

## December Adventures in Skiing

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by Joann J. Ordille

Just as the lodge opened for the season on Dec. 4, members turned their attention to sharpening their skills for the season ahead. Nick and Betty Ann Kaltnecker, and Joel Blank and his son Jordan attended the NJ Ski Council Tune Up Day at Wyndham. Participants skied all day with their instructors amid pleasant weather and conditions. Joel reported that it was definitely "worth it." And Nick said that the "coverage was excellent, even up to double black."

While folks were opening the lodge or at the tune up, Tom Milner was pursuing the award for our most ardent ski student. Tom attended Jim Cardenali's Ski Camp on Dec. 1-5, and then the Epic Ski Camp on Dec. 13-14. Tom said Cardenali's Camp at Stratton had terrific coverage. It was a good week of race instruction by a formidable team of coaches. We've seen the results since then in Tom's high standings in various races. He's the one that many of us (Bruce?) want to beat.

As the sign on the left shows, traveling conditions were sometimes challenging in December, but skiing conditions through Dec. 21 were awesome.

Joann Ordille joined Tom in attending the Epic Ski Camp at Stowe. There was a major snowfall before the camp started, and the conditions rivaled those seen out West for groomed terrain. Joann was particularly impressed with the camp, and thought it was the "best investment in instruction I've ever made." Small groups skied with an instructor for two days, and video footage was taken and analyzed. The instructors are the best of the best. They teach the other instructors in the U.S. how to teach skiing. The entire camp was filled with friendly, talented people who enjoyed a variety of social times as well as skiing together. As Tom said: "Though focused on beginner and intermediate level skiers, the two day Epic Camp leaves even the best skiers taking notes since there is so much to absorb. Perhaps the best aspect of the camp is the enthusiasm and support, not only of the instructors, but from your fellow skiers. It's fun to be in an atmosphere where all the participants are so up."

Joann enjoyed discount accommodations at Stowe that allowed her to sleep in before each day's class. Tom made the extra effort to stay at the lodge and take the 1 hour 15 minute drive to Stowe each morning. The lodge was filled with camaraderie and good ski stories that weekend as everyone took advantage of the great conditions.

A melt came that Monday, but it was soon remedied by an enormous snow storm later in the week. This actually detracted from attendance at the lodge on the weekend of Dec. 19, because no one could get through the storm to what was fantastic powder skiing in Vermont. According to Tom Law, "If you left Thursday morning, you got there." It apparently took Craig 9 hours, but his dedication paid off and he was one of the lucky skiers that weekend.

All in all, December brought an auspicious start to the season with great snow and high spirits.

Thanks to Joann Ordille for our photos. And, here's hoping for smoother travel ahead!