

Joe Bouscaren, M.D. 18 Hemlock Rd. Cambridge, MA 02138 O: 617-354-7254 [JBouscaren@comcast.net](mailto:JBouscaren@comcast.net)

## Getting ready for a challenging early winter ski camp – The long slow distance (LSD) and learn to loppet camp (LTL) at Silver Star, B.C. for 2007

*By: Joe Bouscaren, M.D.*

*Joe is a sports medicine physician, world class rower and national class masters cross country ski racer with multiple age group medals from masters nationals in XC. He has been going to the Silver Star B.C. Thanksgiving camps for 10 years, the last 5 as a coach of the long slow distance camps.*

*He is a certified level 2 NENSA coach and has a special interest in the physiology and biomechanics of endurance sports performance. He has been a member of the Boston Celtics medical team and performed physiologic testing for the Celtics, National rowing team, college cross country and rowing teams and individual members of the US x-c and biathlon ski teams. See [www.skifast.us](http://www.skifast.us) for more details. You may e-mail the author at [JBouscaren@comcast.net](mailto:JBouscaren@comcast.net)*



The 6 day long slow distance ski camp at Silver Star mountain begins with check-in Sunday evening (in time for dinner) November 25<sup>th</sup> and runs for 6 days through the morning ski session on the following Saturday morning, Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>. This is the most challenging of the cross country ski camps offered at Silver Star, and campers considering this camp should be able to ski both classic and skate techniques with good proficiency and have trained well during the summer and fall.

Towards the end of last years “LSD” camp one camper (Ron, an orthopedic surgeon and fitness enthusiast) said that what he thought had been a really good fall of moderate volume and consistent strength training, turned out to simply be the “price of admission” to this group of semi-obsessed cross country ski fanatics! Ron turned out to be a solid member of the long slow distance bronze group and was very excited to have experienced a great week of skiing at Silver Star and Sovereign Lakes. He

committed himself to more time on cross country skis for the remainder of the winter and a return trip to Silver Star in 2007. During the camp he added to our repertoire of dry land training exercises with several innovative stretching and strength exercises.

I have made brief descriptions of each day at camp to give a feel for the six days of skiing at Silver Star and Sovereign Lakes, and the summer and fall training that will allow a skier to get the most out of the long slow distance camp (LSD) (alternatively called “learn to loppet” (LTL))

The camp is really a camp for racers of all ages who are fairly keen on the sport and want to improve. If you have either a strong fitness background and can ski, or if you are a good XC skier but a bit out of shape you should be fine in the LSD, LTL camps. If you are very new to XC skiing and/or a bit out of shape, the technique or weekend camps are a better choice.

What to expect during your week at Silver Star:

### **Monday**

Most peoples first day on snow, it's great to be skiing again!

AM: 2 hour easy level 1-2 skate with whole group of campers and coaches skiing en masse.  
Sort skiers into 3 groups of compatible speed and ability groups

PM: 1 hour easy level 1 skate in small coach-athlete groups (3-6 skiers per coach)  
Get to know each individual camper's goals and begin to work on skate technique specifics for each individual

### **Tuesday:**

Getting comfortable at camp and pulling out the kick wax!

AM: Coaches up early testing kick wax, measuring snow temperature and assessing weather forecast. Coach athlete groups meet before 9 am start of 2 hour easy level 1-2 classic sessions to be sure everyone is getting good kick. 50% of group adjusts (adds) wax after climbing 1<sup>st</sup> hill having forgotten how hard it is to classic ski without good kick in hilly terrain at altitude!

PM: 1 hour easy level 1 classic working on technique specifics for each camper as seen on morning's video footage.

### **Wednesday:**

Everyone has really settled into camp, we've had a few evening video and lecture sessions and people are ready to do some harder work on their skate skis

AM: 2 hour skate with video mostly level 1, but with natural intervals of harder level 3 and level 4 work as terrain and camper interest dictate. The fittest campers get to test their training preparation and climbing mettle against the 50 year old coaches!!

PM: 1 hour skate level 1 working on “no effort” skating. This allows skiers to find the most efficient body positions and skiing rhythms without “covering-up” with effort. Working on whole leg relaxation and balance during glide phases of skating techniques. Lots of downhill skiing and cornering practice to rest the engines and have some fun. The alpine chair allows us to ski all the way down from the top of the mountain without doing our usual 40 to 60 minute climb up!

#### Thursday:

Many campers are getting tired,

AM: We do a very easy, sight seeing, 3 hour level 1 classic tour of the Silver Star and Sovereign Lake trails. We try to ski many different trails to see as much of the 105 km trail system as possible. We often will ski up to the top of Silver Star and down the other side to the Sovereign Lake trails.

This allows high mountain views of the surrounding valleys and several long, higher speed descents. A hot chocolate and power bar stop at the Sovereign Lake Nordic center provides additional energy for the final leg home on the Gold Mountain trail.

PM: Optional 1 hour level 1 classic ski. Anyone who is tired either takes a nap, gets a massage, or goes into town to shop, taste local wine, or stock up on snacks for their fridge.

#### Friday:

Back on those comfortable skate skis and thinking about a Saturday morning “practice race” or time trial.

AM: More video analysis during a 2 hour level 1 skate working on body position, relaxation and rhythm. A few short race pace bursts to check if the technique holds at speed

PM: Classic or skate for 1 hour easy level 1 to “study” Saturday’s race course and plan pacing strategy Evening lecture is usually replaced by a night in the wax room to prep for the time trial and learn a few new waxing and base prep tricks from the base prep and waxing obsessed coaches.

**Saturday:** 75% opt out of the time trial to ski with the coaches and sight see, reinforcing their new found ski skills and making an indelible memory of this special mountain.

AM: 25% test themselves against the clock and their fellow racers over a 10 km course of gradual ups and downs on their choice of classic or skate skis. This allows for good pacing practice and gives confidence that you’ve got one race “under your belt” before returning home to face your usual local competition.

Skiers and coaches exchange e-mails and stories over lunch, while planning to see each other again at The American Birkebeiner, Canadian Ski marathon or some other major race during the coming winter. Personalized DVD’s of the camper’s week of skiing along with the appropriate technique suggestions are handed out to many of the attendees.

PM: Free ski for the campers staying on another day, or pack and travel home for those flying out of Kelowna that afternoon or evening.

**Getting ready for Thanksgiving “on-snow” ski camp during your summer and fall training. A sample of a Gold group camper’s training. (Silver and Bronze campers may scale this down by up to 50%)**

### **Volume:**

You can see from the camp description that we will be training about 3 hours per day for 6 days straight on skis at altitude! This 18 hour week is about a 100% volume increase for even the most dedicated master’s racers (and coaches)!

To build your aerobic base, burn fat calories and develop ski specific endurance do a 2 to 3 hour level 1 session on Monday (skate) and Thursday (classic with plenty of double poling). Work on finding “free speed” through correct body position at low effort level and balancing with full relaxation while gliding.

### **Intensity:**

Doing 2 interval roller ski sessions per week with 60 minutes at level 3 or 30 minutes at level 4 will raise your anaerobic (lactate) threshold and allow you to ski up and over the hills without bogging down. This follows the Norwegian dictum of building your training week around 2 intensity sessions per week.

### **Strength and speed:**

Spend 30 minutes, twice per week on ski specific strength either in the gym or bounding with poles doing skate and classic simulation. This will allow you to ski right up those shorter steeper hills without “blowing-up”; and to maintain correct body positions as you get tired towards the end of a race.

### **Technique:**

The bronze, silver and gold levels of the long slow distance (race camp) at Silver Star welcome skiers from a basic proficiency level all the way to World Master’s medalists. Training on skate and classic roller skis for several months before ski camp will prepare you to get the most out of your 6 days of on-snow skiing at camp. Having this basic proficiency allows the coaches to polish and make subtle adjustments to your technique, without having to start from “scratch”.

If you are a more entry level skier, one of the weekend or technique camps at Silver Star would be perfect for you, as many campers haven’t roller skied during the summer and are still learning some basics of classic or skate technique.

### **Equipment:**

The long slow distance (race camp) skiers usually bring both skate and classic equipment. Norm Crerar can arrange for a limited number of loaners or rentals if you are just beginning to try a new technique and don't have dedicated equipment for it yet.

Bring your skate and classic waxes, iron, scrapers, brushes etc so you can be fairly self sufficient. There is a good ski shop right on the mountain to fill in any gaps you may have in your wax box.

I usually bring at least 2 pairs of skis for each technique so I can learn more about how my skis feel. This will help for race ski selection later in the season.

Please call the following people for more information:



Norm Crerar: Call Norm regarding registration, camp logistics, transportation, housing and dining: (250) 545-9400

Administrator of the Silver Star Nordic Camps. Certified Nordic instructor, past member of the Canadian Nordic Demo team, loppeteer.



Dr. Mike Mandli: Call Mike regarding with other questions relating to the Silver Star Camp experience.

A practicing psychologist who works with athletes across various disciplines. Mike has multiple National Masters age group medals and has coached elite junior, masters, and college level skiers, and has a strong knowledge of ski waxes, base preparations, and ski technique.



Dr. Joe Bouscaren: Call Joe regarding with other questions relating to the Silver Star Camp experience; Mike and Joe have a combined 20+ years with the camps.

A sports medicine M.D. and avid master's racer with multiple National Masters age group medals. Joe coaches junior through master's skiers and holds a level 2 NENSA coaching certification. Joe has a detailed knowledge of Zach Caldwell's grind options and is also good at creating fast structures by hand. See [www.skifast.us](http://www.skifast.us) for more details including video footage of Joe and Mike roller skiing.

A complete profile of all the Silver Star Coaches is at: <http://www.xccamps.ca/faculty.html>

Dates for the technique, weekend, Thanksgiving Special and LSD/LTL camps can be found at: <http://www.xccamps.ca/>