

January 2005. A two class Nordic Ski proposal

From: Joe Teft, Nordic Ski coach St. Cloud Cathedral.

Dear Nordic Ski coaches,

At our fall meeting in Mora we discussed a proposal for moving from a single class to a two class system for Nordic Skiing. The majority of schools who were in attendance Oct. 29, represented large schools. Most of them were not opposed to the proposal, in fact they supported the idea. They also asked that we specifically get additional input from all schools.

All of the current MSHSL sports/activities began as one class. The majority of them have moved to two or more classes. Having additional classes has helped these activities grow. More recently this has occurred with boys soccer, swimming and women's hockey.

At this time only 6 sports and 3 adapted sports are NOT in two or more classes. Of the 6 sports Nordic Skiing is one. Currently we have enough registered schools to support a two class meet. We have approx. 110 schools competing in 97 MSHSL competitive positions. ( a number of MSHSL spots are composed of co-ops, two or more schools).

With the input of several coaches and additional discussion with the MSHSL it appears that the best option is to split on a 50% ration. (see attached sheet of school enrollment). The enrollment figure of 1,100 and above puts half in a large section and the rest in a small school section. You will notice that there are a number of "strong" Nordic programs in the small enrollment section--Duluth East, Ely, St. Louis Park. There is definite quality of ski programs in each proposed class.

A two class meet guarantee's a two day meet. The current proposal of the Coaches Association is also asking for a two day meet with major changes. The Coaches Association proposal however is for a one class meet with multiple events. There is no guarantee it will pass the MSHSL board. In fact it will have a major uphill battle.

This suggested class separation proposal fits with the MSHSL class competition philosophy: **"to extend the opportunity for student participation in a variety of activities at the section and state level"**.

The purpose of this letter is to survey all of the schools with Nordic Skiing. Your response is very important to us. We need to hear from all schools regardless if you agree or disagree.

A two class system would allow us a guaranteed day for each class. In other words two days of State Meet skiing. The MSHSL has NOT designated a specific formula for a two class meet. They have indicated input will be asked of Coaches, Athletic Directors, Administrators and the State Meet Manager. The State Meet could be on separate days for each meet at the same site. It could also be at two sites (not very likely) or it could be for both classes spread over two days at the same site.

I feel the best proposal is a two class meet spread over two days. It is my understanding this proposal means less work/time for grooming, and allows the Meet Mgr. the options/flexibility of reusing the same course or parts of the same course for both Classic and Freestyle races. Currently two completely separate courses are required with 10 km of grooming. There is the possibility of designing a race course that can loop back into the stadium for the pursuit start race, if we have races on two different days.

A two class meet could have the interval race on Thursday for all classes. This allows maximum time for bib processing and computer results. On Friday the pursuit start race would be conducted for all classes along with the appropriate awards ceremony. It provides a two day format, with time for skiers to rest and better meet management. A two class meet is probably the best way to ensure a two day State Meet.

### **Some other comments on how a two class system would look.**

Class sections would be selected state wide geographically, by “geographic closeness” which is the current MSHSL format.

The top 48 schools who have enrollment above 1,100 students (10-12) would be the large class, with approximately 12 schools in each section. We currently have some sections with more than 12 schools. Schools under 1,100 enrollment would make up the other class. They would have four sections with 12 schools.

All classes would have the same race format. We keep 8 section meets.

Medals would be the same for both classes.

Each class would advance TWO winning teams. Along with 10 individual pursuit skiers who are not on any winning team. This provides for up to 192 skiers at the State Meet. We currently have no more than 120 skiers. It definitely provides more complete teams at the State Meet and goes deeper in selecting individuals for advancement.

This proposal could be accepted by the MSHSL in 2006 for implementation at the 2007 State Meet.

## **What are the benefits of a two class system at the State Meet?**

1. We would secure a two day state meet, which coaches have wanted for many years.
2. We could have more time for waxing and course preparation.
3. We could have better course selection for the classic and freestyle races.
4. We would eliminate the panic/pressure currently occurring between races
5. We would have more flexibility with temperature issues
6. We have the possibility of better spectator viewing.
7. It will provide more kids (+72) the opportunity to participate in a State Meet.
8. We will have more complete teams at the State Meet.
9. It may increase the number of skiers in the future and facilitate growth in our sport. with two classes more school might be encouraged to add Nordic skiing.

I feel the time is right for us as Nordic Ski coaches to move to a two class system. I hope you may also feel that way. For those small programs who absolutely must ski with the big schools, the MSHSL allows for you to opt up to the larger class. However large school cannot opt out of their designated class. I do feel with the quality we have across the state, if schools would compete in the class designated by their enrollment we will have two outstanding ski meets just as we see today in Cross Country Running and Track and Field.

Coaches before you vote I also urge you to poll your athletes and their parents. Please share this with your school principal and athletic director and then sent to me your vote representing your school. Remember each team--Girls and Boys should provide a vote.

Sincerely,

Joe Teft, Nordic Ski Coach  
St. Cloud Cathedral High School  
Enrollments 428

## **Two Class Proposal for Nordic Ski**

Current: one class, school enrollment in grades 10-12 from less than 100 to over 2500 students. 8 MSHSL competitive sections.

Proposed: Two classes  
48 schools in a large class. Enrollment above 1,100.  
4 MSHSL competitive sections

48 schools in a small class, composed of schools with less than 1,100 students (10-12)  
4 MSHSL competitive sections.

### **Advancement to the State Meet**

Current: 8 sections. Top team advances (up to 7 skiers)  
8 individuals (4 pursuit, 2 classic, 2 freestyle)  
up to 15 total skiers from each section

Proposed: Send top two teams from each class= 16 teams.  
10 additional Pursuit skiers not on the top two teams.  
up to 24 skiers per section.

### **State Meet format**

Current: 1 day meet with two techniques in a pursuit format.

Proposal: 1 day meet for each class ==Two day State Meet pursuit format.

The MSHSL has NOT decided on which format it will select. It would seek input from meet management, coaches, school AD's and Administrators.

Options:

One class on Thursday, one class on Friday.

One race on Thursday for both classes, with the other race on Friday for both classes.

Current Meet management would favor the two day race schedule for both classes to reduce grooming requirements and it offers more course selection for each race. It also allows more time between races for posting results and bib distribution.

## **Two Class Proposal for Nordic Ski**

Some additional comments and observations on the proposal.

A 2 class meet doubles the number of teams in the State Meet. Participation increases from 56 skiers to 112 team skiers.

For individuals-1 class provides up to 64 spots.  
2 classes guarantees 80 individual skiers

In the current 8 section format, only 4 sections have any number of smaller schools. 4 sections are comprised of large schools. The large schools would have a guaranteed 8 schools in the State Meet. Currently some of the State Meet qualifiers are composed of smaller school with enrollments under 1,1000.

Large schools would also have a guarantee of 40 skiers, not on the wining teams, to advance. Currently many small schools with outstanding individuals take many of those spots. Large schools would also have increased State Meet participation. This proposal is not just for smaller programs.

Having a guarantee of State Meet participation for smaller school will help to strengthen their programs and keep Nordic ski programs alive and well in smaller schools.

This is a win-win for Nordic skiers of both large and small schools.

Will quality shrink? Probably not. Quality is based on the ability of skiers to perform on any given year, which in Minnesota often reflects on where the snow is. In other sports with more than one class there are outstanding teams, who on a given year could win in another class. However, it is generally true that larger school enrollment provides for a larger pool of talent to draw from and frequently more funding opportunities.

Two classes will give more recognition to good small school programs, increase community pride and may also recruit more kids to skiing.

The best way to increase the number of participants at the State Meet is to have a two class, two day meet. Increasing participation in the current one class meet will most likely not happen due to time constraints of a single day.

## NORDIC SKI TWO CLASS PROPOSAL

Current Nordic Ski Schools by enrollment:(10-12) Boys Teams

2528	Burnsville
2503	Eden Prairie
2401	Champlin Park
2386	Wayzata
2288	Stillwater
2233	Blaine
2172	Coon Rapids
2072	Whit Bear Lake Area
2016	Hopkins
1895	Minnetonka
1889	Anoka
1881	Maple Grove
1880	<b>Coop:120</b> Brainerd/Pillager
1877	Chaska
1825	Apple Valley
1808	Forest Lake
1793	Woodbury
1777	Robb. Armstrong
1752	Eastview
1746	Egan
1740	Park (Cottage Grove)
1710	<b>Coop: 526</b> St. Paul Central/St. Paul Open
1706	<b>Coop: 960</b> Elk River/Zimmerman
1674	Osseo
1668	Edina
1651	Roseville Area
1607	Robb. Cooper
1603	Park Center
1590	North
1572	Rosemount
1509	St. Paul Harding
1482	Moundsview
1415	Mpls. South
1406	Hastings
1359	Bloomington Kennedy
1341	Tartan
1334	Mpls Southwest
1307	Prior Lake
1306	Lakeville South
1299	Bloomington Jefferson
1299	<b>Coop: 585</b> Winnona/Winnona Cotter
1244	Andover
1229	Henry Sibley
1226	Irondale
1198	St. Cloud Tech
1146+	Lakeville North
1113	Bemidji
1112	St. Paul Highland Park
1105	Richfield

1088	Alexandria
1081	St. Paul Como Park
1064	Mpls. Washburn
1059	<b>Coop:606</b> Spring Lk Park/St. Atnthobny
1053	St. Cloud Apollo
1040	St. Louis Park
1023	Mpls Patrick Henry
1009	<b>Coop: 917</b> Carlton/Cloquet/Cloquet Christian Acad./Esko
1007	<b>Coop: 962</b> Northfield/ARTech
1006	Duluth East
992	Willmar
992	<b>Coop: 985</b> Orono/Watertown-Mayer
984	Cretin-Derham Hall
969	<b>Coop:363</b> Hermantown/Proctor
955+	<b>Coop: 807</b> Eveleth-Gilbert/Mesabi East/Ridge Acad./Virginia
947	Sauk Rapids-Rice
931	Grand Rapids
922	Duluth Denfield
910	Simley
887	Monticello
814	Mahtomedi
806	Duluth Central
796	Little Falls
780	St. Thomas Academy
739	Rogers
679	Fergus Falls
676	Detroit Lakes
667	Benilde-St. Margarets
451	Mora
428	St. Cloud Cathedral
414	Minnehaha Academy
380	Long Prairie-Grey Eagle
380	Blake School
327	Two Harbors
295	Breck School
271	Deer River
248	Marshall School
187	Mounds Park Academy
183	Ely
176	St. John's Prep
172	Cook County
151	Batle Lake
122	Agricultural & Food Sciences Acad.
120	TrekNorth
50	Voyaeurs Expeditionary
??	Black Lake
2	Ellefson Home School

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