

Canadian Ski Mountaineering Cup Complete for 2008

Contributed by The Editors
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CANADIAN NATIONAL Calendar featured events at Fernie, Sunshine, Whittowater, and Whistler. Ski mountaineering competition Canada declares winners and releases rankings from their national cup calendar. Season concludes with the "spearhead passage" national championship race at Whistler on 19 April.

The overall Cup winners, after points calculations based on racers' best three results over the season's events, are Aaron Chance of Revelstoke, and Melanie Bernier, of Whistler. Notable performances and outstanding efforts were also delivered by Andy Traslín, Jeff Colvin, Reiner Thoni, and Steve Sellars for the men, and Kylee Toth, Julie Matteau, and Billie Valisek for the women.

The races making up this second calendar year for the fledgling Ski Mountaineering Competition Canada were not without occasional controversy. Organizers, officials, and athletes alike learned that weather issues, course setting and control, and complex rules could make for sudden disappointments. At Fernie, a few very capable racers missed a transition in bad visibility. At Sunshine, grooming machinery for the ski hill took out course markers the night before the race. At Whistler, the requirement for racers to use runaway straps while skiing in-bounds led to confusion and time penalties for many. But overall the courses were better than the previous year, the prizes and sponsorship richer, and level of competition higher.

No one gave more than the athletes themselves. Skiers would drive for hours through the night to make the next stop on the circuit, giving up work and sacrificing time off to training. Members of the National Team raised money, sought sponsors and patrons, and paid their own way to Switzerland for the World Championships in February.

Subscriptions to the Canadian Ski Mountaineering Cup race series for the '08 season were up in almost every respect. There were more races, in more places. There were more competitors in all categories, both Competitive and Citizen/Recreational, male and female. Plus, there were more enthusiasts, in the form of skiers attending more than one or two events during the season.

Sponsors for the Canadian Cup series were more involved than ever during the '08 season, providing not only prizes, but expertise and organizational support. Thanks to all those that donated or contributed, and in particular to organizing bodies The Alpine Club of Canada, Arc'teryx, The North Face, Backcountry Safety, ROAM, Recreational Outfitters Inc. (Coltex, Fritchi, etc.), and Ortovox Canada. Thanks also for the professional support and enthusiasm from our patron ski hills at Fernie, Sunshine, Whittowater, and Whistler.

Look for an even better and bigger calendar in the winter of '09. Register for the SMCC emailing list, and watch www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/ccc/ismc for results, athlete rankings, and calendar details.

Come out for the contest, the party with your friends, or just to learn more about this exciting and challenging new kind of ski racing.

David Dornian, chair

SKI MOUNTAINEERING COMPETITION CANADA / COMPÉTITION DU SKI RANDONNÉE CANADA

The Alpine Club of Canada

www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/cc/ismc