

# View as a new team member

By Andrea Lee  
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**W**ay back in April when Eric called and offered me a spot on the NDC – Thunder Bay, I'll admit I did have some hesitations. It was a big decision to leave my life on the West Coast- my friends, family and of course the beautiful Pacific Ocean; and move to the other side of the country to a place I really knew nothing about. However, six months after moving I'm happy to report that any doubts I may have had, have long since fled, and Thunder Bay has surpassed my expectations in so many ways.



The training venues here in Thunder Bay are second to none. One thing I have noticed is that everything is nearby. There is no need to drive far to find adequate venues. For summer training there is great roller skiing right in town. There are many back roads, bike paths through the city and even freshly paved quiet highways that are great for long skis. Sibley Park, featuring the famous "Sleeping Giant" is a great place to go for a long run or hike. If you climb right to the top, there is a great view overlooking Lake Superior. There is also a large network of trails for running or mountain biking in various parks around town. In the winter, there are two major ski centres within a 20 minute drive– Lappe and Kamview. There are also a few smaller centres with groomed trails around town to explore.



Erin at the top of the giant, taking in the view of Lake Superior.

I've always felt that there is no reason why I cannot go to school while still skiing competitively. In the spring, when I was deciding where I wanted to spend this year, the option to go to classes at university and not be forced to do online courses was very enticing. Not to discourage online courses – but speaking from experience, they are not for everyone! Lakehead University is situated right in the middle of the city and is extremely convenient. I scheduled my classes so I have a couple hours of classes a few afternoons a week, as well as some evening classes. The university is only a short five minute drive from my house, so it is super easy to commute back and forth to school between workouts. Being a small university with

just under 8000 students, it has a small town feel, with small classes, and accommodating teachers. So far, all of my Profs have been extremely understanding, and scheduling make up exams and labs hasn't been a problem at all.

The thing that surprised me most about Thunder Bay was the incredible ski community here. It seems that cross-country skiing IS the thing to do here. With two large ski clubs, packed full with skiers of all ages, there is never a shortage of training partners. Throughout the summer, there are bi-weekly trail running races. In the winter, Lappe Nordic hosts the highly popular Wednesday night ski races. From what I hear, they are tons of fun, and are always followed by delicious Finnish pancakes!



I can't believe how fast a great summer and fall of training has flown by! The team is currently in Lutsen, Minnesota for a 5 day training camp, with the Big Thunder Club, and the LU Varsity team. We're all anxious for snow here and can't wait until the season begins in just five weeks!



Erin and Andrea skiing on the Dachstein Glacier in Austria. Fresh snow and sunny conditions, made for perfect summer skiing!