

# Cold weather the winner in some cross-country races at Otway on weekend

The course at Otway Nordic Centre was great on the weekend, but not all the BC Cup skiers got the chance to try it.

There were races on both Saturday and Sunday, but cold temperatures forced the cancellation of some of the age groups. Sunday's RHB Schmitz de Grace Free Technique races for the Atom, Pee Wee and Bantam categories (born after 2003) were cancelled entirely because the forecast high was colder than -15 C. Those same categories saw their head-to-head heats in Saturday's Home Hardware Classic Technique Sprint races cancelled, although organizers were able to award medals based on qualification times held earlier in the morning.

Members of the host Caledonia Nordic

Ski Club did well in a number of the races. Isla Cadell was third in the Atom division on Saturday, while Danielle Clare was first and Payton Sinclair third in the Pee Wee Girls' division.

In the Pee Wee Boys' race, Liam Williamson was second and Lukas Noll third. Lia Huggett was the top local finisher in Bantam Girls, coming in eighth. The Bantam Boys' race saw Caledonia's Damien Georgyev finish tied for third.

Among the groups which were able to complete their head-to-head heats on Saturday, Kaja Andal was 12th in Juvenile Girls, Erica Kreitz was fourth and Sage Bialuski fifth in Junior Girls, and Alexander Nemethy was 14th in Junior Boys.

Junior Women, Master Men and Master

Women raced a 5km interval start race rather than a sprint. In the Master Mens race, John Hagen was third and Scot Forrest fifth.

In Sunday's free technique races, Caledonia skiers ended up claiming one of each of the three podium spots. Kaja Andal finished more than a minute ahead in the Juvenile Girls race, while Emily Dickson and Erica Kreitz were second and third respectively in the Junior Girls race.

Two other Caledonia skiers, Pippa Roots (seventh) and Sage Bialuski (10th) also finished in the top 10 of the Junior Girls race.

In the Midget Girls race, Danika Pjala was seventh and Sadie Bialuski eighth, while Jordan Bass was 17th in the Midget

Boys race.

Alexander Nemethy finished 13th in the Junior Boys race.

A number of the skiers taking part in the weekend races will be back at Otway in February for the Canada Winter Games.

The same weather concerns could affect the Canada Games races, as the International Ski Federation rules state that if the temperature at the coldest point on the course, without factoring in the wind, is below -20 C, the race must be postponed or cancelled.

If the temperature is OK but there are other weather factors, such as strong winds or icy track conditions, the race can be postponed or the distance of it can be shortened.