

Manitoba Naturalist Society  
Jackrabbit Program  
Annual Report 2001-2002  
October 19, 2002

We had our most successful year in several years thanks to better snow conditions, and to the unflagging efforts of Michael and Franziska Edney to recruit new skiers. We had 37 registered skiers. We did refuse some new registrations after Christmas in order to maintain leader to skier ratios at a workable level. The interest was certainly there.

During the season we had 8 volunteers who led the program as volunteers. Three of our leaders have gone through the coaching clinics offered by the Cross Country Ski Association; as well we are fortunate to have a former ski team member, Christy Willim, who brought her enthusiasm and experience to the club. To further strengthen our coaching skills, we met once a week with Laurie Penton, who led us through a series of helpful activities which we then used in our Tuesday night sessions. We also held a waxing clinic for the parents and for the older skiers, at the beginning of the season, and once during the season.

As our present group of skiers get older we have begun to introduce them to some of the events around the province, the Pinawa race, the tour at Birch, the Wednesday night races; as well, a group of three families from the club spent a week in Canmore, which turned out to be a great motivator for the kids.

Presently, the club has \$2,870.30 and we are looking for ways to invest this in the program. To help promote club spirit we invested in toques for all the kids last season, as well as providing jackets for all the leaders. Now that we have more kids in the older age bracket we plan to encourage more participation in weekend races and other activities. We also offer clinics to our volunteers in order to improve our skill level as a club. Finally, our annual Dash For Cash was very successful this year with more young skiers participating than in quite some time.

Last year we met twice as leaders, once at the beginning of the season to organize teams and to orient new instructors, and once at the end of the season. Michael Edney has left the club for a year and we have reorganized the responsibilities with Larry Paetkau coordinating activities, Harald Weigeldt in charge of bingos, and Roy Olynick taking care of registrations.

Overall, our last season was very positive. Kids were extremely motivated, many medals were won, several skiers clocked more than 200 kms, and this enthusiasm was evident in our season windup where many of the parents expressed their appreciation for the season.

Larry Paetkau  
MNS Jackrabbit Coordinator