

# **Cross Country Canada - CCC Awards**

## **Volunteers of the Year**

### **Dawna and Martin Nighbor, North Bay Nordic Ski Club, North Bay, Ontario**

Martin and his wife, Dawna, have had an extensive history of involvement in cross-country skiing over the past 12 years. This involvement quickly grew from a family venture at a club level to a regional, provincial, national level and most recently assisting at a World Junior level.

At a local level, both Martin and Dawna have been involved voluntarily in all aspects of the North Bay Nordic Ski Club including fundraising, ski instruction and coaching, general manager of the North Bay Nordic Junior Racing Team, members of the Board of Directors, and even designing of the renovations to the clubhouse!!

To support the young skiers at the North Bay Nordic Ski Club, both Martin and Dawna obtained and maintained all of their coaching certification for Level 3.

At a regional level, Martina and Dawna served on the NOD Board of Directors and provincially both were member of the High Performance Committee of Cross Country Ontario. Martin played a key role in reorganizing the high performance program in Ontario Martin was also a member of the CCO/NOD coaching staff

Martin and Dawna have volunteered countless hours of tireless coaching over the last 12 years.

In particular, over the last 6 years, as co-coaches for the North Bay Nordic Junior Racing Team, their involvement has been a 12-month commitment involving:

- all weekends throughout the winter
- extended week-ends throughout the winter to travel and coach at 11 Ontario Cup Races and National Races.
- 2 weekly sessions of dryland training throughout the rest of the year an annual week-end team building canoe trip
- several week-end training camps throughout the year
- development of individual training schedules for each team member
- individual interviews on goal setting for each member
- budgeting
- on-going communication with racers and parent informational meetings
- the list is endless!

Martin and Dawna have instilled in the members of the North Bay Nordic Junior Racing Team a passion for skiing. They have become incredibly skilled and skiing will always be a life long pursuit

More importantly, through Dawna and Martin and the sport of cross-country skiing, these young

people have learned some important life lessons about

-working hard, being self-disciplined and focused in order to achieve goals

-understanding, caring for and strengthening the body and

-being empowered by it being disappointed but not giving up

-supporting and encouraging each other and working as a team

-believing in yourself and being the best that you can be

The gifts that Dawna and Martin have given these young skiers, at a formative period in their lives, are immeasurable and will reach far beyond their competitive skiing days. As parents of the North Bay Nordic Junior Racers, we are indebted to Martin and Dawna Nighbor for their countless volunteer hours, their skill and expertise, tireless effort and commitment to the sport and these young people. Indeed, they have gone the extra mile for which we are most grateful

This year Martin was designated coach for the NOD at the Junior Nationals and he participated in the CCO Coaching Seminar in May 2002. This year, 3 of Martin's team members qualified to compete at the Junior Nationals.

Martin's influence on his racers has been far-reaching. Members have gone onto race at the Junior Worlds (David Nighbor placed 34<sup>th</sup>), have been named to the National Training Centres and the National Athletic Development Centre (Jeff Seguin, Dave Nighbor, Linnea Rudachyk), have joined other racing teams (Tavis Apramian is joining the Rocky Mountain Racers) and others have joined various University ski teams (Melanie Weppchert).

Martin is an inspiration to all the young skiers (and their parents!!). He is a dedicated coach who always gives more than one would believe possible – his energy is boundless!

After 12 years of intense involvement and outstanding contributions to the North Bay Nordic Ski Club, the North Bay Nordic Junior Racing Team, the NOD and the CCO, Dawna Nighbor has decided to "pass the torch"!

This year, parents of the North Bay Nordic Junior Racing Team tried to fill the void!! They were in awe of what Dawna had managed to do on a regular basis for so many years.

Some of her responsibilities included:

-managing the team's finances (including collecting membership fees, sponsorships, bill payments, receipts)

-all the 'behind the scene' administration (hotel reservations, transportation arrangements, race registrations, licenses)

- co-coaching at all the sessions throughout the year including dry land training, weekend camps

-co-coaching at all the Ontario Cup Races

Dawna's enormous contributions often went unnoticed as she quietly but effectively worked behind the scenes and at the sidelines preparing each skier for their personal best. For 10 years, Dawna was a manager and co-coach but also "mother" of each team member ensuring that each racer was physically and psychologically prepared.