

Vernon

X-country skiers hit the trails

Darren Handschuh - Nov 18, 2015 / 3:47 pm



Photo: Contributed

If the opening week is any indication, it is going to be quite a year for Nordic skiing in the North Okanagan.

From Nov. 11-15, a record-breaking 79 skiers and 14 coaches from around British Columbia ascended to Sovereign Lake Nordic Centre and Silver Star Mountain for the annual Fall Snow Camp hosted by [Cross Country BC](#), the provincial sport organization for cross country skiing.

The BC Ski Team, BC Development Squad and BC Talent Squad all took part in the camp.

"This is the first time on snow for most of our athletes, which makes for a lot of excitement, but they are encouraged to ski slowly and smoothly to adjust to early season conditions and the higher altitude," said CCBC provincial coach Chris Manhard.

The camp consisted of long, slow skis around the mountain, as well as team sprints, strength training, psychology and nutrition presentations and even early morning jogs.

The purpose of CCBC's early season snow camp is to work on ski technique as well as fitness and strength before competitions get underway.

Local skier Hannah Mehain, a member of the BC Ski Team and national champion, was happy to have such a positive camp experience at home.

"I feel very fortunate to have a training camp like this right in my backyard because I was able to get lots of good, quality training with my fellow teammates," said Mehain. "We had excellent early season snow conditions and access to lots of trails at Silver Star and Sovereign."

CCBC has been utilizing Vernon's cross country ski areas for years, as it provides good early season skiing as well as altitude training. Dudley Coulter, CCBC's athlete development co-ordinator said Sovereign Lake and Silver Star usually provide the best early season conditions in Canada.



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The race season officially gets underway in B.C. Nov. 29 when the Teck Coast Cup will take place in Whistler.

Vernon will see the first race of the season on Dec. 12-13 when the Haywood NorAm takes place, welcoming Canada's best cross country skiers to B.C.

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