

2011 Ski Nationals in Canada
By: NDC member Dudley Coulter

The 2011 Ski Nationals in Canada's Nordic town had its ups and downs, but overall we once again have shown Canada what NDC Thunder Bay is all about. You might ask, well what is the NDC about? We are about being fast; it's as simple as that!

This year's event was held in Canmore, Alberta - it was run well, courses were awesome and volunteers couldn't have done a better job. As these were the last races of the year for most Canadians, it will be one to remember. Our team was very excited to travel to Canmore for many reasons; it is the hub of Nordic skiing in Canada, many world cups have taken place on the same trails, 1988 winter Olympics were held here and we've put in some hard hours here during the summer. Most of the team has skied here various times before, except myself, as this was my first time. For myself, I was excited to race on the trails I trained on this summer, and I think I can speak for the rest of my team as well.



Andrea followed by Erin in the Classic Sprints

The week kicked off with a team sprint, which is where two skiers from the same club team compete against other teams to qualify for the final, then the top three teams from each heat, and the 10th fastest team advance to the finals. Not everyone on the team raced that day, Harry skied with his Hardwood Ski team to a 5th place finish in the final while Chris and Jimmy took Big Thunder Ski Club to an 8th place. On the women's side,

Andrea skied with Lakehead University and picked up a bronze medal!! The next day was a 10km skate for the men and a 5km for the women, what a hard course! This was one of the toughest loops I've ever raced on. Top three finishes of the day were Mike in 13th, Chris in 15th and myself in 20th. The next race was a 15km classic for the men and a 10km for the women. Today was a very successful race for Andy who skied to a 6th place finish in open men! Other notable results of the day were Mike in 10th and Andrea in 16th. Wednesday brought on the classic sprints, a race that many of our team members were waiting for. The qualifiers went really well for many of us, but unfortunately come the heats came some bad luck. It was a tough day to be a wax tech, conditions constantly changing, using different types of grip wax. On the good side Mike skied himself to an 11th, Harry a 16th. On the women's side Andrea finished 10th, close behind was Erin in 13th. At this point we have raced our hearts out but there is still one more race that has been at the back of our heads all week, 50km for the senior men, 30km for junior men and 30km for the women. After two rest days of movies, food and hot tubbing, it was time to get back into race mode. The morning brought colder temperatures than the rest of the week. The snow was fast in some sections but slower in others. Our team finished off the week extremely well. Mike skied to an amazing 4th place, less than a minute off the winner. Other notable results of the day were Chris in 13th, Harry in 15th and Erin in 17th. Now all of these placings mean nothing I suppose until I tell you on average in each category there is 40-60 racers. Not just any racers, the best in Canada. This years' field was very deep and really let us know where we stand nationally.



Andy out front in the 30km

NDC ripped it up this past week and we went out with a BANG! This just proves to everyone that whatever we do, we do it right. Once the Canadian racing circuit opens up

in December 2011 you can guarantee we will be faster than ever before. For half the team, this was the last race of the year, for Mike, Andy, Erin, Chris and myself, we will be sticking around Canmore for the next week until we leave for Sun Valley, Idaho with Cross Country Canada where the USSA Supertour finals will be held. From one adventure to the next, there is nothing like being part of such a great, successful team!

Thanks for reading!



Mike with the lead pack (all National Team Members) in the 50k