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LOCAL SPORTS

Whistler athletes impress at BC Winter Games

Cross-country, alpine, freestyle teams well represented by local skiers BC Winter Games Eric MacKenzie
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Whistler skiers of all kinds helped add to the Vancouver-Squamish zone's medal total this past weekend during BC Winter Games competition at various venues, including right here in Whistler.

Benita Peiffer led the local contingent in cross-country ski racing held at Whistler Olympic Park, securing a midget girls' silver medal in the individual start event and a bronze from the sprint race. She also helped her mixed relay team, which featured fellow Whistler Nordics skier Ian Davidson, to a fifth-place result.

Lauren Kilfoy-McKay finished ninth in the sprint and 10th in the individual start race, and also finished sixth in the mixed relay.

Michael Murdoch ended up with fourth-place finishes in both of his midget boys' races, but did hit the podium in the relay, capturing a silver alongside Whistler teammate Fraser Doak. Doak posted top-10 results in both the sprint and individual start races, while Davidson placed 12th in both events.

Jonathan Rabung of Pemberton competed at the juvenile boys' level and placed 10th in individual start and 11th in the sprint. Also from Pemberton, Ethan Hess earned a gold-medal finish in the individual start sit-ski race.

Though Mission was the official host of the Games, Whistler Olympic Park also welcomed biathlon competition over the weekend. Squamish's Hunter Sones won gold in the senior boys' individual competition and bronze in the sprint, while Sorsha Henning, also from Squamish, collected silver in the junior girls' sprint.

Alpine and freestyle skiing events took place at Hemlock Resort, and several Whistler skiers hit the podium in the races and contests there.

Among them were Lucas Pelletier and Chase Ujejski, who made it a one-two finish for the Vancouver-Squamish team in the youth men's slopestyle. Ujejski also earned a silver medal from moguls competition. Kevin Leslie was just short of the podium, placing fourth in moguls and eighth in slopestyle.

In youth girls' competition, Whistler skiers Raine Haziza and Eva Dunham were in the top 10 for both events. Dunham was fifth in slopestyle for her best finish, while Haziza's top result was seventh in moguls.

Carter Krasny, Teagan Bruns and Anders Ujejski all qualified for the team, but did not compete.

Vancouver-Squamish's alpine race team was made up of mainly Whistler Mountain Ski Club members. Ella Renzoni had a near-perfect BC Games, finishing with gold medals in the girls' slalom and giant slalom races, plus a bronze in the ski cross team event. Meg Swaffield earned a ski cross gold to go along with the bronze she won in GS.

Arabella Ng, Erin Dawson, Alissa Wong, Maja Woolley and Sierra King all earned at least one top-10 finish during the slalom and GS races held over Friday and Saturday, (Feb. 21 and 22). Whistler skiers Lucy Tuer, Morgan Border and Rosie Smith all came through with strong results for the Vancouver-Squamish team as well.

Due to snowy conditions at Hemlock, organizers were only able to pull off one boys' race, but it featured a Whistler skier on the podium.

Nathan Romanin took a bronze medal from the boys' slalom to lead the group of local competitors. Jack Forsyth ended up in sixth place, one spot ahead of fellow Whistler Mountain Ski Club member Ethan McTavish. Jack Cormack and Griffin Brumec-Parsons placed in the top 20, while Dominic Belanger, Ian Milley, Jake Bennett and Alex Cairns all posted respectable results as well. Eric Smith and Ben Thompson were unable to finish the lone boys' race.

The Fraser Valley team finished atop the BC Winter Games medal table with 103 podium finishes. Vancouver-Squamish finished second with 77 medals, but did have the highest number of golds, collecting 32 first-place results.

Visit www.bcgames.org for more details.

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