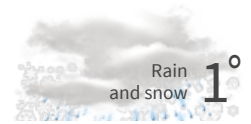


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SPORTS

Fernie Nordic Society hosted the Kootenay Cup



Loic Weber gets set to race as volunteer Emma Dressler looks on. — Image Credit: Submitted

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by [Bryn Catton - The Free Press](#)
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This is the first year that the Fernie Nordic Society (FNS) has held a Kootenay Cup race. The Nordic race series is a part of the 2015-16 Teck Regional Cup Program. Offering athletes age-appropriate categories and accessibility to competitive opportunities. The Kootenay series is one of four that Teck has sponsored in the U.S. and Canada.

Despite the Griz having mixed feelings about the weekend, the FNS's event was sunny and spring-like.

“The stress level was high until a couple hours before the race. It rained past midnight the night before the race; the temperature did not go below zero. Despite these conditions, race morning turned out to be one of the sunniest we've had in a while,” said Megan Lohmann, president of the FNS. “Conditions were spring-skiing - the snow was softer and became more so as the morning progressed. The Masters and SuperRec categories definitely had the hardest conditions to battle. So

goes weather in Fernie.”



Clara Michal, Monty Clarke, Gryffin Falzon-Knoop and Norah Lohmann are members of the Fernie Nordic Society and competed in the Teck Kootenay Cup, which the Fernie Nordic Ski Club hosted over the weekend.

As it was the FNS's first time hosting the event it marks a big step for the club.

“The Elk Valley Nordic Centre has

been open only three seasons, and we've had a formal race team for two seasons - people were so supportive of our young club and patient with the big learning curve,” said Lohmann. “[We had] great feedback on the prizes and awards too. The top three racers that fell outside of the core Kootenay Cup categories received a handmade medal, made locally by Ron Lantz, which participants were very excited about. Our volunteers put on an amazing lunch spread, with desserts, and the bonfire was a big hit.”

The newer venue and its amenities provided the ideal start/finish location for the race. Many sections of trail that the clubs partners have contributed to were also used for the event.

“The Elk Valley Nordic Centre was an amazing venue. We had great feedback on the course - lots of comments on the hills and the advantage our Fernie racers would have in terms of fitness and hill work,” said Lohmann. “The warming hut was dedicated to our timing and result volunteers, which worked out well given the warm day. We are so grateful to The Cedars, Galloway and Mount Fernie Province Park for partnering with us in developing these trails.”

The Teck Kootenay Cup had almost 100 participants from B.C., Alberta and the U.S.A.

“We had an incredible turnout for our first ever Kootenay Cup - 96 registrants from a variety of clubs. We were lucky enough to host racers from Libby, Montana, Sovereign Lake, Black Jack Ski Club [from] Rossland, Toby Creek Nordic [from] Invermere, Kimberley Nordic, Nelson Nordic Ski Club and Foothills Nordic [from] Calgary,” said Lohmann.

While the event is a big step for the club, they have also had a great membership turn out for this season.

“Club registration has far exceeded 700 members this year. We reached 575 last year - the increase is so exciting for our club, and demonstrates the community that is developing around cross-country skiing,” said Lohmann

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