

Loppet teams enjoy snow and warmth

By Geneviève Svatek

Banff Crag & Canyon — Racers in the Lake Louise to Banff Loppet met excellent conditions Saturday in the Winter Festival classic.

The temperature at the start of the race on Lake Louise was -5 degrees and the trail received eight centimetres of fresh snow, said Banff participant Erwin Widmer.

Widmer completed the 65-kilometre classic cross-country race on his own in eight hours and 17 minutes.

“The track was generally good except in the Backswamp,” he said. The Backswamp, a wilderness area in the fifth leg of the race had been packed using snowshoes and ski-tracked only. The wind blew snow off the track in some sections.

The maximum of 160 registrants participated in the event, many coming from outside the Bow Valley.

Most participants joined teams of up to six people. The mixed team titled Team X finished first with a time of 4:53:34. The team consisted of Erik Carleton, Milaine Thériault, Joel Jaques, Sarah Robinson, Cathy Jaques and Sarah Daitch.

The Banff Ski Runners 210 team came in second in 4:58:05. The youth team was made up of Mike Argue, Jess Cockney, Evan Bruce, Gerard Carnier, Haaken Lenes and William Brooks.

The Canmore mixed team titled The New Parents finished third in 5:08:09. The team included Nic Christoffersson, Kris Bury, Alaric Fish and Robie Fish.

Kathy Davies and Banff’s Maria Hawkins made up the winning women’s team and the fourth team overall, ahead of the fastest men’s team, which included Bruce Copeland and Robert Burden.

Michael Hayes was the fastest individual competitor with a time of 5:37:45. Banff’s Norbert Meier was a close second 41 seconds behind. Marg Fedyna was the fastest woman in a time of 6:01:47. She was fifth overall among individuals.