

ABR / CCSAA Grooming Clinic Wrap up

Thank you for attending the grooming clinic. When we started planning the clinic, last April, we had hoped for 30 attendees. We ended up with 124! The idea was prompted after I attended a grooming clinic at Frisco and Breckenridge Nordic Center, 1400 miles to the west. The clinic cost, with transportation, lodging and hotel, was over \$2,000. There were 15 –20 participants, including 3 presenters, and the clinic was 1 ½ days. I still thought what I got out of the clinic was worth it, but I did see a need for a clinic closer to the Midwest.

According to the registration forms, we had 986 years of grooming experience gathered in one room.

We are already planning another clinic for next year, tentative date Jan 16-17, 2002. We have enclosed an evaluation form to help us improve the clinic, please fill it out and return it. As a wrap up I would like to summarize the events over the clinic and the vendors that attended. Email me if you are interested in future grooming clinics, workshops or publications.

Wednesday started out with 8 inches of fresh snow and about 20 degrees. 9-12, we had on snow demos from Piston Bully with a new 9 foot PB100 and Bachler /YTS Front Renovator, a 9 foot tiller and twin Bachler tracksetters. I also demo'ed ABR's PB 200 with a 12 foot tiller. Bombardier demonstrated the new BR 180 with a front blade. Snowmobiles and grooming attachments were available for demo during this time.

The Race Building/Wax room was set up with brochures from vendors, product samples, groomer innovations, homemade accessories, a "For Sale Board" (see below) with used groomers, and videos playing grooming tapes.

1:00-4:00 we met at the Erwin Town Hall (just down the road) and had a sit down lecture/discussion. Our first speaker was Russ Alger from the Kewenaw Research Center at Michigan Technological University who spoke on "snow" from a technical level and on the research they are doing. KRC has a research tool that compacts snow to .68 density. Paul Swanson spoke on power tilling and on the models of Piston Bully, Eric Peterson spoke on Bombardier. Doug Edgerton of Yellowstone Track Systems and George LeFeuvre spoke on grooming for races and some of their experiences grooming Olympic Events around the world. Eric Anderson of ABR spoke on buying a used snowcat.

4:00-6:00 we returned to ABR and had open grooming and open skiing, the skiing was not too good since most of the grooming demos occurred close to the trailhead!

7:00-10:00 we met at Mama Get's Restaurant and enjoyed dinner and drinks we had some casual grooming discussions.

Thursday

9-11 we observed some on snow demos. Doug Edgerton demonstrated setting tracks in the parking lot with the Bachler/YTS renovator and tracksetter pulled by an Artic Cat Bearcat 550, liquid cooled. With multiple passes a track penetrated the hard pack. Phil Zink of Tidd Tech set tracks with the Trail tenderizer and David Zink of Tidd Tech demo'ed the features of the groomer and the most recent innovations. We also saw the new roller, and packer tracker. Bob Cragin of Cragin Machine demonstrated the Cragin groomer (aluminum) 8 foot wide and 12 feet long weighing only 300 pounds. ABR trails were groomed Thursday AM with this drag pulled by a SWT . Rick Slade of Ave's (Ski-doo Dealership) demonstrated the suspension adjustment on the Ski-doo Skandic SWT and initiated discussions on steering the SWT.

11-12 Show and Tell, we looked at some homemade drags and accessories brought by participants. Make sure to judge the best homemade idea on the evaluation form.

12-1 lunch consisted of traditional "Yoooper Pasties".

1:00-3:45 Lectures/discussions at the Town Hall. We heard from David Zink of Tidd Tech on early season trail prep and getting the most out of your snow. Eric Anderson of ABR led a discussion on grooming costs for Snowcats and snowmobile grooming. The final costs were, snowcat grooming \$60/hour or \$15/mile and snowmobile grooming costs were \$5/mile. Eric also spoke on deep snow grooming. Doug Edgerton and George LeFeuvre spoke on setting a good track, while Jim Waters, a physics teacher and classic skier, expressed what makes a good track.

Open skiing was held after the clinic was concluded. I enjoyed a groomer/non-skier (never been on skis) comments as he came in after skiing a 3 km loop with a big smile "it all makes sense now, wow, did I learn a lot on that short loop!"

Other Grooming Clinics/Shows

MCAA Show Jan 29-31 2001
Vail CO, 651-638-9658

Snowcat Training Class Jan 3-Mar 27th 2001 various classes
Littleton CO 1-800-485-SNOW

CCSAA Conference and Grooming Show April 8-10, 2001
Homestead Resort, Heber City (Park City) Utah 877-779-2754

ABR / CCSAA Grooming Clinic & Workshop January 16-17, 2002
ABR Trails Ironwood MI 49938 906-932-3502

Some Interesting Ideas on Grooming from the Clinic

Grooming with a snowcat costs \$15/mile grooming with a snowmobile costs \$5/mile

Groom for 85% of your customers, you cannot please everyone.

Hard to steer the SWT? Buy \$400 aftermarket skis, add weight to the SWT bumper, or adjust the suspension, there are 3 suspension adjustments.

Use a renovator to mix old and new snow.

Install an actuator on your Tidd Tech, or drag, to snow farm from the sides

To pack 20 inches of snow in 2 passes you need a snowcat and tiller

You need weight, slow speed, and proper snow preparation to set a good track.

Pack track with your snowcat before tilling deep snow.

Snow density measuring is an objective method of determining trail firmness

Spray your equipment with a diluted Anti-freeze mixture to eliminate snow sticking

Extend the exhaust on your snowmobile to exit the rear to eliminate fumes on you

Do not finish groom (lay corduroy) over a surface that is not compacted properly, it will freeze a superficial layer with a soft layer below. Drag/roll and compact the surface first!

Grooming for races, remember athletes have trained extensively, give them the best course that you can even if it means not sleeping, and make it a fair course

Use a pintle hitch on your snowmobile and implements

Pack the pole plant area well on striding trails

To set tracks in boiler plate, you need to till, scarify, or renovate to loosen the ice first, then set a track with heavy weight (down pressure) and multiple passes if needed

Snowmaking on Nordic trails is expensive!

NEVER get out of your snowcat with the tiller running!

Keep your classic track out of the brush, a minimum of 20- 24" is recommended

Grooming for Olympic events, grooming cost is not considered

Mount a 12 volt ATV winch on your snowmobile to lift tracksetters and winch your groomer back on the trail when you get stuck

Artic Cat Bearcats are liquid cooled but do not overheat like liquid cooled Skandics

Bearcats steer better than Skandics

Use wood chips to cover tree roots that radiate heat and melt the snow

Alternate your passes if you groom with a smaller (8-10 foot) snowcat to pack the center

Use SOS (oil sampling) to check equipment for wear & when buying used equipment

Use a shear pin to protect your drags

8 feet is not wide enough for skating and striding

Install carbide studs for grooming on icy conditions

The best grooming is done at night as the temperature is dropping and less skier traffic

If you use hay to cover wet spots, hide it from the deer and elk

Groom when you need to, not on a regular set schedule

Grooming is an economic decision, make your grooming choices accordingly to survive

Summer service your snowcat and keep it out of the sun

Email me abrski@skyenet.net if you are interested in future publications. EricAnderson

FOR SALE & wanted to buy

1981 Ski-Doo Alpine , 1999 Ski-Doo Skandic SWT, 12 volt actuators for Tidd Tech or other YTS type drags \$300, weight bracket for SWT \$30, call ABR 906-932-3502

1998 BR110 Bomardier 7 ½ ft wide groomer 591 hours, like new, with Comag cross country groomer and blade, new \$60,000 now \$35,600
call Joseph Maskell 604-218-7458

For Sale Piston Bully PB200 12 foot wide with YTS tracksetter
Call ABR Trails 906-932-3502

Wanted to buy: 10 foot wide snowcat with tiller (Prefer PB)
call ABR Trails 906-932-3502

For Sale 4 foot Tidd Tech Groomer
Call McQuires Resort 231-775-9947 ask for Mike

For sale: 1989 PB 130 with tiller and dual tracksetters 4100 total hours, 2000 hours on factory rebuild \$27,500 Call H ugh 800-451-5167

Vendor/Speaker List Remember to tell the vendors, you saw them at the “ABR Clinic”

Piston Bully, Track Inc, Paul Swanson, PO Box 20541 Bloomington, MN 55420
612-888-7372 www.tracking.com

Bombardier, Aspen Equipment, Eric Peterson, 4303 west First Street Duluth MN 55807
800-888-2773 www.aspen-companies.com

Tidd Tech, David Zink PO Box 2036 Fraser CO 80442
877-843-3832 tech@tiddtech.com www.tiddtech.com

Yellowstone Track Systems Inc, Doug Edgerton, PO Box 29 West Yellowstone MT 59758
www.yellowstonetrack.com skiyts@aol.com 406-646-7603

Bachler Renovators, Yellowstone Track Systems Inc and Track Inc

Cragin Groomer, Bob Cragin 2106 Central Ave Superior WI 54880
715-392-6988 cragin@presenter.com

Geiss Engineering, Alpina Twintrack Snowmobile and power tiller,
375 Lincoln St. Northumberland, PA 17857
570-473-8545 www.geise-engineering.com

Ski-doo, Aves Sport Center, Chuck Vukovich, Hiway 51 North Hurley WI 54534
715-561-2720
Ski-doo Skandic SWT dealer

George LeFeuvre 63 Robertson Road, Jemseg, New Brunswick Canada E4C 4A3
506-488-2075 jelef@nbnet.nb.ca
Professional Olympic Groomer

Russ Alger Keewenaw Research Center MTU Houghton MI 49931

Ron Bergin, Silent Sports writer, Upcountry Enterprises
rbergin@cheqnet.net

Steward Products, Jeff Steward, 615 W. Sunset Ave. Appleton WI 54911
920-954-2878 stewardr@execpc.com www.stewardenterprise.com
Oil additives and low temp grease

Gopher Signs 1310 Randolph Ave. St. Paul MN 55105 651-698-5095
XC trail signs and accessories

SOS Oil Sampling Ziegler 901 West 94th Street, Minneapolis MN 55420
612-888-4121 800-352-2818

Knapp Associates, Equipment Brokers, SRM 260 Pinehurst Drive Shelburne VT 05482
800-451-5167 knappassoc@att.net <http://skiindustry.com/knapp>

Paul Leitch Equipment Brokers, PO Box 237 McCoy CO 80463
970-653-3030 800-780-0470

CCSAA (Cross Country Ski Areas Association) 259 Bolton Road, Winchester NH 03470
603-239-4341 ccsaa@xcski.org www.xcski.org
memberships

USSA U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association Box 100 Park City Utah 84060
435-647-2666 membership@ussa.org www.usskiteam.com
memberships and competition guide with grooming specifications

Reliable Racing, 643 Upper Glen Street Queensbury NY 12804
800-274-6815 www.reliableracing.com

Clinic Evaluation Form

Please answer the questions as completely as possible in order for us to improve the clinic. Add detailed comments where needed.

1. Did the clinic meet your expectations?
2. Did you learn something?
3. Did the cost of the clinic and travel and lodging justify the trip?
4. Did you get a chance to ski?
5. Which equipment did you operate?
6. Which day (s) did you attend?
7. How would you rate the "on snow demos"?
8. How would you rate the lectures/discussions? Which was your favorite?
9. Did you buy any equipment because of the clinic?
10. Did you make any good contacts?
11. Would you come again? Next year?
12. What was the most innovative idea that you saw or heard from a fellow groomer and who was it from? (the winner of this question receives a prize)
13. Would you like to buy a copy of the grooming video for \$30.00?
14. What would you like to see different in terms of grooming programs? Hands on? Discussions? Speakers? Time of the clinic? Costs? Location? Snow condition? Equipment? Lunch?

Other Comments.....

Thank you ,

Eric Anderson

Return via email to abrski@skynet.net or to:
ABR Trails E5299 W Pioneer Road Ironwood MI 49938