



## Pemberton podiums aplenty at Teck Coast Cup

### Strong performance by Spud Valley Nordics at WOP

Vince Shuley / Whistler Question

January 19, 2015 06:36 PM



The Open and Masters Men storm out of the starting area at the Teck Coast Cup on Sunday (Jan. 18) at Whistler Olympic Park. Photo by Vince Shuley

The rain and wind on Sunday (Jan. 18) did not deter over 300 competitors from accruing points at the third stop of the 2015 Teck Coast Cup at Whistler Olympic Park.

Clubs from Whistler, Pemberton, Squamish, Vancouver and Vancouver Island travelled to the Callaghan Valley for a series of team sprint races, ranging from a 100m circuit for the Peewees to 1000m for the Open and Masters categories.

The Hollyburn Cross Country Ski Club, based at Cypress Mountain, showed its strength by sweeping the podium in the Bantam Girls and Juvenile Boys categories and bringing around half of the 300 competitors. But hosts Spud Valley Nordics were able to hold their own with wins in the Bantam, Juvenile and Midget age categories with all top spots going to the girls' team.

Kaede Kawano and Alisa Feuz took first place Juvenile Girls after making a breakaway on their second of three 600m laps each, edging in front of Whistler Nordics' Lauren McKay and Linnea Uunila.

“The wax was fast, but the snow was really slushy and pretty hard to ski in,” said Kawano shortly after crossing the finish line. “We’re all pretty even (in fitness), so it was a pretty hard race. It was difficult to keep pace up at the top of the hill climb.”

Other Spud Valley wins went to Marlie Molinaro and Alexa Hunter in Bantam Girls and Sakura Kawano and Fiona Davies in Midget Girls. Jack L’Estrange and Alex Feuz managed a third place in Bantam Boys with strong competition from Strathcona and Hollyburn ski clubs.

Nordic Teams from UBC took first place in the Junior Women and Open Men, the group being well familiar with the venue at Whistler Olympic Park.

“We had a lot of fun I think, but it was pretty wet out there,” said Robert Ragotte, who won the Open Men category with teammate Evgeniy Panzhinskiy. “Even for a West Coast race (the weather) was pretty bad but we still had fun. It’s always an adventure in pouring rain.”

Cross country skiing is one of the few snowsports that will rarely cancel a race due to poor weather and even with the high winds and freezing rain keeping spectators and volunteers chilled on Sunday, the turnout was much higher than expected.

“We had double the number of participants than last year,” said Deloris Franz Los, chair of the Spud Valley Nordics. “There were so many kids and they were so happy to be here, but it was really tough on the officials.”

The team sprint format also helped with the challenging conditions, with the young racers passing by the stadium area frequently and receiving encouragement from the crowds.

Franz Los made note of the tireless efforts by volunteer staff in putting on the event and rewarded all their hard work by gifting them all with five pound bags of Pemberton potatoes.

For full results head to [spudvalleynordics.com](http://spudvalleynordics.com).

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