



## Haywood NorAm Candy Cane Cup

### Media kit

**Website:** <http://coupecandycanecup.ca/>

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### 6 Local Athletes to Watch



**Antoine Cyr**

Hometown: Gatineau

Ski Club: Club Skinouk

Age: 21

Years on National Ski Team: 3 ½

Category: Senior Men

Antoine attends the Pierre Harvey Training Centre in Quebec City/Mont Ste. Anne. For a relatively young athlete he has had some great individual results, including winning a **silver medal as a junior at the 2018 Open age, National Championship 10k.**

His best international results are a **12<sup>th</sup> place finish in the 10k classic race at the World Junior Championships in 2018** and **20<sup>th</sup> in the classic sprint at the 2019 U23 World Championships.** He won 2 silver medals for the Quebec team at the 2019 Canada Games in Red Deer.

Last March, he participated in the Canadian Championships held in Gatineau. His best result was the bronze medal in the pursuit race in classical technique. His final results ranked him second in the U23 category which qualified him for the World Cup Finals in Quebec City the following week.

At the World Cup Finals in Quebec City, he finished 61st in the 15-kilometer race and 61st overall.



**Laura Leclair**  
Hometown: Chelsea  
Ski Club: Chelsea Nordiq  
Age: 22  
Category: Senior Women

Laura attends the Pierre Harvey Training Centre in Quebec City/Mont Ste. Anne. She has had some strong results as a young senior athlete, including a **1<sup>st</sup> place NorAm placing in the NorAm** in Duntroon, Ontario. Laura's international highlight is a **15<sup>th</sup> place finish in the sprint at the 2018, U23 World Championships in Switzerland**. She claimed a **complete set of gold, silver and bronze medals** at the 2019 Canada Games in Red Deer, competing for Quebec.

At the World Cup Finals in Quebec City, she finished 61st in 10 kilometers and 61st in the overall standings.



**Pierre Grall-Johnson**  
Hometown: Ottawa  
Ski Club: Nakkertok  
Age: 20  
Category: Senior Men

Pierre trains out of the Thunder Bay Training Centre and **was one of the best junior sprinters in the country. He won a silver medal, as 19 year old, in the sprint event at the Canada Games**, where he represented Team Ontario. His sister Claire raced for Canada at the 2017 World Junior Championships.

Last March, he competed at the Canadian Championships and won several medals, including two gold and one bronze. He won the sprints and the 30 km event. He also finished 4th in team relay, in classical technique. After the week of competitions, he finished as first Junior overall. Pierre also competed in the Rising Stars race on the Plains of Abraham during the World Cup Finals where, he finished 22nd in the 10km.



**Zoë Williams**  
Hometown: Cantley  
Ski Club: Nakkertok  
Age: 22  
Category: Senior Women

Zoë is a Neuroscience and Mental Health student at Carleton University and recently claimed 2 gold medals at the Ontario University Championships. She was **3<sup>rd</sup> in 2 races at the World Championship selection races and has 2 recent NorAm victories on her resume.**

Zoë lives a “stone’s throw” away from Nakkertok ski club, with her 5 siblings, all of whom are active ski racers. Her oldest brother Zeke represented Canada at the World Junior Championships another brother Jesse is a coach at Nakkertok and her 2 younger sisters are regulars on the Quebec Cup podiums and are expected to do well in the younger junior categories at the NorAm.

Last March, Zoë also competed at the Canadian Championships. She won the gold medal with her teammate Hannah Shields in the Team Relay in Classic Technique and finished 10th in sprints. Her results at the Canadian Championships led her to the World Cup Finals in Quebec City the following week.

At the World Cup Finals in Quebec City, she finished 66th in the 10 kilometers and 66th overall.



**Luke Allan**  
Hometown: Ottawa  
Skiclub: Nakkertok  
Age: 16  
Category : Junior Boy

Luke upset the favourite, Xavier McKeever, by winning gold in the sprint at last year’s Canadian Championships. He also captured 2 more silver medals in the races on his home trails at Nakkertok. Luke, an Ontario Junior Team member moves up to the first year of the U18 category for competitions this season.



## **Snowmaking at Nakkertok**

Major cross-country ski events have been held at the Nakkertok Nordic Center for many years. This includes races such as the Canadian Ski Championships, the Eastern Canadian Championships and the Haywood NorAm Candy Cane Cup.

The “Open” National Championships were held in the region this past spring and the most recent Junior Championships were held in 1995. The Senior Championships are traditionally held in mid-March and it wasn’t until Nakkertok won the Kraft Heinz Project Play grand prize of \$250,000 in 2016 that the local community felt confident they could host the event. The Kraft Heinz money and funding from MRC Des Collines-de-L’Outaouais and fundraising was used to develop an artificial snow making system that allowed for five-month ski seasons. In recent years, skiing has started on November 11th and 12<sup>th</sup>. This backup system, with hydrants covering a 3km. trail, has allowed the organizers to be confident of putting on a quality event and resulted in their successful bid. The artificial snow system is available for use by the organizing committee, if necessary.

## **Waxing and Ski Preparation**

Long before the athletes are up, the wax technicians are up testing waxes and ski structures, that will let the athletes have the fastest skis for the varying snow conditions. The top athletes will choose from several pairs of skis before a race and they will be numerous glide and grip waxes tested, before the wax is applied to the skis. Prior to race time there will be a flurry of wax tech activity on the test areas and in the wax trailers, as the optimal wax is selected and applied to the skis.

## **Trail Grooming**

Proper grooming can make a tremendous difference in the conditions for the skiers. Dirk Van Wijk, was one of 3 groomers entrusted with preparing the trails at the 2018 Olympics in PyeongChang. He has also groomed at the 2010 Olympics and several World Cup races. Dirk and his wife Claudia, are the owners of the land that Nakkertok South is located on.

## **About the Haywood NorAm Candy Cane Cup**

The organization of the NorAm Haywood Candy Cane Cup is a joint initiative of several clubs in the Ottawa-Gatineau area:

- Nakkertok Nordic
- Club Skinouk
- Chelsea Nordiq
- Kanata Nordic.

The event will take place from Friday, December 13 to Sunday, December 15, 2019 at the Nakkertok South Nordic Center in Gatineau / Cantley, Quebec. In addition to being part of the Haywood NorAm Series, the Candy Cane Cup is also part of the Alta Gas Canadian Sprint Series, the FIS Continental Cup, the Quebec Cup and the Ontario Cup. The races will also serve as a selection for the National Group for Quebec City, Minneapolis and Canmore World Cup races.



**Schedule** (if you are looking to watch one of the local athletes racing check their category on their bio and compare it to the scheduled time for categories below)

The competitions will run over three days as follows:

<b>Thursday, 12 December</b> Official Training for Sprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Official Training for Sprint</li> </ul>
<b>Friday, 13 December</b> Sprints Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9:00 Start of Qualifier for Senior/U20</li> <li>• 11:00 Start of Senior M/W Heats</li> <li>• 12:15 Start of U20 M/W Heats</li> <li>• 12:30, 13:45 and 15:30 Awards</li> <li>• 14:00 Start of Sprint Qualifier for U18/U16</li> <li>• 15:15 Official Training for Distance Race</li> </ul>
<b>Saturday, 14 December</b> Distance Free Technique Races, Interval Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9:00 First Start</li> <li>• 11:00 to 15:30 Awards</li> <li>• 15:15 Official Training for Distance Race</li> </ul>
<b>Sunday, 15 December</b> Distance Classic Technique Races, Interval Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9:00 First Start</li> <li>• 11:00 to 15:45 Awards</li> </ul>