

NDC Thunder Bay Athlete Update Article By: Angus Foster



Where did the summer go? Somehow already find ourselves in September, with shorter Fall days and cooler weather just around the corner. It seems like just a couple of weeks ago we were gearing up for our off-season training, with a packed summer schedule and lots of training in the hot sun ahead of us. But with summer fading behind us and August now in the books, it's time for another athlete update.

Having returned from our training camp in Canmore in early July, we spent the end of July and the first couple weeks of August in Thunder Bay, taking a little much deserved downtime. While we were in town, some of the team made the trip out to Red Rock to participate in the Paju Mountain running race, a local event an hour outside of Thunder Bay. We had some great results at the event, with Scott finishing 1st, Scott 3rd, Sam 4th, Evan 5th and Julian 6th.

Some of us took advantage of the break in our travel schedule to get away for a bit, with many of the athletes visiting home or fitting in a small vacation. Our team training was a bit more relaxed with a few focused workouts, but overall we focused on being rested for our training camps at the end of the month. And while the first couple weeks of August were more relaxed, the end of August was where we really trained hard. The last two weeks of August made up our last big volume block of the summer, with most of us averaging 3+ hours of training a day. Although we have a strong co-ed team spirit, we actually spent most of the volume block in separate men's and women's camps: the men spent 11 days in Wisconsin, while the women spent closer to 2 weeks in training in Quebec City.

The girls were part of a joint training camp organized by Cross Country Canada, which included the women's teams from CNEPH and the AWCA (the NDC's training centre counterparts). The camp was focused on getting all the top women in the country together to train together and work towards being the best in the world. Female athlete and dropout have been a problem in Canadian skiing over the last decade, with our women's national team falling from one of the best in the world just 10 years ago to not having a World Cup team for this season. Our girls spent just over two weeks training just outside Quebec, working with the top female skiers and coaches in the country, and getting in lots of rollerskiing on a closed rollerski track.

Rather than meeting up for big training camp, the men got away for some training (and male bonding) in Hayward, Wisconsin, a small town best known for hosting the finish of the American Birkenbeiner, the biggest ski race in North America.



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Joining us at the camp was American skier and Olympian Brian Gregg from Minneapolis, who tagged along for a week and showed us the area. We stayed in lakeside cabins just outside Hayward, and spent 11 days training in the area. We spent a lot of time rollerskiing on the great roads around Hayward, along with lots of running and ski-walking on the Birkenbeiner trails. As our “night out” for the camp, we headed into take to Famous BBQ for dinner for the full American experience. Our camp concluded with a makeshift triathlon organized by the coaches, complete with a 250m swim, a 4km run and a 12km skate rollerski.

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After our respective camps, we all met back up in Thunder Bay, and after a couple of days of easy training, Timo hit us with some hard pole-walking and striding intervals in Centennial Park, just to make sure we were good and tired! We continued with some easy training to close out the month, bringing us into September. We are headed into our fall testing week, and after that some of the older athletes will be heading to Park City, Utah for a training camp with the National Team, with the rest of us staying back in Thunder Bay. With Fall arriving and winter coming around the corner things will really start to ramp up for us, so be sure to check back at the end of the month for our September update!



The Boys in Hayward



The girls in Quebec

