

[Mohawk Trail nordic, alpine ski teams prepare for championship races](#)

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Annoyed about all the snow that has dumped down on the Pioneer Valley this winter? The Mohawk Trail Nordic ski team certainly isn't.

Warriors coach Mark Pollard said the team has had snow to practice on nearly every day since Thanksgiving, which has allowed Mohawk Trail, which co-ops with Hampshire Regional, to properly train for meets.

That training has led to success, with the Warrior girls team winning their first league race in many years while the Mohawk Trail boys team have consistently done well during their regular season meets.

The Warriors hope all that hard work comes through during their final race of the season on Tuesday, as they head up to Prospect Mountain in Woodford, Vermont for the MIAA Nordic Ski Championship. The race is slated to begin at 11 a.m.

"It's been a fabulous season," Pollard said. "Especially for the girls team. We won our first league race in over a decade and had a lot of second place finishes along the way. The boys have consistently been finishing in third place. This is the best team we've had here in a long time." At the championship race last year, the Mohawk Trail boys placed eighth overall while the Warrior girls took 11th place.

Pollard said Augustus Niswonger and Adam Muller have been leading the pack for the Mohawk Trail boys throughout the season while Charlotte Niswonger, Corrine Somes and Ada Comer have been the top performers for the Warrior girls. All five are expected to impress on Tuesday.

"All of them are having really good years and are top notch skiers," Pollard said. "They're all top 10 skiers."

With a young team, Pollard said all the snow this winter has allowed the Mohawk Trail skiers to make strides throughout the season.

"We only have one senior," Pollard said. "A lot of the skiers on the girls team are freshmen. Having a lot of snow and consistent snow has made a difference. It had been three years since we had good snow and the last two years have been pretty rough. The more specific the training, the better. It's also just a lot more fun. You do this sport to be able to have fun in the snow. It's a really hard, brutal sport so when there isn't snow, it makes it that much more challenging."

With the way the season has gone, Pollard has high hopes for how his team will perform on Tuesday. The boys race kicks things off at 11 a.m. while the girls race is set to begin at 12:15 p.m.

“I hope and think the girls can realistically get second or third if everyone has a good race and we get things right,” Pollard said. “The boys are shooting for fourth or fifth. It’s been a while since we’ve been up that high. The kids are really excited for this race.”

Alpine ski championships

Over at Berkshire East on Tuesday, the Mohawk Trail alpine ski team will be competing in the PVIAC individual championship.

The Warriors had the individual winner on both the boys and girls sides last winter, as Weston den Ouden won the boys individual crown while Addie Loomis took home the girls title.

Den Ouden has graduated but Loomis, a junior, is back to reclaim her crown. Loomis took first place in all seven PVIAC races during the season. Lydie Pinkham, Sofiya Slocik-Gritzner, Grace Sisum and Brooke Koshinsky all have top 10 finishes during the seven regular season races, Slocik-Gritzner placing fifth at the individual championship last year while Pinkham came in seventh.

Even without den Ouden, the Mohawk Trail boys will still be in the mix to bring home an individual championship. Phineas Tuttmann, Grayson Bishop, Benjamin Zarotny, Liam Zarotny have earned first place finishes during the seven regular season meets, Tuttmann placing first in two of those meets.

The races are set to begin at 9:30 a.m. in Charlemont. The MIAA state championships for alpine skiing is Feb. 25 back at Berkshire East.

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