



The U-6 competitors get ready to start their 1 km ski race as part of the Nordic combined during the Cloquet Invitational at Pine Valley.



Clara Thompson from the Cloquet Ski Club makes her second jump from the 20-meter ramp at the Cloquet Invitational at Pine Valley.



Ski jumping judges (from left) Mike Sobczak, Mike Randall, Mike Rasmussen and Ken Ripp score individual jumpers on style and form from the judges stand at Pine Valley during Saturday's competition.

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he said, recalling that his parents paid for a button that would allow each kid access to the hills and trails all season long. “We’d spend all day here on the weekends.”

While Johnson used to alpine ski, Cloquet’s Terry DeMenge was a jumper. “I cracked up in ’67 and never went back up the hill,” DeMenge said. “But I was the ‘rabbit ears’ champ — that would be the 20-meter jump now.”

DeMenge was there watching his grandson, who is now about the same age he was when he jumped.

Johnson didn’t have any kids or grand-kids jumping or racing Saturday, but he wanted to see the kids go off the big jump and enjoy the community spirit outside the chalet.

“It’s fun to see it, and see people like Mike Randall, and (Kerry) Kolodge and people who used to ski,” Johnson said. “It’s good to see it busy like this.”

Some of those names from Cloquet’s glory days helped judge Saturday’s competition, including

the previously mentioned Mike Randall — a 1980 Cloquet grad who competed in the 1984 Olympics in the Nordic combined event. Mike Sobczak, Class of ’72 and a national competitor, was also a judge, alongside a former competitor turned coach, Mike Rasmussen, and current Cloquet coach Ken Ripp. The four scored each jumper for form and style, along with distance (which was called by volunteers standing alongside spray-painted measurements in the snow).

Rasmussen brought four kids — ages 8, 9, 10 and 12 — from the Ishpeming Ski Club, on Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. It was his first time in Cloquet, although he remembered meeting many Cloquet competitors including the Sobczak boys and Mike Cary in the 1960s, ’70s and ’80s, he said.

“I didn’t quit until I had to get a new knee,” he said. “Coaching is as close as I can get now.”

Saturday’s ski jumping competition started with the littlest jumpers — all of them wearing helmets — basically hopping down a 5-meter jump built out of snow next to the chalet.

Then it was time for the 10-meter jump,

also constructed out of snow, but on the big hill opposite the chalet. There were a couple fairly spectacular wipe-outs off the 10-meter, but no injuries.

The numbers got smaller and most of the kids got bigger as the competition progressed to the 20-meter jump and then on to the massive 40-meter jump.

Twelve-year-old Maxim Glyvka of Norge Ski Club in Chicago turned in the longest jump of the day, 37.5 meters off the 40-meter. Glyvka also had the highest score of any competitor at 186 points, followed by Stewart Gundry of the Flying Eagles Club out of Eau Claire, Wis. with 178.2.

Karl Thompson turned in Cloquet’s highest score of the day with 112.2, followed by Charlotte Ripp, with 102.4 points. Ripp placed first for her age group in the Nordic combined event, in which a skier’s race start time is determined by his or her jumping score. Other Cloquet winners in the Nordic combined event included Luella Mark in U-6 girls and Simon Langer for U-8 boys.

Rasmussen praised the facilities in Cloquet, and said it was worth the five-hour drive to compete both days.

“This club has been around a real long time and they’ve had a lot of real good ski jumpers,” he said. “And you want to get these kids together, to form friendships and compete.

“Plus you can’t expect anyone else to come to your tournaments if you don’t come to theirs. Now I can tell these guys — we came.”

Also watching Saturday was Tom Marciniak, brother to Mick, the longtime Nordic ski coach who worked with Joe Nowak in the early days of Pine Valley.

Tom said he never jumped or skied, but he loved watching his talented nephews when they were growing up.

“My brother always tried to get me to ski, but I have 12-inch inseams,” he said with a big laugh. “I’m glad to see it still going. A few years ago, I was pretty worried, but look at it now. It’s awesome.”

Editor’s note: Find more photos with the online version of this story at PineKnotNews.com.

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Later, bee balm, coneflowers, milk weeds, echinacea, joy pye weed, heliopsis, rudbeckia, golden alexanders, penstemon, roses, hydrangea, lupine, false indigo and many others attract beneficial insects, bees and neighborhood children. “Woody pollinator plants include viburnum, forsythia, lilac, chokecherry, willow, burning bush and maple,” Smith added. “Their shrub roses have rose hips that are enjoyed by birds all winter. They don’t clean up their gardens until spring as who knows what goes on amongst the dry garden plants in winter.”

Along the way and through the years, the Andersons have taught children and adults about gardening, wildflowers, and pollinators as well as life, compas-

sion, and passion. This is why SWCD thanks Vicki and Terry Anderson for their many years of work on behalf of pollinators and why we bestowed upon them the 2018 Outstanding Pollinator Habitat award. May each of us catch their passion and work to help pollinators in our own little corners of the world, too!

Kim Samuelson is Carlton SWCD’s elected supervisor for District 4. For more information about pollinators, establishing a pollinator habitat, and the annual Conservation Awards program, contact Carlton SWCD at 218-384-3891. You can also find more information about Carlton SWCD on Facebook or on their website at www.carltonswcd.org.



Vicki Anderson (in white coat on right) leads a tour group through her pollinator habitat garden.