

Witness the Fitness

By Erin Tribe
NDC Member 2010-11



The title of the NOD camp was pretty loaded but it sure delivered. Chris, Eric and myself headed to North Bay on Friday after an invite from the division and Cross Country Ontario to participate in a training camp called "Witness the Fitness." We arrived on Friday after a full day of travel- including 3 hours in the luxurious Porter lounge adorned with complimentary treats and a fancy cappuccino/latte/ espresso machine. Upon arriving at Nippissing University to see a football field with a dusting of snow we were informed that the skate rollerski was being ditched for a real classic ski. It was probably the thinnest falling for a "first ski" but all 40 athletes skied around the field with intense positivity. Feeding off of their enthusiasm Chris, Eric and I led a classic sprint start session. At the end of the workout, under the lights and in the cold, we were treated to warm Gatorade before heading in for dinner. After dinner we listened to a sport psychologist give a speech about preparation and race planning. It was a solid start to the camp and everyone headed back to their billets and us to Toivo's house to crash for the night.



An afternoon recovery ski walk brought us around the campus trails and ended with hot chocolate (including marshmallows)! I have to give props to the volunteers who supplied the workouts with warm beverages for everyone. Every single workout! It was a pretty awesome treat. That evening NDC gave a presentation that focused on recovery, hard work, doing what you love and a number of things involved in high performance. We headed home afterwards to prepare for Sunday's classic rollerski race.



Sunday was set up to run like a real race. They had start times, bibs and a race clock to run it. It was a head-to-head 700m uphill race with timed heats. Everyone did between 3 and 5 heats. It was great practice with the race season so close and everyone put in a really strong effort. I was able to cool down with a few athletes and



chat about the race and get to know them a bit. The camp was complete and with the afternoon to relax we had a sauna and an extra-cold river dip back at Toivo's before catching our plane.

Saturday was a very full day. We met at the top of the downhill ski area for a striding intensity workout. In the parking lot we took on a few balance drills while everyone assembled and then went out for a warm up. After giving the athletes a few points about proper striding technique we hit the hill for 5x5 minute intervals. Everyone put out a solid effort and it was fun to watch some of the older guys keep up with Chris and really push it. Before lunch we were treated to a table of all kinds of treats that the parents had made. Lunch was again plentiful at the University and we enjoyed a bit of rest and watched the video from Friday's sprints and the morning's workout.

I was really happy we were able to attend the camp. I was impressed by everyone's level of positivity and enthusiasm. No one was afraid to ask questions and there was a keen sense to really take in each workout. I really enjoyed helping individual athletes learn something new and sharing my knowledge of the sport. The organization made it run very smoothly and overall it was a lot of fun! Thank you to everyone who helped put this together and to Toivo for his hospitality. We sure witnessed some serious fitness!

Thanks for reading!