



WORLD SNOW DAY AT OMINECA SKI CLUB

BURNS LAKE, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA



Welcome to the Omineca Ski Club!!

Our club is located just outside the Village of Burns Lake in north central British Columbia. Our town has a population of just over 3600 people but it services a rural population of over 10,000 people. The Omineca Ski Club was formed in 1927 by a group of Scandinavian loggers – they built a ski jump or two and used to hold ski races down the main street of town (that has now become part of the Yellowhead Highway/Trans Canada route). Our club now has over 45 km of groomed cross country ski trails as well as access to snowshoeing opportunities. In the summer months people hike, bike and trail ride (horseback) on the trails.



We invited the town to come out and play in the snow for World Snow Day and called our event “Celebrate Snow”. And it snowed – all day!! We created a whole bunch of fun activity centers using the toolkit that we received from FIS. We had two slalom courses (which isn’t that easy on cross country skis!). We had an obstacle course featuring ski jumps and hoops. There was a snow soccer field and another field saw many games of ‘Moose Calf’ which is a winter modification on ‘Red Rover’. The biathlon range was converted to a fun relay race using marshmallow guns to shoot at targets. And there was lots of ‘horse and cart’ where it is a challenge to coordinate skiing with multiple people holding on to the same long poles. Thanks to the generous donations of both local businesses and club members, we served a free, hot lunch of chili and hot dogs plus lots of cookies and hot chocolate.

In the weeks leading up to our event we made 300 buttons and distributed them to all the elementary schools in our area. Each of these schools have their own cross country ski equipment and it is a regular activity for classes to go outside and ski around their playground or play on the hills. Many of these kids also come to our Skills Development Program on Sunday afternoons (ski lessons).

We offered free day passes to all non-members plus we offered free ski rentals – and most of our skis were used. We have only had children sized skis for two years but almost all of the 17 pairs were out on the course. We had at least 155 participants sign our guest book. We coordinated our event with our Sunday lesson group so they went with their coaches and circulated around to all the activity centers. And we had drop-ins join them in all the fun. Plus there were lots of people just out enjoying the trails.





How much fun is this?!!



Our group at the end of the festivities





On Saturday, a group of intrepid skiers braved the weather of blowing snow and cold winds to climb the trails to the Spud Tower and pitch tents for the night. The ski is about a 12 km climb from our lodge with an elevation gain of around 600 metres. The youngest skier was 9 years old.

They cooked dinner on an open campfire and sometime during the night set off a bunch of fireworks. They warmed themselves with the fire and lots of 'sommores'. In the morning they skied back down the trail and enjoyed hot pancakes in the lodge. Thanks to their 'support team' the snowmobiles delivered all of their equipment up and down the hill.

This isn't the first time that some of our young skiers have celebrated World Snow Day up on Spud Mountain but it might have been the most comfortable one – due to the large wall tent this time. And we hope it becomes an annual trek!



On Sunday, another group of 11 skied up to the tower. The weather was still snowy, foggy and the wind blew the whole time but it didn't daunt the tough Canadians eh! We had promised a beautiful view but instead... Most of these pictures were all taken at the end of their almost 25 km ski. Thanks to the overnight campers there was a blazing campfire for a warm-up at the top. And although we had reports of cold skiers when the groomer went on a recce (and potential rescue mission) he found them all racing down the hill.



If you want to see more of our pictures just take a look at our website: www.ominecaskiclub.ca

There is a slideshow at: <http://ominecaskiclub.ca/upcoming-events/special-events-2/>

