dragon.

Photo opposite page of Larry Dragon Moody Spring '03, by Gary Bridgman.

Wednesday, September 14, 2005 **Trip Miles: 2185**
The Birches to MT. KATAHDIN; 5.20 miles

"...I barely slept last night; knowing it was my last night might have had something to do with it."

"...It was a very challenging climb. A wrong step could have been fatal. We made it to the summit by 9:45. The sun was out; we were actually above the clouds."

"...It was a very glorious time up there, lots of reflecting and I must admit I was a little teary eyed for a brief moment."

"...I don't think it hit me yet that my trip is done."

Tuesday, December 13, 2005 **A post-hike update**

"...I must say so far the hardest thing about my thru-hike has been re-entry back into society. I'm just starting to come around now, almost 3 months since finishing (thanks for the help Jewels). I still long for the trail, the good thing is that I live right next to it. I'm sure I will have Springer fever come springtime, I guess I'll have to settle for doing some trail magic and day hikes. I would like to wish all the people I met on the trail and those associated with it, as well as my journals readers Happy Holidays."

"...I have finally landed a job at a local paper company in the security department. I think having a job has helped my readjustment not to mention my cash flow situation. I'm still planning on putting together a presentation about my hike and present it to local hiking clubs and scout troops and maybe even teach some backpacking courses at the local college. I feel the thru-hike has given me so much knowledge and experience and I would like to share it with others."

"...I'm enjoying the small town life in Cheshire and enjoying the company of Jewels."



Contact Larry at: hddragon@hotmail.com

Larry's trail-journal: trailjournals.com/draggin

THE NIGHT BEFORE WOODFORD

'Twas the night before Woodford
 And all through the land
 WMAcCers were stirring,
 Worsham's checklist in hand.

Snowshoes were laid
 By the door with great care
 In hopes that the snow
 Soon would be there.

Dion bunnies were busy
 Loading their van
 With Vermont bread galore
 For all those who ran.

On loaners, on Velcro
 On buckles, on cleats
 To fit all sizes
 Of WMAcCer feet.

Through snow, through sleet
 Over hill, over dale
 Those bunnies they hopped,
 They never did fail.

To deliver their snowshoes,
 Advice and good cheer
 To each eager runner
 In front place or rear.

Jack Quinn gave the signal
 And the stampede began
 Saucony Santa
 Leading the clan.

And we heard him exclaim,
 As he flew out of sight,
 Happy snowshoeing to all
 And to all a good night!

Laura Clark

WOODFORD AGE GROUP CHAMPS

12 – 15	Kath. Lavoie	1:01:54	Robbie Briske	52:48
16 - 19	Lauren Stocker	48:21	Tony Martini	34:25
20 – 24	Sheila Osgood	38:16	Chris Chromczak	31:40
25 – 29	Janelle Harris	37:38	Greg Hammett	26:14
30 – 34	Jessica Hageman	42:11	Don French	35:22
35 – 39	Pamela Delsignore	43:46	Richard Bolt	25:57
40 – 44	Karen Schaffrick	54:27	Ken Clark	28:03
45 – 49	Maureen Roberts	45:40	Howard Bassett	41:35
50 – 54	Marcia Whitney	45:59	Bob Dion	33:47
55 – 59	Laura Clark	49:11	Allan Bates	34:05
60 – 64			Paul Jensen	34:47
65 – 69			Ed Alibozek, Jr.	41:44
70 – 79			Richard Busa	53:18

WOODFORD AT THE STARTING LINE

The Woodford moveable snowshoe feast again took its customary place at the starting position after last year's finish at the end of the pack. The weather was perfect, the snow fluffy and deep and with randomly falling flakes, it was as if we were encapsulated in a giant snow globe scene.

In a clever race director move, Jack Quinn discovered the secret to insuring good attendance no matter what the weather conditions. Last year's returning participants were awarded their '04 finisher Tshirts, and the first fifty '05 entrants will be similarly motivated to return in '06. But be warned—these shirts are an extra incentive for doing well—the '04 shirts have the race results printed on the back for all to see. But eventually as attendance rises, the list will lengthen, allowing those with rear-end times to tuck themselves concealingly into their jeans.

There seemed to be an inordinate amount of confusion at this year's starting line as folks seemed to have difficulty recognizing people they had hung out with all last season. We were all winter camouflaged in multiple layers of highly technical clothing with labels and guarantees that make sense only to chemists. To compound the problem, the Highly Thrifty had taken advantage of last year's end-of-season sales to stock up on entirely new colors. I ditched my tattered yellow jacket in favor of fashionable lime green and Laurel went from peacock blue to stealth black. Some, thankfully, remained as we remembered them. Ken Clark still sported his lucky yellow Shenipsit Strider singlet and Farmer Ed the Younger still came in from the fields flannel plaided and smiling.

To the eldest among us was reserved the special foot-on-the-starting line position as Saucony Santa. Excited by the prospect of riding behind all those female reindeer (males drop their antlers in the fall – so much for Rudolph), Rich shed his aviator goggles in favor of red velvet fur-trimmed shorts and stylishly matching hat. Despite the reindeer's help, Rich was disappointed with his finishing position. And no wonder. After 76 years, he made the classic beginner's mistake of wearing new, untested snowshoes to the race. And they weren't even Dions!!! Guess his shiny Crescent Moons tempted him with visions of a photo-op Santa gliding effortlessly over the snow, past the moon and forward to countless fireplaces, mugs of hot chocolate and plates of Christmas cookies.

But what we will remember most about Woodford was that it featured not one, not two, but nine Polar Express trains on a wild roller coaster ride through the woods. Unlike last year's North Pond Train, each passenger car remained unhitched, providing nine exciting sprints to the finish. It was rumored that some trains were so excited about the first race of the season that they paused just long enough to claim their Vermont bread and then headed straight on to our next destination -- Merrimack.

laura clark



WMAC

WOODFORD 3.5 MILE SNOWSHOE RACE

WMAC

December 18, 2005

Woodford State Park

Woodford, VT

1. Richard Bolt	35M	25:57	100.00
2. Greg Hammett	28M	26:14	99.11
3. Elijah Barrett	29M	27:42	98.21
4. Ken Clark	43M	28:03	97.32
5. Brian Johnson	26M	30:10	96.43
6. Chris Chromczak	21M	31:40	95.54
7. Edward Alibozek	43M	32:58	94.64
8. Jay Kolodzinski	26M	33:23	93.75
9. Bob Dion	50M	33:47	92.86
10. Allan Bates	57M	34:05	91.96
11. Gregory Rems	29M	34:16	91.07
12. Josh Merlis	23M	34:23	90.18
13. Tony Martini	17M	34:25	89.29
14. Paul Bazanchuk	51M	34:37	88.39
15. Paul Jensen	62M	34:47	87.50
16. Christopher Lanaud	38M	35:02	86.61
17. Don French	34M	35:22	85.71
18. Patrick Riley	27M	35:24	84.82
19. Wayne Stocker	51M	36:13	83.93
20. John Kinniatt	43M	37:00	83.04
21. Janelle Harris	25F	37:38	82.14
22. Sheila Osgood	23F	38:16	81.25
23. Mike Lahey	54M	40:25	80.36
24. Bill Morse	54M	40:30	79.46
25. Art Roti	33M	40:59	78.57
26. David Newman	25M	41:03	77.68
27. Patrick Sorsby	30M	41:06	76.79
28. Howard Bassett	45M	41:35	75.89
29. Eric Juzysta	39M	41:38	75.00
30. Barry Auskern	45M	41:41	74.11
31. Ed Alibozek, Jr.	66M	41:44	73.21
32. Larina Riley	27F	41:52	72.32
33. Adam Bazanchuk	20M	41:56	71.43
34. Jessica Hageman	30F	42:11	70.54
35. Jan Rancatti	45M	42:12	69.64
36. Mike Kent	42M	42:13	68.75
37. David Holt	46M	42:19	67.86
38. Mike Pytko	50M	42:30	66.96
39. David Alden	36M	43:38	66.07
40. Bruce Marvonek	52M	43:41	65.18
41. Pamela Delsignore	36F	43:46	64.29
42. Vincent Kirby	49M	43:48	63.39
43. Pete Lipka	54M	43:57	62.50
44. Dan McNamara	56M	44:13	61.61
45. Brenan Tarrrier	20M	44:19	60.71
46. Dave Fiorini	44M	45:15	59.82
47. Scott Bradley	50M	45:26	58.93
48. Bob Dick	50M	45:28	58.04
49. Charles Thayer	61M	45:30	57.14
50. Jurgen Reher	56M	45:33	56.25
51. Ed Saharczewski	52M	45:34	55.36
52. Maureen Roberts	47F	45:40	54.46
53. Thomas Mack	41M	45:43	53.57
54. Laura Monti	34F	45:57	52.68
55. Marcia Whitney	52F	45:59	51.79
56. Joe Geiger	64M	46:00	50.89
57. Jacqueline Lemieux	39F	46:14	50.00
58. Jim Carlson	57M	47:17	49.11

59. Jim Gonyea	57M	48:09	48.21
60. Dick Flores	28M	48:17	47.32
61. Lauren Stocker	16F	48:21	46.43
62. Elizabeth Cullinan	17F	48:30	45.54
63. Ray Chen	41M	48:33	44.64
64. Doug Salb	33M	48:34	43.75
65. Dawn Toronto	37F	48:36	42.86
66. Tom Adams	61M	48:39	41.96
67. Denise Dion	48F	48:49	41.07
68. Walt Kolodzinski	62M	48:54	40.18
69. Bob Massaro	62M	48:55	39.29
70. Laurel Shortell	39F	49:01	38.39
70. Bruce Grisafe	52M	49:03	37.50
71. Neil Snedeker	22M	49:04	36.61
72. Laura Clark	58F	49:11	35.71
73. Robert Nichols	41M	49:38	34.82
74. Christina Corsac	39F	49:52	33.93
75. Samuel Montalvo	18M	50:32	33.04
76. Lynn Grieger	47F	50:57	32.14
77. Diane Pytko	48F	51:03	31.25
78. Laura Madison	16F	51:22	30.36
79. Jeff Hattem	54M	51:43	29.46
80. Michael Rosenthal	61M	52:10	28.57
81. Barbara Sorrell	48F	52:24	27.68
82. Nancy Briskey	48F	52:45	26.79
83. Robbie Briskey	14M	52:48	25.89
84. Tanya Snyder	33F	52:54	25.00
85. Richard Busa	76M	53:18	24.11
86. Jenn Schermerhorn	24F	53:24	23.21
87. Karen Schaffrick	41F	54:27	22.32
88. Stephen Mitchell	64M	54:29	21.43
89. Ginny Patsun	37F	54:35	20.54
90. Jim Sharkey	46M	54:39	19.64
91. Don VanWelt	56M	55:18	18.75
92. Jean Alden-St Pierre	36F	55:59	17.86
93. Peter Finley	44M	57:34	16.96
94. Paige Madison	16F	57:35	16.07
95. Konrad Karolezuk	53M	57:44	15.18
96. Greg Taylor	59M	59:56	14.29
97. Daniel Lavoie	47M	1:01:43	13.39
98. Katherine Lavoie	14F	1:01:54	12.50
99. Jessica Lemieux	14F	1:01:55	11.61
100. Mary Kennedy	47F	1:01:56	10.71
101. Emily Granelle	18F	1:03:10	9.82
102. Ann Payden	17F	1:03:17	8.93
103. Rebecca Rahmanian	19F	1:03:23	8.04
104. Susan Mitchell	52F	1:04:05	7.14
105. Jamie Howard	40M	1:04:32	6.25
106. Debbie Robinson	46F	1:05:12	5.36
107. Gary Robinson	43M	1:05:13	4.46
108. Jeff Clark	58M	1:06:00	3.57
109. Katherine Karlson	53F	1:12:26	2.68
110. Andy Keefe	75M	1:20:00	1.79
111. Bruce Kurtz	69M	1:32:00	0.89

Thanks to Woodford RD's Jack Quinn and John Pelton

Please send corrections, to: edtrnews@yahoo.com

REMAINING WMAC SCHEDULE 2006

Saturday, January 7, 2006 9th NORTH-SOUTH POND	Sav/ Florida, MA 5 Miles
Saturday, January 14, 2006 7th GREYLOCK GLEN	Adams, MA 3.5 Mile
Sunday, January 22, 2006 4th CURLY's RECORD RUN	Pittsfield, MA 4 Miles
Saturday, January 28, 2006 2nd SIDE-HILLER	C. Sandwich, NH 4 Mile
Sunday, January 29, 2006 2nd MESSABESIC	Auburn, NH 5 KM
Saturday, February 4, 2006 4th NORTHFIELD MTN	Northfield, MA 9.3 KM
Sunday, February 5, 2006 7th SARATOGA WINTERFEST	Saratoga, NY 5 KM
Saturday, February 11, 2006 2nd BRAVE THE BLIZZARD	Guilderland, NY 5 KM
Saturday, February 18, 2006 4th CAMP SARATOGA	Wilton, NY 8.25 KM
Sunday, February 19, 2006 5th MOODY SPRING	West Hawley, MA 8 KM & 15 KM
Saturday, February 25, 2006 4th COVERED BRIDGE	Adams, MA 8.0 Miles
Saturday, February 25, 2006 4th HOXIE THUNDERBOLT	Adams, MA 3.5 Miles
Saturday, March 4, 2006 9th HAWLEY KILN KLASSIC	Hawley, MA 4.0 & 7.0 Miles
Sunday, March 12, 2006 SPRUCE HILL CLIMB	Florida, MA 5 Miles

2006 USSSA REGIONAL QUALIFIERS

Sunday, January 08, 2006 BOLTON VALLEY N.E. QUALIFIER	Bolton Valley, VT 5 KM & 10 KM
Saturday, January 21, 2006 MENDON PONDS WINTERFEST	Mendon, NY 5 KM & 10 KM
Saturday, January 21, 2006 HOFFMAN NOTCH	Schroon Lake, NY 6 Miles
Saturday, February 4, 2006 NORTHFIELD MTN	Northfield, MA 9.3 KM
Saturday, February 18, 2006 NESCOPECK STATE PARK	Drums PA 5 KM & 10 KM

USSSA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Saturday, March 25, 2006 BOLTON VALLEY	Bolton Valley VT 5 KM & 10 KM
--------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------

HOW TO QUALIFY FOR 2006 NATS.

How to Qualify to Participate in the 2006 United States National Snowshoe Championships Bolton Valley, VT.

Athletes have to become a USSSA member PRIOR to competing in their regional qualifier event(s).

A) Download USSSA Membership form from the USSSA Website and mail it in with payment.

B) Join on-line via Active.com from the USSSA website

C) Join at their regional qualifying race on race day

The top 10 Overall 'USSSA Member' finishers in the Junior Boy's and Girl's 5km & Senior Men's and Women's 10km will qualify for the National Championship.

Plus the top 5 'USSSA Member' finishers in each age group:

20-24 yrs of age	25-29 yrs of age
30-34 yrs of age	35-39 yrs of age
40-44 yrs of age	45-49 yrs of age
50-54 yrs of age	55-59 yrs of age
55-59 yrs of age	65-69 yrs of age
70-99 yrs of age	70-99 yrs of age

Plus any 'USSSA Member' who does not finish among the overall top 10 of 'USSSA Member Finishers' in the Junior 5km or Senior 10km, NOR among the top 5 USSSA Members Finshers in their age group, BUT DOES finish within 130% of their age groups winners time

Plus the members of the 2005 U.S. National Snowshoe Team are automatically eligible to compete in the 2006 U.S. National Championships in Bolton Valley, VT.

For additional information, please contact

Mark Elmore of the USSSA 518 – 643 – 8806

snowshoeguy@yahoo.com

The current Board of Regional Athletic Directors (BORAD), which has served for two years, comes to the end of their term in March 2006. The BORAD has been instrumental in the growth and expansion of the USSSA's National Snowshoe Championship Program. The BORAD is composed of three 'delegates' from each of the five USSSA 'regions'.

Representing the Northeast are:

Kelli Lusk
 Britt Brewer
 Bill Morse

Representing the Athletes Panel are:

Nikki Kimball
 Ethan Hemphill
 Helen Cospolich

Representing the Technical Panel are:

Adam Chase
 Bob Dion
 Tom Sobal

BTB: WITH OR WITHOUT SNOW

Twenty-four hours before the inaugural Brave the Blizzard (BTB) snowshoe race last year, it was not looking good. A blizzard was in the forecast alright—but not until the day *after* the race. All that remained in the Pine Bush of Guilderland, NY on February 20th, 2005 were sheets of ice—where snowshoe tracks once lay. Ten dedicated Albany Running Exchange (ARE) club members emerged from the woods five hours after tirelessly scraping away as much ice as they could to create an alternative non-snowshoe course (of 1.89 miles). The fact of the matter was—it was still dangerously slick. The deflated posse was then met by a note from their expert race advisor, Bob Oates, who warned them of the repercussions of still holding the event. Any normal running organization would have cancelled the event. But the ARE is far from your normal running club.

Now entering their fourth year of existence, the ARE has blossomed into the future of running in the Albany area. Once only consisting of wide-eyed college students from the University at Albany, the ARE is now made up of many harriers from the surrounding community. In addition to BTB, the ARE produces two trail events (Dodge the Deer and the Hairy Gorilla Half), a winter series event (in conjunction with HMRRC), a weekly summer group run series, and organizes several overnight adventures to race destinations each year. Boasting a fabulous website with tons of perks for club members (including an online running log), the ARE is now looking to add a timing service to their repertoire. So what's next for the ARE?

Brave The Blizzard part deux is scheduled for February 11, 2006, rain, snow, sleet or shine. This year's event promises not to disappoint, regardless what Mother Nature decides to throw at us. The original 5k course the ARE designed is extremely fast, given good conditions. If you don't reach a personal best at Saratoga Spa the week prior, then you should consider a run at BTB to eclipse your mark. The course begins on the open field of Guilderland Elementary School. After circling school grounds, runners will enter the beautiful Pine Bush preserve to meander its trails for most of the race. Although most of the trails will only allow for single track, some areas do allow for two lanes, which race directors promise to designate as guess-free strategic passing zones. In the unfortunate event that the ground cover is less than ideal for 'shoeing, you better believe the club will have an alternative course to cover—so bring your YAKTRAX! For family members not participating, there will be a warm gymnasium to seek respite while you frolic in the woods. The gym will be filled with lots of post-race refreshment, including a live DJ spinning tunes. ARE member, Chris Chromczak adds, "I thought it was a bad idea hosting the event last year, but we still had a good turnout and everyone who was there made the most of it." Brave the Blizzard is an event which embodies the ARE ideals. It brings together runners with an enthusiastic eye on fun and outdoor adventure. If you haven't been to an ARE event before, BTB is a good introduction to the organization. The ARE is perhaps best known for their furry charismatic event mascots—perhaps at this year's Brave the Blizzard, they will introduce yet another!

WOODFORD – DECEMBER 18, 2005



Rich Bolt leading Greg Hammett early on



Janelle Harris on her way to a victory



Emily Granelle having too much fun

All photos taken by Paul Hartwig.

UP NORTH ORIENTEERS AND THE US SKI-O TEAM PRESENT

“The Winter 2005-2006 Windblown Trim-O Ski-O Point Series”

Are you looking for a new challenge? Love the outdoors? Good at reading a map? Try Snowshoe Orienteering this winter!

This is a great opportunity to test yourself against various courses at the Windblown XC ski area in New Ipswich NH.

<http://www.windblownxc.com/>

Courses are laid out over the 40K of trails at Windblown. A special orienteering map is used to navigate between various points as quickly as possible. The map shows greater detail than a “regular” map. The challenge is to quickly determine your location and figure the best way to get to the next point (called a control). When you reach the control you will find a red & white flag with a code (three numbers) so that you can confirm you are at the correct location.

Summary: During the winter of 2005-2006 a series of self-service ski/snowshoe-orienteering courses will be set at Windblown Cross Country Center. The course will change weekly during the season (unless there is no snow) and will be posted at www.geocities.com/glidexc/. Skiers/Snowshoers who complete the course email their elapsed times to the organizer. Times will be posted occasionally during the period, points will be awarded as each period ends, and over all standings maintained.

Cost: Everyone must have a Windblown trail pass. There is no additional charge.

Weekly Cycle: The actual periods will depend on snowfall and the personal whims of the organizer. In general the weekly cycle will be:

Wednesday morning- course map posted
 Wednesday thru Monday- course open
 Monday 8 PM deadline for emailing results
 Tuesday thru Wednesday morning- course change over

Points: 1st- 15 points, 2nd- 12 points, 3rd- 9 points, 4th- 6 points, 5th- 3 points, 6th- 2 points, every other finisher- 1 point. Standings will be maintained for male, female, and overall points.

Timing: Timing is entirely on the honor system.

- Start your elapsed time with one ski-pole touching the woodshed, located just uphill of the main lodge building, and end when you have completed the course and touched the woodshed again with your pole.
- Compare your punch card to the master punch card posted with the map. If your punches match, you’ve completed the course. If not send in your time anyway with the number of punches you got right.

Rules: Complete the course in order.

- You may try each course as many times as you like but only your first attempt counts.
- Everyone must have a Windblown trail pass and may only attempt the course when Windblown is open. There is no time limit, but you must be off the course by Windblown’s closing time.
- Follow all Windblown rules (such as designated one-way trails) and be nice to the other skiers.
- You may compete on skis or snowshoes. If you take off your skis or snowshoes you may not walk on or across any groomed trail. A single footstep on groomed snow is disqualification!

Reporting: Email the organizer (GlideXC@yahoo.com) with the following information:

- Your name and gender, the date and time of day the course was attempted, and your elapsed time in hours, minutes, and seconds.
- Comments, if any, in 18 words or less. Longer comments will be arbitrarily truncated.

MASS SENIOR GAMES AT CURLY’S

Carl Fetteroll, the Games Coordinator for the Massachusetts Senior Games, has contacted us concerning one of our snowshoe events serving as a medal event at this season’s Senior Games.

The event that appears to work best with their schedule is Curlys Record Run, scheduled for January 22nd in Pittsfield State Forest.

From what I understand, a senior is anyone 50 or older. The MASS Senior Games give out awards to all seniors, and special awards for those who are Massachusetts residents.

If anyone wishes to contact Carl, his email is:

Senior_Games@SPFLDCOLE.EDU

Every year of the Curly’s Snowshoe Race, Brad Herder has made a video of the event. He recently has put them out on the web (in reduced quality), but still worth watching.

Here is the link to the videos:

<http://www.berkshiresports.org/index.php?ID=videos>

brad@berkshiresports.org