



Myles Desilets puts on a burst of speed and crosses the finish line in style at the Temiskaming Nordic Ski Club on Saturday. It was the only Get Active in Temiskaming series event of 2020 to get the full race-day experience with 28 participants taking to the trails October 3. (Staff photo by Steven Larocque)

Got active

Hitting the wide open trails at TNSC

Steven Larocque
Speaker Editor

COLEMAN TOWNSHIP – At least there was one.

The Get Active in Temiskaming series of road races and walks – like most other activities in 2020 – were cancelled due to the pandemic.

But organizers did stage one event when the series touched down at the Temiskaming Nordic Ski Club (TNSC) in Coleman Township October 3.

“This was our only physical event this year after having to cancel the regular season,” said lead organizer Chandra Juurlink.

“We hosted a virtual event back in June that was successful but thought we would give this a try with modifications and see what interest there was. (We had) smaller numbers but those that attended had a great time and we raised some money for our bene-

ficiaries.”

Safety precautions were taken because of COVID-19.

“We offered cohorts of staggered start times of groups of 10 or less beginning at 9 a.m. every 15 minutes to keep groups of participants to a minimum at the start line,” said Juurlink in an email interview.

“Every participant received COVID pre-screening emails, checked in upon arrival, wore masks before and after their event, and maintained social distancing.”

The TNSC’s “wide spacious trails were perfect for spreading out on course, so this was a perfect venue to host this style of event.”

There were 28 runners/walkers who came out Saturday with another five participating virtually.

Patrick Paquette led the way in the 10-kilometre distance at 44 minutes, 30 seconds.

The quickest 5km time was 26:24 by Emily Reynolds.

“We raised \$570 from the entry fees and were distributed to our beneficiaries based on participant’s choice,” noted Chandra.

The Temiskaming Nordic Ski Club receives \$237, Temiskaming Northern Loons Swim Club \$247 and the Nastawgan Trails Hiking Group \$86.

“For next season, we will also carry forward these beneficiaries for our fundraising initiatives,” said Juurlink.

She said in 2021 the series “may see a slow start at getting back into group events again, but we plan to continue offering virtual options with all of our events for anyone who isn’t comfortable (or available) to attend in person. We’ll update via social media between now and the new season and see how things go over the next six months.”

Normal as normal goes

TSMHA on the ice with return to play programming

Sue Nielsen
Speaker Reporter

TEMISKAMING SHORES — The return to play for minor hockey has been anything but normal.

Unfortunately, with the country still dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and its restrictions, hockey is still a go but looking much different this season.

The Temiskaming Shores Minor Hockey Association (TSMHA) is taking direction from the governing bodies for local hockey. The Northern Ontario Hockey Association (NOHA) and the Ontario Hockey Federation (OHF) both issued back to play programming rules by which the TSMHA is abiding.

Children were back on the ice in Temiskaming Shores midway through September.

But since then, the Greater Toronto Hockey League (GTHL) has put their season on ice due to pandemic restrictions in that area of the province.

The president of the TSMHA doesn’t anticipate that happening in this rural re-



gion.

“We are still playing. I haven’t heard of anything suspending play as of yet from the NOHA and the OHF. I know that the GTHL have suspended their operations until January of 2021,” noted president Derek Shillinglaw in an email interview.

The TSMHA is using both the Don Shepherdson Memorial Arena in New Liskeard and the Shelley Herbert Shea Memorial Arena located in Haileybury.

“We are continuing with our return to play programming as set out at the beginning. We hope this continues to be the case for the kids in our region,” added Shillinglaw.

It is expected that depending on the pandemic, hockey in this region and further afield won’t return to normal play with rep teams travelling to out of town locations until at least 2021.

Having an opportunity to play hockey with their friends and take part in a physical activity is deemed good for the players’ mental wellness after a most challenging year.