

Nordic skiers wind up season at State

By Charlie Kanzig
Correspondent

The Nordic ski racers wound up their season on Friday and Saturday, February 25-26 at Mt. Bachelor, with the Oregon Interscholastic Ski Racing Association (OISRA) State Championships, sponsored by the Oregon Nordic Ski Foundation and Central Oregon Radiology.

The OISRA is the governing body for high school ski racing in Oregon for both the Nordic and alpine divisions. The alpine State meet is set for March 3-4.

Schools represented at the meet in addition to the Outlaws included Bend, Summit, Mt. View, Corvallis, Hood River, Redmond Proficiency Academy, La Pine, St. Mary's Academy,

and Ashland.

The first day of the state competition featured the five-kilometer freestyle (skate) race. Brooklyn Liddell skated to an impressive 12th-place finish, clocking a time of 16:59.

Ella Bartlett placed 42nd (22:19) and Josie Berg 55th (25:35) to complete the scoring for Sisters.

Neve Gerard of Bend Senior High won the race with a blistering time of 14:19.4.

For the boys, Evan Eby came through first for the Outlaws in 15th place with a time of 14:50.1, which was 2:12 back from Zach Jayne of Summit who won the race in 12:37.5.

Kaleb Briggs placed 38th (16:58.98) and Jackson Griffin 58th (19:19.8) to round out the results for Sisters.

In Saturday's four-kilometer classic race, Liddell crossed the line in 18th place with a time of 19:16. Bartlett came in next in 29th place (21:33.4) and Berg 62nd in 28:05 among 77 finishers.

Sophie Corkran of Mountain View took top honors in 14:27.7.

Evan Eby cracked the top dozen in the boys classic,

finishing 12th in 14:47. Briggs placed 30th (16:52) and Griffin 62nd (20:51).

Jayne completed his sweep of the weekend by winning the classic in 12:11.8.

Three-person teams combined for a relay event to cap the meet in which Sisters placed sixth among the girls' teams, while the boys finished fifth.

Two-day combined scores resulted in Liddell and Eby each placing 12th overall as individuals.

Team scores are determined by the places of the top three finishers in each race from each school. Summit won the overall girls division with 40 points, while Summit took the top trophy on the boys side with 21 points.

Sisters placed fifth among girls teams and sixth among boys.

Dave Smullin, who oversaw coaching duties for the Outlaws in addition to skiers from Redmond, said, "I am incredibly impressed with these six athletes. They have been a really fun group to work with and I will be sad to lose 5 of them to graduation."

Bartlett is a sophomore, while the rest of the team will



PHOTO BY JULIE HOWLAND

Evan Eby digs in hard on the Nordic course at Mt. Bachelor.



PHOTO BY JULIE HOWLAND

Brooklyn Liddell made a strong showing for the Outlaws in Nordic skiing championships last weekend.

graduate this spring.

Smullin acknowledged that the competitive level in the league, especially of the Bend schools, is very high.

"The Bend skiers all have their top racers being coached five to six days a week by Mount Bachelor Sports Education Foundation, who compete at the national level, so compared to our kids who

could train only three days a week and considering most of them had never skied competitively before, they still came out among the top non-club skiers."

Smullin hopes the team will continue next year with a return of Bartlett and a new crop of skiers. "Hopefully we can recruit another bunch and keep this going."

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