

## Trail W.A.T.C.H. Forecast

Expect trails to soften up this weekend with temperatures moving into the high 30s and low 40s. There may be some wind, especially in hillside areas outside of town. Possible snowshowers on Sunday and Monday may be cooler than the weekend, but it will warm up as the week progresses.

### Nordic

**BIRCH HILL**—Trails are very hard and very icy. Track is still set on all 35 kilometers and klister wax is recommended for classical skiers. It's tough for skaters to get an edge on the icy snow.

**CHENA LAKES**—Track is set on ski trail (7K) and conditions are hard fast.

**SALCHA**—Hard, fast and icy, just like everywhere else. Track is set on all 15K.

**TWO RIVERS**—Trails behind Two Rivers Elementary School are hard and icy but still very skiable.

**UAF WEST RIDGE**—About the same as last week—hard and fast. Lots of people skiing at lunch and in the later afternoon.

### Alpine

**BIRCH HILL**—Open Thursday and Friday from 4-9 p.m. and weekends from 12-8 p.m. Recording at 353-7053.

**MOOSE MOUNTAIN**—South slopes are icier than the west and north facing runs. Good skiing for advanced or intermediate skiers. Open every day from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. until the season ends. Call 458-8132 for recording.

**SKILAND**—Warm temperatures and sun haven't hurt the north-facing slope. There is still powder to ski on. Open Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Call 456-SNOW for recording.

### Mushing/Skijoring

**CHENA LAKES**—Trails are hard and fast but still in decent shape for skijorers.

**STUDDERT RACE-GROUNDS**—Hard, slick and fast conditions at Jeff Studdert Racegrounds on Farmer's Loop. Track will be crowded Saturday for the Streeper Spring Fling, an eight-dog, eight-mile race starting at 1 p.m. Signup is at 11:30 a.m. and draw is at noon. There is some construction going on in the Creamer's Refuge and the trail may be blocked intermittently beyond the 11-mile trail. Use caution if you go past this point. Parking lot is down to dirt but hook up area is fine.

**CHENA RIVER REC AREA**—All cabins in the area are accessible and trails are reported in good shape with only minimal overflow. That may change if it warms up this weekend.

**WHITE MOUNTAINS**—All cabins are accessible and nearly all 200 miles of trail have been broken and groomed. Watch for deep, slushy overflow at major creek crossings, on Beaver Creek and on Fossil Creek. Warm temperatures increase the chance of overflow. Overflow is inside the Windy Gap cabin and the door cannot be opened. For trail report call 474-2372.

### Snowmachining

**CANTWELL**—Still good snow for riding with a slight



Wilderness Classic  
is not an ordinary  
ski race

By **TIM MOWRY**  
Staff Writer

One year, a grizzly bear ran across the trail a couple ski pole lengths in front of Ev Wenrick.

Another year, Wenrick watched the ski tracks he was following to guide him through a whiteout disappear into an avalanche, although he later found out nobody was caught in it.

Wenrick will never forget the year he watched Rourke Williams suddenly sink up to his waist in water on Gun Creek. One minute he was standing there with his skis on and the next he was submerged in three feet of water.

When Williams was helped out of the water, he simply strapped his skis back on and kept going. "He didn't even change his clothes," said Wenrick.

Two years ago, "This was all glare ice," said Wenrick, pointing to a section of the Anaktuvuk River on a laminated map. "All you could do was double pole and you had a 30 to 40 mile an hour headwind. Your sled would be going off sideways. You'd have to aim over there to get over here. It was brutal."

Racers used the lights of Anaktuvuk Pass to guide them the last five miles, he said. "Thank God for the electrification of villages."

Then there was last year, when Wenrick was wearing crampons, not skis, and "hanging by my fingernails" on Peregrine Pass in the Brooks Range.

"I don't want to do that again," said Wenrick with a shudder.

Then why will Wenrick, 56, join a field of almost a dozen racers at the starting line again this year when the Brooks Range Ramble, a.k.a. the 10th annual Alaska Wilderness Ski Classic, begins on Monday north of Wiseman on the Dalton Highway?

"It's just a nice place to be in the spring time," said Wenrick. "It's a nice way to wrap up the ski season."

Besides, Wenrick doesn't plan on taking that route again.

#### A different race

The Alaska Wilderness Ski Classic was started by Roman Dial in 1987 as an offshoot of the Alaska Wilderness Classic, a cross country wilderness race which is run each August and rotates courses every three years. The first Ski Classic started at Eureka Roadhouse near Glennallen and ended in Valdez, a 100-mile course that traversed three glaciers.

"We went down the entire Valdez Glacier," said Wenrick. "Everyone finished within a couple hours of each other so we could celebrate together."

"That was a great race." For the next three years, from 1988-90, the race course went 150 miles through the Alaska Range, from Black Rapids south



Photo Courtesy of Bob Groseclose

**REST STOP**—Skiers in the 1994 Alaska Wilderness Classic Ski Race take a break after breaking trail on the first day of the 200-mile wilderness race in the Brooks Range, north of Coldfoot.

of Delta Junction to Denali Park.

"There were two passes over 7,000 feet, avalanche danger everywhere and crevasses all over the place," said Wenrick. "One year we got down to Denali and the Yanert (River) was running. We had to slash our way out for 40 miles."

From 1991-93 racers traveled from Tok to Summit Lake, the shortest of the Ski Classics at just a little over 100 miles.

The race moved to the Brooks Range in 1994 for what so far is the longest Ski Classic route.

"The Brooks has to be the best," said Wenrick. See **RAMBLE**, Page C-2

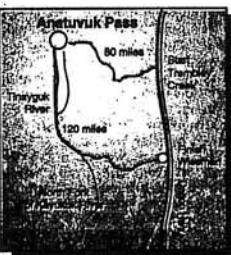


Photo courtesy of Rourke Williams

**SOCK CHANGE**—Bob Groseclose, right, changes his socks during the 200-mile Alaska Wilderness Classic Ski Race in the Brooks Range two years ago as traveling partner Brant McGee waits to hit the trail. Groseclose, McGee and Rourke Williams won the race in 5 days, 15 hours.

## A different kind of backyard moose barbecue

# March mountain riding can be heavenly, if done right

We're coming down to the homestretch.

The last real month of riding is upon us, and springtime riding is a story all of its own. Unfortunately we can count the number of weekends left for riding on one hand, and soon our beautiful beasts will be hauled away for the summer. Quite frankly, I'm happy to have this winter behind considering the awful start we had. I'm looking forward to a snowy start next season, but that's another column.

For some of you, March mountain riding is the best thing there is, but the fact is for many of you out there without access to a trailer, the riding year is all but finished. Even for those that will be heading up to Summit Lake for the Arctic Man Ski-N-Sno-GO Classic, or to Cantwell to avoid the crowd, you know the white stuff is soon to depart.

If you just got your trailer and



Bud Kuenzli

this is your first season out in the hills, I hope you'll find an experienced friend to drag along (not usually a problem) because there are some things you'll want to be ready for.

Your No. 1 enemy is the sun. The snow that you will so happily play on in the early morning will soften as the day progresses. Each day, hour by hour, the strength and consistency of the snow is weakened by the melting process.

For mountain riders in the spring this all becomes clear as they head back to the truck at the end of the day. Snow that had no problem holding you up on the

way out suddenly becomes problematic. The slope that you confidently went down a few hours ago is now a challenge to get back up. Getting stuck means being buried in heavy, wet snow. That means you need to bring your fancy new Gore-Tex clothes and your shovel.

All this boils down to my advice for spring riding in warm weather:

Get an early start to the day and come back well before the snow is soft. Personally, I rarely follow my own advice, so I carry an extra big shovel. No matter how much you pray for one more foot of snow, that ugly, unnatural green covering has a way of coming out each summer...umm... (I can get the word out if you give me a second)...summer (wheew).

When your last ride is a recent memory, don't forget you still have a little bit of work to do to prepare your machine for next

fall. Snowmachers have a lot of money invested in their machines. A new machine can easily run over \$5,000. Keeping it running during the year is a matter of routine maintenance. Keeping your investment running year to year is a matter of proper summer storage. Luckily it is fairly simple.

Your basic job is to protect it from the sun and moisture, and possibly the occasional mouse. To protect it from the sun your best bet is to keep it inside your garage if you have one that's big enough.

If not, a light tarp that will allow some ventilation is important to keeping your machine's exterior in good condition. If you have the energy, a little Armorall on the seat and a coating of wax on the hood will be helpful, too.

Whether your sled is kept inside or outside, be sure you store it with the track elevated. It re-

leases tension from the springs (which you can also manually loosen) and it lifts tracks off the often wet ground. Those are important things to do, but the most critical thing on any machine is the engine, and now is the time to ensure your engine will not rust or oxidize in any way over the summer.

There are a couple of ways to do this, and the best thing to do is to refer to your owners manual or give your dealer a call. One option is to drain your tank of all gas, drain your carbs, and pour a teaspoon of oil into each cylinder. Pull the rope a time or two to distribute the oil to the cylinders. With this method you will protect the cylinders and be assured you won't have contaminated gas.

It may be better to spray fogging oil (available at your dealer) into each carb as it runs. This will get the oil into more of the engine for better protection, but keep in mind each machine is dif-

ferent; with an EFI machine you absolutely do NOT want to run the machine dry. With these machines you will want to fill the machine to the top with fresh gas and add Stabil, a gasoline storage chemical that prevents the gas from getting old.

The bottom line here is to protect your engine from internal corrosion. All of these procedures put together are less than an hour of work. That's a small time commitment to ensure having a machine that will run well in the fall.

It's late, I'm tired, and the darn sun is still out. Oh well, time to start thinking snow.

With a little luck we might get a cold snap in late August and be riding by early September. It could happen.

Bud Kuenzli is president of the Fairbanks Sno Travelers snowmachine club and an eternal optimist. This is his final column of the season.

## IN BRIEF OUTDOORS

### Fairbanks Retriever Club hosts dinner

The Fairbanks Retriever Club will kick off the season and host its annual spring membership drive potluck dinner and party on April 19 from 6:30-9:30 p.m. at the Palace Saloon at Alaskaland.

The Club will also be holding spring training classes for retrievers of all ages starting on April 20. Six sessions will be offered and are geared towards training working dogs and preparing dogs and handlers for upcoming American Kennel Club licensed hunting tests and field trials. Classes are free for Fairbanks Retriever Club members and \$30 for non-members, which includes a one-year membership.

For more information contact Kate Lamal at 479-7544 or Karen Wilson at 479-4325.

### Fish and Wildlife Protection violations

The following people were cited for violations by Fish and Wildlife Protection troopers:

■ Thomas W. Belcher, 30, of North Pole, was cited for sport fishing in Chena Lakes without a sport fish license.

■ Clint C. Coleman, 22, of Fairbanks, was cited for exceeding the daily bag limit for sport-caught salmon at Chena Lakes.

■ Scott Conover, 42, of Fairbanks, pled no contest to charges of sport fishing in Kool Lake without a valid sport fish license. He was fined \$100.

■ Andrey Proshutinsky, 45, of Fairbanks, was cited for exceeding the bag limit of sport-caught salmon at Chena Lakes.

■ Albert D. Patterson, 57, and Dale Anderson, 37, both from Anchorage, pled no contest to charges of waste of game meat. Both were fined \$500, must perform 100 hours of community

service work, had their hunting licenses revoked through Dec. 31, 1997 and were placed on two years probation. Both received a suspended imposition of sentence.

■ Glen G. Holt, 40, of Big Lake, was cited for taking a bull bison on a cow permit.

■ Doris M. Scott, 67, of Fairbanks, was cited for taking a cow bison with a bull permit.

### Alaska Bird Conference scheduled

The sixth annual Alaska Bird Conference will be held Monday through Wednesday at the Fairbanks Princess Hotel. The purpose of the conference is to bring together researchers, wildlife managers and amateur birders to share information on the biology and management of Alaska birds.

Researchers will present results and updates on their activities in a wide range of paper sessions. This biennial conference rotates among Alaska cities and is not expected in Fairbanks again until the year 2002.

For more information contact Philip Martin at 456-0325.

### Meeting to feature Piledriver Slough

Fishing Piledriver Slough on Eielson Air Force Base will be the topic for the Midnight Sun Flyers' monthly meeting on April 11 at the Captain Bartlett Inn.

There will be a lecture on access to the portions of Piledriver Slough which threads through Eielson Air Force Base. Piledriver permits will be available at the meeting so anglers should bring their current fishing license.

The meeting will also feature a demonstration of Piledriver flies tied by John Olson. Included will be the Griffith's Gnat, Mosquito and Adams.

### Hunting clinic series scheduled

The Alaska Hunting Clinic Series is presenting a clinic called becoming an Alaska hunter for new and new-to-Alaska hunters on April 12-13 in Fairbanks.

Clinic presenters will cover moose, caribou, sheep, bear and deer hunting, along with other important Alaska hunting topics.

The series is designed to provide good, solid information on hunting for new and experienced hunters. Presenters include biologists, guides, taxidermists, game wardens and others with substantial hunting experience.

Tickets cost \$10 and are available at Down Under Guns. Kids under 16 and seniors 69 and over may obtain free tickets.

### Sport fishing guides must register

The owners of all businesses engaged in sport fish guiding, either in salt water or fresh water, are reminded to register for 1996 with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game before taking clients fishing.

All boats used for guiding must have current Fish and Game licenses. Boats used in salt water charter operations must display their Fish and Game

number in permanent symbols at least 12 inches high and at least one inch wide on both sides of the vessel's hull, cabin or mast.

Owners are also required to provide the name and address of all employees acting as sport fishing guides for their business as well as their vessel port in Alaska for salt water charter boats and list the area of the state where the owner intends to operate their guiding business.

There are other state and federal regulations that owners of sport fishing guiding businesses must comply with, including having a current Coast Guard Operator's License, a State of Alaska business license and a special use permit from the U.S. Forest Service for guide businesses operating in fresh waters within the Tongass National Forest.

Registration forms are available at all Fish and Game offices throughout the state.

## BARBECUE: Moose.

Continued from Page C-1

I walked outside, armed once again with a handful of charcoal briquets, ready to do battle. The moose didn't put up much of a fight. I pelted her a few times and she trotted into the woods.

By the time I got outside the moose was back in the garden. Moose the hunky was shaken but OK.

I went to the garden and showered the moose with briquets and obscenities, chasing her out of the yard and across the road as the dogs chomped me on exuberantly.

I was sitting on the couch an hour later at 3 a.m. when I heard the crunching of snow behind the cabin. She was back for her fourth helping.

I walked outside, armed once again with a handful of charcoal briquets, ready to do battle. The moose didn't put up much of a fight. I pelted her a few times and she trotted into the woods.

It was then, at 3 a.m. under a full moon and beautiful, starlit sky, that it hit me.

"Only in Alaska," I thought to myself.

There are three morals to this story:

- 1) Be thankful you live in Alaska: It really is the Last Frontier.
- 2) Rototill your garden in the fall so it's not an all-you-can-eat buffet for moose.
- 3) Keep plenty of charcoal briquets on, and in, hand.

Tim Mowry is the outdoors editor.

## RAMBLE: Brooks Range race will push racers

Continued from Page C-1

longest and toughest of all of them, no question in my mind," said Williams. "You won't see any two day finishes on this one."

Wenrick figures the Ramble course is about 200 miles, 80 miles to the check-in point at Anaktuvuk Pass and 120 miles back to Wiseman.

It took the winning trio of Williams, Bob Groseclose and Brant McGee 5 days and 15 hours to complete the 1994 race. It took the slowest finishers 7 1/2 days. Last year's race was cut short in Anaktuvuk Pass because the North Fork of the Koyukuk River had broken up.

"It's a full six days of skiing," said Williams. "If you make it you're doing OK as far as I'm concerned."

Wenrick took over organization of the race in 1989, when Dial left Fairbanks, because he didn't want the race to fold.

"I never could find a race long enough to give me a chance," said Wenrick with a smile. "I didn't want it to die."

The race course is due to change location next year, making this the final Brooks Range Ramble. Wenrick said he is thinking about moving the race into the Talkeetna Mountains next year in an effort to attract more Anchorage skiers.

### Self-contained, self-propelled

There is another, more important, reason Wenrick wants to keep the Wilderness Classic Ski Race alive.

"I want to promote skiing as a means of transportation and wilderness travel," said Wenrick.

Which is exactly what the Ramble is. It's orienteering on skis. Racers can choose their own route and are not required to carry specific gear, only that they be "independent in terms of gear and food" and all travel must be "self-propelled, without benefit of motorized vehicles, wheels or animals," as well as self-contained.

"There's no one there to set track for you, there's no one to hand you your Exoco," said Groseclose, a Fairbanks attorney who is planning to run his second Brooks Range Ramble next week and is a veteran of almost a half dozen summer Classics.

"It's not, I can get all wet and sweaty and go home to a shower," said Groseclose. "It's, I can get all wet and sweaty and learn how to survive."

Wenrick said competitors usually follow the same route because it's easier and safer.

"It takes a lot of nerve to break off from the group, especially if you're breaking trail," said Wenrick.

Most racers use diagonal skis and carry a pack or tow a sled with 40-60 pounds of gear and food that usually includes a tent, sleeping bag and pad, stove, fuel, compass, maps, crampons, shovel, extra skis and poles, repair kit and flares. Racers are advised to take enough food and fuel for a minimum of 10 days because there are no food or aid stations along the way.

Asked what kind of survival gear he would take along, Williams replied, "Lots of food."

Williams is hoping to contain his load to 40 pounds or less, more than half of which will be food. Williams said he will eat about 2 1/2 pounds of food a day. His diet will consist of bagels and peanut butter, pre-cooked meat and "lots of Ramen and rice."

All skiers are required to check-in at Anaktuvuk Pass, where they are allowed to spend one night.

Race rules warn racers to "expect 60 mph winds, avalanches country, open water, temperatures from 40 degrees below zero to 40 above, deep snow, no snow, ice, breakable crust, over slop and storms."

The finish deadline is midnight on April 17, at which time any racer who hasn't finished is considered overdue and organizers contact Alaska State

Troopers and the Alaska Alpine Rescue Group for a possible search-and-rescue.

Wenrick is quick to point out that no one has ever needed to be rescued during the race and the worst injuries skiers have suffered have been sore shoulders and quarter-sized blisters on their feet.

The maximum number of racers is 20 but the field has never been close to that big. Wenrick said there are "eight or 10" signed up for this year's Ramble. Though the entry deadline was April 1, Wenrick said "we're kind of loose about that."

Basically, the race is open to anybody who shows up at the Trembley Creek starting line at Mile 185 of the Dalton Highway Monday at 9 a.m. and looks like he or she knows what they're doing.

The entry fee is \$100 and there are no cash prizes, but entrants do get a commemorative long-sleeve shirt. The race winner will probably be lucky to get a free pair of ski poles donated by a local sporting goods store in Fairbanks.

People don't do it for money or prizes, though, said Williams.

"It just puts that extra flavor into going across the country," he said with a smile.

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## BECOMING AN ALASKAN HUNTER

Fri., April 12, 7-9 p.m. & Sat., April 13, 1996, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

FAIRBANKS

Bob SP IN N fo P I'm A been getti Fort age puni apol one! It tanc expli cut-2 two cotic " four nois am? T said, have Wor ting Ir out, t will tioni Ir sorry bad. A seve tests last thro wert fore wind T: 1: play that nalti was early 2. has appl it boys prog anti-story T and' Hou alleg four Jenn M claim the for d T: trait eithe cludi and freal M prob torio A Bam bust juan H Morr inste credi bulls trun M crim again their hear M stane John field shak pire! W game day, callin and W west catch M