

**January 18, 2011**

## **Record Crowd Received at Perkinstown's Chilly Races**



Another record number of participants traveled to Perkinstown (near Medford, Wisconsin) on Saturday, January 15, 2011, to snowshoe in either the 3-mile, 6-mile, or the Mountaineer races. There were just over 500 competitors in all, with 407 of those racing in the 3-mile event (see picture of the start of this race). There were several other events and races-within-races being hosted by Perkinstown on this chilly day in north-central Wisconsin. It was around 15 degrees above zero but wind chills were much lower with 20 mile-per-hour winds sweeping through the area.

Racers were mostly protected from the wind due to the starting/gathering area being blocked by hills plus the dense woods that all competitors were able to enjoy on their race course. But because of a recent snowfall, there were six to eight fresh inches of snow on the course, which mainly consisted of ski trails that had been groomed the night before the snow started coming down. Racers were slowed down by a few minutes in their races because of the conditions, but even though it wasn't a fast track as usual it was still enjoyable nonetheless. The course is mostly small rolling hills with the hardest part near the end – the last half-mile includes a small but steep ski hill and sugary terrain on the way to the finish.

The overall winner of the 3-mile race was Kronenwetter's Kris Borchardt, 31, who crossed the line first in 23:41, winning this race for the second time in three years. His margin was 1:30 over the second-place finisher, who was Catawba's Kyle Schmidt, 36, who completed the course in 25:11. Borchardt and Schmidt are familiar rivals, finishing as the top two in several snowshoe races over the last few years. The third-place finisher in the 3-mile event was Medford's Davey Sapinski, 36, who was over three minutes behind Borchardt with a time of 27:03.

The winner of the female division of the 3-mile race was Medford's Kathy Hackbarth, 29. Her time was 29:24, the first snowshoe race she had ever won overall for women. She came really close last year at Perkinstown, taking second overall, just 37 seconds behind the champion. According to Hackbarth, this was her fourth year competing at Perkinstown, "This is a good course, but it's softer than last year, but it was still fun – it was very hilly and tough at times. There was a good turnout here. I passed Paula Liske just after the first mile and I found out near the end that I was leading for the women when somebody told me. This was the first time I won in a



snowshoe race.” (see picture of Hackbarth posing with her new trophy in front of the race results and door prizes board) Many great door prizes were given away including several pairs of snowshoes.

Just 24 seconds behind Hackbarth was the famous former Junior Nationals champion, Medford’s Michayla Heil, 18, with a time of 29:49. Following close behind was the famed co-race director Paula Liske, turning in an excellent race despite having to handle the duties for putting the Perkinstown Snowshoe Race on. Liske, 50, from Medford, finished well with a time of 30:26, just over a minute behind the winner. This makes the top three women all from the Snowshoer Capital of the state (proclaimed by the author last year), from the little town of Medford, approximate population 4500.



The 6-mile race (see picture of these racers prepping before the 11:00 a.m. start) had two front-runners led by Greenville’s Eddie Holzem, 40, at the finish and exactly a minute behind him Wausau’s Mark Beversdorf, 37. Holzem was running his first snowshoe race and blazed the course in a time of 50:49 (see picture of Holzem finishing and winning his 6-mile race) with Beversdorf clocking 51:49. The racers in the 6-mile event were able to trek a small section of single track within the Chequamegon National Forest with the majority of the course being groomed ski trails. In third place, another 6 minutes back was Medford’s Scott Scheithauer, 44, finishing in 57:53. He just edged out defending 6-mile champion Mike Quednow, 47, from Westboro, who crossed the line five seconds later in 57:58.

The multiple-time defending champion Andrea Mueller, 32, from Edgar, won the female division again in the 6-mile race. Her time was 1:04:03, close to two minutes ahead of her next competitor to the throne, Medford’s Michelle Brost, 41, who completed her race in 1:05:37. Third place in this division went to Marshfield’s Danielle Berger, 20, who came in around six minutes later in 1:11:26. Forty-nine racers finished the 6-mile race, with about equal numbers among the finishers for male and female.

There were Mountaineer divisions at Perkinstown as well, a 6-mile men’s mountaineer race and a 3-mile women’s mountaineer event. Wausau’s Jay Punke (also known as CJ Snowshoe), 50, once again won his signature race, dominating this event yearly now. With his big wooden snowshoes and 15# backpack, he pushed and pulled his added weight across the line in a time of 1:08:14. Green Bay’s Dave Sykora, 63, traveled from the home of the Packers to place second again to Punke with a time of 1:21:28, just over 13 minutes back.

The 3-mile Women’s Mountaineer saw Stillwater’s Kristin Miller, 48, take first place in a time of 35:38. It was the first time that she competed in the Mountaineer race at Perkinstown, and she obviously did very well in this challenging event. Her winning margin was by over six minutes

on Withee's Jona Hatlestad, 40, who passed the line in 41:50. There were 16 mountaineers in all, with there actually being a greater number of women: twelve!

Additionally, Perkinstown uniquely has a Clydesdale division for special racers running the 3-mile event. The Clydesdale racers are proud to state they are 225 pounds or more. Racers in this division have a really good chance to medal. Marathon City's William Litzer, 21, was the best Clydesdale competitor, clocking 34:41. He won by just over a minute over his next competitor in the division, which had nine husky men.

There was also a Team Division at Perkinstown, as the scoring was for team-participating athletes in the 3-mile race. The winning team (in the Open division) was once again the Pressed Rats, defending their team title from a year ago (and several before), handily beating out the next best team called Hosers-MVFD (the winners of the Co-Worker division). The Pressed Rats team, made up of almost completely new members, had their top-five scoring from Kris Borchardt, Kyle Schmidt, Joe Freudenthal, Jeremy Jonas and Joe Paczkowski. The Hosers-MVFD had their top five consist of Davey Sapinski, John Bauer, Joshua Brandner, Sheldon Phillips and Mike Radlinger.

Withee's Paczkowski, 26, snowshoeing since 2004 and competing all six years at Perkinstown, talked about being on the winning team. "I'm happy to be on a team and happy to win. I was pretty happy with my performance. The hills here are always nice, always challenging – I didn't think the course was too bad today – I like how it's more wide open and easier to pass here, and there's always a good crowd too." Paczkowski took 35th overall in the 3-mile race with a time of 33:20, and took up snowshoeing seven years ago to do something active in the winter.



Perkinstown co-race director Paula Liske also helped coordinate a Kids Race, where race mascot Perky the Porcupine led and motivated dozens of children to sprint and make their way to the finish line in the cold weather. There were goodie bags and medals given to each one of the kids, with the bags consisting of chocolate milk and kids' Clif Bars, like in previous years. Liske and the other co-race directors have done a great job in organizing and making this race the juggernaut it has become.

The Perkinstown Snowshoe Race has grown to be a huge Wisconsin snowshoe event in just its 6th year running, which had its inception in 2006. It is the largest snowshoe race in all of Wisconsin, and should be the blueprint for other snowshoe races in the state and in the Midwest to follow. With so many attractions for this event and many different categories of races to run, this event can only get bigger with many snowshoe racers having it pegged as their favorite (including the author).

The Perkinstown Winter Sports Area, 20 miles northwest of Medford, hosts this event every year, and it should continue to grow with the heart of Wisconsin snowshoe country surrounding it.

Results and additional pictures of this race are available at:

[www.perkinstownsnowshoerace.com](http://www.perkinstownsnowshoerace.com) and <http://www.superiortiming.com/?p=1091>.

Any comments or thoughts about this race or story? E-mail:

[kris.borchardt@ingenixconsulting.com](mailto:kris.borchardt@ingenixconsulting.com).

For a free e-mail Snowshoe Magazine subscription, visit:

<http://www.snowshoemag.com/subscribe.cfm>.

Perkinstown is part of the BraveHeart Snowshoe Series: [www.uppermidwesttrailrunners.com](http://www.uppermidwesttrailrunners.com)

**January 19, 2010**

**Quednows Conquer, Perfect at Perkinstown**

A record number of participants traveled to Perkinstown (near Medford, Wisconsin) on Saturday, January 16, 2010, to snowshoe either in the 3-Mile, 6-Mile, or Mountaineer races. There were close to 450 competitors in all (see picture of just some of the mass amount of people awaiting results post-race at the bottom of the tubing hill), with 365 of these racing in the 3-Mile event. The winner of this event, Jeffrey Quednow, later saw his father Mike win the 6-Mile race as the Quednows (from nearby Westboro) swept the Male divisions this year at Perkinstown (see picture of Jeff Quednow, Mountaineering winner Jay Punke and Mike Quednow displaying their Perkinstown trophies).

The younger Quednow, Jeff, won his 2nd consecutive snowshoe race, as he won the Whitetail Ridge 10K in River Falls, Wisconsin by a minute over his father a weekend ago. At Perkinstown, 18-year-old Jeff won this race for the first time, beating defending champion Kris Borchardt, 30, by 56 seconds. Jeff ran a time of 21:41, with Borchardt crossing the line in 2nd place in 22:37 and Kyle Schmidt, 35, placing 3rd with a time of 22:54. It was fitting that it was this trio in the top 3, as this same trio took the top 3 spots in 2 other snowshoe races last year.

In the post-race interview, Jeff stated, "I was really happy with my race today. I was going for the win – I was worried about Borchardt and Schmidt. When I got to the 2-mile mark and looked over my shoulder, I didn't see anyone coming and figured I had a good chance of winning." Jeff took the lead early on and Schmidt and Borchardt stayed within a few seconds of him until the first mile marker, where Jeff found another gear and worked a big lead against both men. Borchardt passed Schmidt for the first time right before the 2.5-mile marker, and opened up a gap during the last half mile, which included a small but steep ski hill and sugary terrain to the finish.

Jeff is actually a two-sport athlete in the winter, as he plays high school varsity basketball for the Rib Lake Redmen. He is a senior on the team, and starts as shooting guard, playing most, if not all, 32 minutes of game time for the team. His legs admittedly were a little tired yet from a game and a practice within a couple of days prior to the race. Of course, Jeff also ran cross country and track for Rib Lake, and has one season of track remaining for the Redmen.

The winner of the female division of the 3-Mile race was Ashley Woest, 22, from Medford. Her time was 26:55, startling due to this being one of her first times on snowshoes, and only her 2nd snowshoe race ever. According to Woest, she was just having a good time, "I just wanted to have something to do for fun. The course was good – it's so pretty out here. I'm just out here having fun – I just ran. I had no idea (I'd be so fast when I started) – it was just my 4th or 5th time on snowshoes." She had also won the female division in the 5K at Rib Lake two weeks ago. After running track and cross country at University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, she is moving on to snowshoe racing to continue her competitive enthusiasm.

Kathy Hackbarth, 28, from Medford finished in 2nd place with a time of 27:32, which was 37 seconds behind Woest. Just one second behind Hackbarth was Janie Grunwald, 34, clocking 27:33. Grunwald, like Woest and Hackbarth, is a local from the town of Medford.

Mike Quednow, 46, as previously stated, ruled the 6-Mile event, winning it with a time of 53:11. Once again, a Quednow took down a champion from the year before – Jonathon Delf, 32, from Rice Lake was hoping to defend his title from 2009 but finished 35 seconds behind the elder Quednow in 53:46. Scott Scheithaeur, 43, placed 3rd in the 6-Mile race with a time of 54:01, also hailing from Medford. Delf and Scheithaeur kept it close until Quednow pulled away from them around the 4-mile mark, increasing his lead until the finish.

Andrea Mueller, 31, from Edgar, was a defending champion who was not beaten this year at Perkinstown, but mixed things up by switching from the 3-Mile race in 2009 to the 6-Mile one in 2010. She had the biggest winning margin of the day for non-mountaineers, crossing the line in 58:51, over 3 minutes in front of the next female finisher. This resembled a year ago, when she also won by over 3 minutes in the 3-Mile race's women's division.

Medford's Michele Brost, 40, ended her race 3:26 behind Mueller, finishing with a time of 1:02:17. Kristi Speer, 28, from Phillips, finished in 3rd place in 1:03:03, shortly behind Brost. Speer is one of several area athletes that plans to travel to New York to compete at the USSSA Snowshoe Nationals race on March 6th. Many of the top competitors at Perkinstown hail from Medford (which is unofficially the Snowshoer Capital of Wisconsin). The more of these athletes we can get to New York, the better the Midwest as a whole can be represented at the USSSA Nationals race (see picture of several Medford area athletes finishing the 3-Mile race in a



close pack).



There were also Mountaineer divisions at Perkinstown as well, a 6-Mile Men's Mountaineer race and a 3-Mile Women's Mountaineer event. Wausau's Jay Punke (also known as CJ Snowshoe), 49, once again won his signature race, dominating this event for years now. With his big wooden snowshoes and backpack, he pushed across the line in a time of 1:01:26. Dave Sykora, 62, traveled from Green Bay to place 2nd again to Punke with a time of 1:11:54, but shaving 6 minutes off Jay's winning margin from a year ago.

The 3-Mile Women's Mountaineer saw Medford's Lori Sprotte, 25, take 1st place in a time of 31:54. Jay

Punke's wife Judy, 55, took 2nd this year, with a time of 37:21, mountaineering her way through the Chequamegon National Forest that all racers had the privilege to trek through. Jay and Judy host their own event next month, the Stomp the Swamp Snowshoe race – it is on Sunday, February 28, at Nine Mile County Forest in Wausau, Wisconsin, and it boasts a Mountaineer event as well, along with 6K and 12K races.

There was also a Team Division at Perkinstown, as the scoring was for team-participating athletes in the 3-Mile race. The winning team was called the Pressed Rats, defending their team title from a year ago, handily beating out a team by the name of Frosted Flakes. The top team was made up of Jeff Quednow, Kyle Schmidt, John Kann, Bill Bellendorf, Chris Mueller and John Wilke.

Perkinstown co-race director Paula Liske also helped coordinate a Kids Race, where race mascot Perky the Porcupine led and motivated 50 children to sprint and meander their way to the finish line in the warm-feeling 30-degree weather (see picture of Paula Liske posing with Perky the Porcupine, just seconds after the finish of the Kids Race). There were goodie bags and medals given to each one of the kids, with the bags consisting of chocolate milk and kids' Clif Bars.

Liske was ecstatic about how great everything came together, saying "This is the nicest (weather-wise) it's ever been – last year it was just 15 degrees, two years ago it hit 22 below zero. There should be about 450 people total today, not even counting the kids." The warmer weather may have helped to bring in more people, but this race has grown since its inception in 2006. It was formed by a mountain biking club in the Medford area, and it has grown to be a huge Wisconsin snowshoe event in just its 5th year running. For the most part, the course was great for running on with groomed ski trails making up the majority of the course.



The Perkinstown Winter Sports Area, 20 miles northwest of Medford, hosts this event every year and it should continue to grow with the heart of Wisconsin snowshoe country surrounding it.