

The team behind the team

Much like the "roadies" on the rock star's tour, the wax tech's for the National Ski Team play a vitally important role in the performance on the trails of each competitor.

Canada is considered to have one of the best wax teams in the business. CCC started the program in the lead up to the Calgary Olympics by hiring Sun Valley's John Plummer, with Dave Wood and then Alain Masson also very successfully leading the service team through into the 90's. While it doesn't have the giant waxing trucks, scores of service personnel, or meteorologists as do some of the bigger teams, it presently does have another of the best wax tech's in the business leading the team, Yves Bilodeau.

Yves started as racer with the National team in the early 80's and represented Canada at the Olympics in '88, '92 and at 5 World Championships until retiring in 1995 and getting started on a career as a wax tech with the team. He surprisingly came out of racing retirement prior to '98 which he qualified for, racing in the 10k event while also serving as a wax tech. Yves lives in France and is the leader of the program that presently has 9 full and part-time staff, with additional Canadian coaches assisting for short term stints at major events.



Chandra Crawford (l), Beekie Scott and Sara Renner present NST athlete and technician Yves Bilodeau with a gift for his commitment to the sport. © John Evelyn



Canada's Yves Bilodeau competes in a cross country ski event at the 1988 Calgary Olympic winter Games. (CP PHOTO/COA/ J. Gibson)

While Yves is the leader, the group has to work very tightly as a team to make at times tough and quick decisions based on a combined wealth of knowledge and experience. The days are long, requiring hard work, and demanding a passion for the sport. The rewards however are great, helping athletes' record personal bests. It is not just hard work as there is an opportunity for an occasional ski, to visit some incredible ski trails and locations with a hot sauna every day and the occasional cold beer!

The second full time position is the Technical Service coordinator a former National level racer Joel Jacques. Joel started as a wax tech in 2007 and began his present role in 2010. He does everything from taking care of vehicles, to dealing with the wax companies, ski orders, managing all equipment (the

equipment budget and purchases). This dedicated liaison with the companies is very important. Joel is also a big asset to the coaches and can jump in and take over when needed from taking lactates to leading workouts.

The third full time (winter) employee is Micke Book, who has been with the team since 2007. Prior to that he spent 10 years as a technician with the Swedish team. Micke is an expert on grip wax and ski selection from Ostersund Sweden where he lives with his wife and 2 children and a dog named Devon.

In the winter the team is also joined by Peter Thor who makes his home in Ostersund.



Crawford (l) with Canadian national team technician Micke Book in Östersund, Sweden. (Courtesy photo)

from FasterSkier.com



Former top level Canadian athlete Sacha Bergeron has also been a, full time (winter) wax team member through the support of B2ten for 3 years and Graham MacLean from the Callaghan Valley Training Centre has also been supporting the team for many years on a part time basis during the winter.

[Alain Masson](#), a former Head Technician for the team and presently Yukon Ski team coach lends his experience to the team at major events. Alain was a long time National team athlete skiing with Yves Bilodeau on the team and representing Canada at the 1998 and 1992 Olympics in skiing and the 1994 Games in cycling.

This year there have been 2 new additions to the team on a part time basis, Timo Puiras a former National level racer from Thunder Bay...



and Sweden's Maggan Carlson.



The wax team plays a vital role in the performance of the skiers, and the next time Canada wins a medal on the World Cup circuit, take a moment to also credit the incredible team behind the scenes that help make that success possible.