



CITIZEN PHOTO BY JAMES DOYLE  
 Patrick Stewart-Jones of Nakkertok, Ont., leads a group of skiers during a heat race Saturday at the Haywood NorAm Buff Sprays Western Canadian cross-country skiing championships at Otway Nordic Centre. Stewart-Jones won the heat and finished second overall in the open men's class.

# Beatty beats rush to sprint gold

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In her final tune-up before she tackles World Cup competition in Ski Tour Canada, Dariah Beatty completed a two-race weekend sweep on the cross-country slopes of Prince George. The 21-year-old from Whitehorse, Yukon, was content to tailgate behind Olivia Bouffard-Nesbitt for most of Saturday's open women sprint final at the Haywood NorAm Buff Sprays Western Canadian championships at Otway Nordic Centre. But once that finish line was in sight, Beatty kicked into passing gear and beat the clock ahead of Bouffard-Nesbitt. "I was really happy to get another win, it was a fun course and having Olivia right in there the whole time it was a really competitive race and I was able to have a strong finish and outspurt her to

the finish," said Beatty. "Coming down the last chute I was still behind her and I just pounced when I had the chance." Overnight rain Saturday made for tricky wax conditions for the classic race and Beatty and her wax team had to re-wax her grip zone before she tackled the steep, hilly course. "Warming up for the heats I wasn't getting any kick and my coaches completely redid my skis right before my race," said Beatty, who qualified second-quickest behind Bouffard-Nesbitt of Fondeurs-Laurentides (Morin Heights, Que.). "I was able to stride everything, I didn't have to herringbone at all, which really made a difference." Beatty came to Prince George trailing NorAm points leader Cendrine Browne of St. Jerome, Que., but after winning the sprint event and Friday's 7.5-kilometre freestyle race, Beatty is back in the

**I'm real happy to get that lead back I had before Christmas and I'm looking forward to Tour Canada.**

— Dariah Beatty

driver's seat. "I'm real happy to get that lead back I had before Christmas and I'm looking forward to Tour Canada," said Beatty, who raced two individual and two team World Cups in Slovenia and Czech Republic in January. "I like to race as much as I can to get myself into race mode and this was a perfect two days of racing. It couldn't have gone better." The Tour consists of eight days

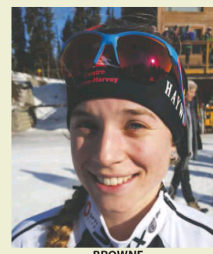
of racing in 12 days (March 1-12) when Ski Tour Canada brings the World Cup tour to Gatineau, Que., Quebec City, Montreal and Canmore. Fourteen males and 12 females will make the Canadian team. The three-day Western Canadian event in Prince George was the last chance for skiers to qualify for the tour. "I've never done that much racing close together so it will be a real test of fitness and an amazing experience," said Beatty. "There's three sprints and five distance races. The last four races are in Canmore. I've been training there for three-and-a-half years so I'll have a bit of home course advantage, for sure." Beatty will finish her season in her hometown, Whitehorse is hosting the Canadian championships, March 18-28. In the open men's final, Bob Thompson of Thunder Bay, Ont., made a last-second lunge to

hold off fellow Ontarian Patrick Stewart-Jones of Nakkertok Ski Club to win the 1.4km race. With that win, Thompson locked up his spot on Ski Tour Canada. "It was real close, I knew it was going to come right down to Patrick and I, I guess I had a bit more at the finish," said Thompson. "He was just behind me when I was leading at the start and he had a bit more in the main climb and I just made sure I stayed right on him so we would have a good finish." "Winning this, it will be a confirmed spot (in the Tour) and that will be my first World Cup and I just hope to make a bit of a jump to really show myself. Hopefully we'll have a bit of an advantage over those (European) guys being on home turf." Stewart-Jones was upset after the race and claimed Thompson interfered with him in the final straightaway. — see OTWAY, page 11

# Quebec skier Browne qualifies for Tour

Ted CLARKE Citizen staff

Cendrine Browne was worried about course conditions for Sunday's 15-kilometre classic race at the Haywood NorAm/ Buff Sprays Western Canadian cross-country ski championships. The overnight freeze made the already-challenging downhill at Otway Nordic Centre a bit more dicey, and she had the choice of putting on the brakes to make those tight corners safer, or just let gravity take over. Browne chose the latter, and that approach took her to the top of the podium in the senior women's class. The 22-year-old from St. Jerome, Que., led from start to finish, completing the course 52 seconds ahead of second-place Annika Hicks of Canmore Nordic, who was just six-tenths of a second in front of bronze medalist Katherine Stewart-Jones of Nakkertok, Ont. "I was afraid of the downhills, but they weren't so bad," Browne said. "It was so icy and I was afraid of losing my kick (wax) on the downhills because when you skid you lose all your klisters. There's a lot of big uphills on the course so having good kick is important, but I had great skis. My grip was excellent." Browne spent a week before the NorAm races training at altitude at Lake Louise and was not feeling physically strong when she started her weekend at Otway. Despite



BROWNE

that, she was fifth in Friday's 10km freestyle race and made the A-final in Saturday's sprint. Browne's next challenge is Ski Tour Canada, an eight-race, 12-day World Cup tour event March 1-12 which stops in Gatineau, Que., Montreal, Quebec City and Canmore. She will be part of a 12-female, 14-male Canadian team on the Tour. "I'm really excited to race World Cups in Canada, I'm going to be able to race in front of my family and friends, racing the best in the world," Browne said. "I did some World Cups earlier this season in Europe but that's not the same as racing at

home. It's a pretty big advantage because we won't have jet lag and we can eat the food we're used to eating. There's a lot of snow in Quebec right now. I hope the Europeans will be happy about the nice trails." Evan Palmer-Charette of Thunder Bay, Ont., won the senior men's 20km classic. He had with a pack of jackrabbits which included Lappe Nordic clubmates Andy Shields and Michael Somppi, David Palmer of Black Jack (Rossland) and Patrick Stewart-Jones of Nakkertok and they set the pace in the race, which consisted of four five-km laps. "We kind of worked together until the final K when Mike Somppi pushed the pace and I was just able to get by him over the top of the last climb and hang onto the finish," said Palmer-Charette. "There's two significant climbs on this course, the one main one off the start and one in the latter half of the course, and between that the technical downhills played a big role today and I was able to keep my grip without having to skid on the corners. Some guys were skidding a bit more and I think lost their kick and weren't able to climb the hills at the end." The 21-year-old Palmer-Charette finished in 53:11.5, just one-tenth of second behind Shields and a five-tenths before Stewart-Jones. Palmer-Charette raced at the 2015 Canada Winter Games in Prince George, where

he finished second in the 15km freestyle race and anchored Team Ontario to gold in the relay. He said this past weekend's conditions at Otway – fast trails, warm sunny weather – were virtually the same as what he encountered a year ago. "I'd say this is my favourite venue other than home, Lappe Nordic, so I was pumped to come back here once again," said Palmer-Charette. "I really like the technical downhills – skiing those well is definitely an attribute of mine. I also like the longer, more gradual climbs that are on the trail system here, not like short steep pitchy ones. I love the weather here. Is it like this all the time?" In other open category results, Gareth Williams of Telemark Ski Club (West Kelowna) won the junior men's race, with Gaelan McLean of Whitehorse, Yukon, second and Peter Hicks of Canmore claiming bronze. Katie Weaver of Vancouver captured gold in the junior women's race, while Ingvald Hoymork of Edmonton and India McIsaac of Calgary (Rocky Mountain Racers), were second and third respectively. Kaia Andal of Caledonia won her second Haywood NorAm medal in the junior girls 7.5km classic mass start race. Rachel May of Larch Hills Nordic (Solomon Arm) and Sara McLean of Foothills Nordic (Calgary) finished 1-2 respectively among the junior girls.

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# Sports 11

## Otway 'course really suits me,' says Thompson

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"I went out of the track and came up beside him and we might have touched poles a bit and he felt he missed a few poles with that," said Thompson, who was unsure if Stewart-Jones would lodge a protest.

Thompson, who turns 25 on Feb. 27, just missed the age cutoff to compete in the 2015 Canada Winter Games in Prince George. This was his first time racing at Otway and he was impressed with the sprint course layout.

"The course really suits me, a lot of double-poling and there was a bit of ice on the corners this morning and that got a few guys," said Thompson, who also won the NorAm classic sprint in Canmore. "Classic sprinting is kind of my specialty. I started to be more of a sprinter last year and I'm still trying to maintain the all-around and I'm still having a few good distance results."

Thompson, who was eighth in Friday's 15km freestyle race, came to Prince George ranked fourth in the Canadian NorAm standings and was fifth in the Buff Sprint points.

Other sprint winners and their club affiliations were: Junior girls – Ingvild Hoymork, Edmonton Nordic; Junior men – Gareth Williams, Telemark (West Kelowna); Juvenile girls – Alana Brittin, Revelstoke; Rachel May, Larch Hills (Salmon Arm); Juvenile boys – Remi Drolet, Black Jack (Rossland); Junior boys – Reed Godfrey, Canmore Nordic.

Caledonia Nordic Ski Club results were as follows, Junior girls – Kaia Andal was ninth, Danika Fiala was 22nd, Ariadne Douglas was 23rd and Mackenzie Connon was 26th; Juvenile boys – Jordan Bax was 18th, Bhavish Parshotam was 27th; Junior boys – Christian