

2015-2016 Nakkertok Volunteer Awards

Golden Toque – [Etienne Grall](#) and [Grant Williams](#)

Volunteer(s) of the Year – Individuals who, through their significant contribution of time and effort, have helped ensure that the 2015 / 2016 Nakkertok season has been a successful one.

[Corina Zechel](#)
[Benjamin Campin](#)
[Anton Scheier](#)

New Volunteer(s) of the Year – [Susan Kim](#)

Susan Kim

Kim said: LOVED being part of Nakkertok this year. The caps just showed her enthusiasm.

Susan fearlessly organized the Sunday afternoon LTS program, and did a wonderful job putting the teams together and keeping everyone well informed. You could see her every weekend, family in tow, making sure that the Sunday lessons ran smoothly. She also did a superb job at figuring out what happened to the LTS hats for our group!

She was present every week with at least one child on her back and a smile on her face. As a first time member, she still seemed to have an answer for every question!

She also ensured the success of the season. She organized all the groups (including ensuring people were placed with friends, neighbours!), she made photo day a success, she made sure there were enough hats for everyone in every size, and gave all of us volunteers our tasks to ensure everything went smoothly. All of this was done behind the scenes and in a way that none of the members likely realized how hard she worked!

Benjamin Campin

Benjamin is a key member of the Nakkertok Val des Monts management team. His area of prime interest is the LTS program and working with kids. Over the last 3 years he has developed the program to the point now where it can be safely said it is a sustainable program for at least the near future. He has also been heavily involved with promoting Nakkertok into the Val des Monts community. There have been several school and community groups that have used the facilities for various activity days. Also he has helped introduce a “ski fast” like program to Nakkertok in Val des Monts. This program is likely to be a huge success. Funding is falling into place and the program is essentially already fully booked for next year.

So to summarize Benjamin does it all. He is:

- a LTS instructor
- a LTS day coordinator
- a LTS program coordinator
- a ski fast program coordinator
- a Nakkertok Management board member
- a Nakkertok community promoter
- a Nakkertok fundraiser/grant application guy
- ...and even does his share of trail clearing in the fall.

Corina Zechel

We all have experienced the challenge of getting your child to practice on time, or not being late for your volunteer meeting. Well for Corina Zechel, it is a little more of a challenge since you are driving in from Kingston.

Corina has been a dedicated Nakkertok parent and volunteer for many years. Always keen to help out, she has served several roles on the race committee, including the organizer of race organizers and the parent rep for the Nakkertok Junior Development Team group. Additionally Corina has helped to manage/organize many trips including the most recent National Championships in Whitehorse.

Corina is always keen to help out in any smaller tasks as well, whether it is in the kitchen at the Easterns, fundraising bake sales and making excellent motivational videos for the Nationals team.

Anton Scheier

Toni is a modest and quiet man who goes about his work without requiring words of appreciation or claps of applause; though he does like a hug now and then. He is the guy at the meeting who sits and listens to everyone who speaks, and then contributes a thoughtful idea, couched in the language of respect, understanding, consultation and compromise. Toni takes the time to think things through and provide practical and accommodating solutions. Since I have known Toni and had the pleasure of working with him on the Race Committee, Toni has been involved in many trips as wax support staff, getting up well before the sun without complaint to stand in the wax room for hours applying grip and glide to lots of skis. Getting to know trips from the inside has helped him in his biggest role at Nakkertok, that of race trip and program treasurer. Sorting through piles of receipts, making sense of trip organizers' trip accounts, keeping the race program's finances in good shape, would be enough to test anyone's patience. But Toni is always calm, never misses an opportunity for a joke or a smiley face, and always finds a way to be kind and fair whether it's by saving an athlete some money, or spending hours rewriting and redesigning the trip sign-up procedure. This is a huge job on its own, but Toni finds time to promote Nakkertok and its racing program with daily tweets and Facebook updates. Whether he is having a huge banner made to celebrate one of our Olympians, or quietly decorating the Chalet for the arrival of the Ski Tour of Canada athletes, or working on ideas to support our Junior Development Team, or figuring out a way to bring snowmaking to Nakkertok, Toni's energy is boundless.

And what underlies all of the volunteer work, the projects he has undertaken, the ceaseless promotion of our sport, is a passion for skiing, a passion for supporting young athletes, a passion for growing Canada's commitment to nordic racing and our involvement on the World Cup circuit.

On behalf of all of the Nakkertok athletes and their families, thank you.

Written about Both Anton Scheier and Corina Zechel:

The time and energy they have added to the endeavours of having a fine tuned and extremely organized racing program have been invaluable. I would say the three of us spend at least 1-3 hours a day in communication almost every day for probably 300 days of the year.

We have to communicate on a very regular basis to:

- Review the details like food, car rentals, athlete allergies, accommodation, driving trips, sick athlete pull outs, costs for detail of every event that the racing program takes
- The small detail financing is reviewed on spreadsheets, every pre and post trip, expenses like gas, chaperone food expenses, wax, food, and reimbursement for every trip has to be detailed and discussed

- We have written the policies and procedures of trips together. Most current documentation on the present racing page of the website is written by the 3 of us. Other clubs come to our page to borrow and ask about how we do trips and how we coach.
- They both are writers so they have helped edit any grant with me, we share videos or photography as well

Grant Williams

I asked Seamus how many years his dad has been leading racing rabbits. Seamus replied "since before I was born". I then asked Seamus how many years has his dad attended NORAMS and slept on the gymnasium floor with the Racing Rabbits. Seamus replied "since before I was born". I asked Seamus how old he is and he replied "10 years old." Thanks Grant for over a decade of leadership, patience, good humour and kindness to all! (Kelsey Robin, RR coach)

Thank you for volunteering! Grant welcomed me into the fold of the Racing Rabbit coaching staff with those words in 2011 and I heard him repeat that mantra many times to many volunteers over the years, at the club and throughout the racing circuit. He taught his kids, his athletes, and his coaches to say it and say it often. Grant embraced the Racing Rabbit program with seemingly boundless enthusiasm, leading practices and games under sunny skies, in foul weather, and at freezing temperatures alike. Thank-you for volunteering, Grant! (Greg Smith, RR coach)

Quietly hilarious, patient, caring, creative, open-spirited, stoic...are just some of the adjectives that come to mind, when we, the RR coaches, think of you, Grant. We are simply in awe of your epically long-term commitment to the RR program and to Nakkertok in general. A big thank you to you from all of us!

Etienne Grall

Etienne is the consummate Nakkertok volunteer and is especially deserving of this award.

We are equally likely to see Etienne...

- teaching our athletes the intricacies of uphill one-skate
- diving for a Frisbee during an intense ultimate game at a Mooney's Bay practice
- demonstrating expert navigation skills on a long trail run at a summer practice
- powdering fast skis at Nationals, world junior trials, or any number of Ocups/Qcups
- splitting firewood at a lumberjack's rate
- klistering fast skis at Nationals, world junior trials, or any number of Ocups/Qcups
- sipping tea at the CSM Gold Camp
- helping his fellow coaches do their jobs better
- chatting in Italian with a World Cup sprint champion
- rollerskiing up and down Blacks with our athletes, helping them dial in their technique... that's after cycling the 30k to the 8am practice and before cycling back home!

...and the list goes on and on.

And Etienne does all this with boundless enthusiasm, optimism, and tireless commitment. He is an amazing role model, not only for the athletes he coaches, but for the entire club.

Après toutes ces années d'implication et de dévouement dans le club Nakkertok Nordique, la tuque d'or, symbole de la contribution exceptionnelle d'un bénévole de longue date dans l'avancement du club et la réussite des athlètes, est remise à l'entraîneur bénévole, **Étienne Grall**, en ce samedi, 30 avril 2016. Étienne, notre chic *coach* français par excellence, dégage une superbe énergie positive, et ce dans toutes les situations. Il est toujours prêt à aider tout le monde, tout le temps. De la salle de fartage aux pratiques, de la saison de ski à roulettes au ski sur la neige, Étienne est au rendez-vous!

Son attitude chaleureuse et sa façon bien à lui de trouver les bons mots ou les bonnes expressions pour encourager les athlètes, et ce continuellement, font de lui le *coach* en or! Que ce soit avec les T2T ou les LTC, Étienne s'adapte facilement à la dynamique du groupe et réussit à établir une excellente relation avec les athlètes pour faire en sorte qu'ils s'amuse tout en s'entraînant avec l'effort requis au bon moment.

Nous apprécions tous Étienne, sa présence aux séances d'entraînement et aux compétitions procure une source de confiance dans l'équipe car tout le monde sait qu'on peut compter sur lui!

Milles merci Étienne!