

For Immediate Release
July 1, 2009

Summer Orienteering at the Canmore Nordic Centre

The Canmore Nordic Center's new orienteering facilities opened in May and have been attracting a steady stream of locals and visitors who are taking the challenge to see how quickly they can navigate through the courses.

The permanent courses are changed three times each year – in the spring, summer, and fall – to give people new challenges and to take them into different parts of the park. A special race will be held on the opening day of each course. The Grand Launch of the 2009 Summer courses takes place on July 12th, starting with a presentation by Patrick Goeres, North America's top orienteer at 10:00am in the Nordic Center Day Lodge, a short introduction to orienteering clinic at 10:30am, and the racing starting at 11am. Entry fee is \$5 and includes introductory clinic, race, map, and compass & timing chip rental.

Beginners to experts can all enjoy exploring the Nordic Center while refining their navigation skills. There are three courses of increasing difficulty (Green, Blue, and Black) for runners, walkers and hikers. In addition there is a fourth course for mountain bikers. The Green course is suitable for families and hikers that want to enjoy time in the forest and learning basic map reading skills, while experienced orienteers and adventure racers will get a full-on physical and navigational challenge from the Black course.

The permanent orienteering courses are suitable for a wide range of groups including adventure racers wanting to improve their navigation skills, school groups, families, running groups, mountain bike clubs, hiking groups, tourists, corporate team building groups, and even birthday parties. The courses can be done individually or in teams.

"We have had a few larger mountain bike O groups, corporate groups, a kids' hockey camp as well as quite a few members of the Canadian Nordic ski team try the courses", says Andy Pohl of Trail Sports. "My ski club also ran quite possibly the first ever Biathlon O in Canada using that looped course I planned. This was very successful and is something my club and possibly the national biathlon team may look at repeating often."

The Canadian Junior & Senior orienteering squads held a training camp at the Nordic Center in May in preparation for their competitive summer season. Patrick Goeres, North America's top orienteer, set a record time of 17:58 for the Blue course – more than three minutes faster than team-mate Jon Torrance. On the Black course, Yukoner and former National Team member Brent Langbakk holds the fastest time of 29:54, just three minutes faster than another former national team member, Canmore resident Alaric Fish. Fastest women's times are 37:54 from Kat Orekhova from the USA and 44:23 from Sarah Brandreth of Calgary.

To try the permanent orienteering courses, simply visit Trail Sports at the Canmore Nordic Centre where for \$5 you will receive an orienteering map (to keep), an introductory brochure, and the rental of an electronic timing chip and compass. When you finish the course you get a print out of your times and you can compare splits with the online results on the Trail Sports website.

For more information and to register please visit www.barebones.ca/Canmore

Speaker Profile: Patrick Goeres



World Champs, 2008 Sprint Final



Training at Canmore Nordic Center, 2009

(hi res versions available)

I am a 24-year old, orienteering athlete competing for Canada. My dream is to medal at the World Orienteering Championships, Canada's best ever result. I began orienteering 7 years ago in high school as I did lots of outdoor sports like running, climbing, canoeing and skiing. At the time, I was getting into Adventure Racing, but when I discovered orienteering, I quickly found my new passion! I worked hard to improve steadily over the next few years. I competed at the 2005 Junior World Champs in Switzerland and the next year's senior World Champs in Denmark. Both were invaluable experiences to lead me towards an 8th place Qualification finish in the 2008 World Championships in Czech Republic. Having graduating from my undergrad degree at the University of Winnipeg, I am currently living the dream of a full-time athlete and training hard for the 2009 World Championships in Hungary!

For more information

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Backgrounder

What is Orienteering?

Originally developed over 100 years ago in Scandinavia, orienteering has grown as a sport to the point where races are held in over 60 countries worldwide every year, and the International Orienteering Federation has expanded to include some 70 member nations, and is actively developing the possibility of orienteering being added as an Olympic event. The sport itself requires competitors to navigate to designated checkpoints using map and compass through unknown terrain. While most races involve high-speed cross-country running, other popular variations include orienteering on mountain bikes or on nordic skis. With recent increases in Adventure Racing, orienteering has gained popularity amongst adventure racers looking for an opportunity to enhance their navigational skills.

Orienteering appeals to outdoor-oriented athletes – people who enjoy being active in the fresh, clean air. It features a very low environmental impact, and encourages participants to respect and appreciate nature. It is a non-violent sport, and is free from doping scandals and other controversies.

At the elite level, Canada has been regularly represented at the World Championships for more than 35 years. This year, members of the Canadian Team will be competing at World Championships, Junior World Championships, World Cup series, as well as numerous regional and national races across North America.

At the recreational level, orienteering is a good way for all members of the family to enjoy the outdoors while learning navigational skills and developing comfort in the wilderness. Weekend warriors enjoy the physical challenge of running, biking or skiing while solving the mental challenges of navigation and route choice presented by the course planner. All orienteering events have a variety of courses available for participants to choose from, ranging from short and technically easy courses for the youngsters, to long and technically challenging for the elites.

While the core of the international racing season lasts from May-September, most regions are active and conduct orienteering events year-round. Major races are typically held between April and November each year. The North American racing schedule includes dozens of larger (100+ participants) races yearly, with an even greater number of smaller races and training events.

For more information, try:

Orienteering Events in Canmore	www.barebones.ca/Canmore
Foothills Wanderers Orienteering Club	www.orienteeringCalgary.ca
Alberta Orienteering Association	www.orienteeringAlberta.ca
Canadian Orienteering Federation	www.orienteering.ca
International Orienteering Federation	www.orienteering.org