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Skiing

Kings of the hill: Petoskey boys return to top as D2 skiing state champs

Drew Kochanny (231) 439-9345 dkochanny@petoskeynews.com

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The Petoskey boys' ski team returned to the top of Division 2 with a state championship day at Nub's Nob in Harbor Springs. The Northmen edged out Harbor Springs and the Great North Alpine team. The title comes following a runner-up finish last season and eight straight prior to 2019.

Courtesy Photo/Mary Paquette

HARBOR SPRINGS — Welcome back.

The Petoskey boys' ski team will enter the offseason in a familiar and comfortable place: As champions.

After winning eight straight skiing state titles and settling for a runner-up finish a year ago, the Northmen returned to being kings of the hill at the 2019-20 MHSAA Skiing State Championships at Nub's Nob in Harbor Springs on Monday.

“It’s great to be back on top,” said an enthusiastic Erik Lundteigen, Petoskey’s head coach. “It’s awesome. We had an eight year run, were second and now we’re back on top. I’m really happy for the guys.”



Petoskey’s Jimmy Flom hits a slalom gate during his final run before claiming an individual state title in the race on Monday.

Courtesy Photo/Mary Paquette

Looking to unseat defending state champ Great North Alpine (GNA) out of the Traverse City area and a good Harbor

Springs team, Petoskey did so with a 56-64 advantage over the runner-up Rams.

GNA placed third overall with 84.5 points.

For Lundteigen, he needs to look no further for a reason as to what brought his team back atop the podium than his depth throughout the lineup.

“The reason we’re so good is I think we have great depth,” he said. “There’s a lot of ‘B team’ guys that would be skiing varsity for a lot of other schools. So the guys at the top have to get after. Roles get established and the guys do their best. At the back end, we knock a lot of people down the list because they’re all up there.

“Today was a real team effort. We always count on Tripp (Thomas) or Jimmy (Flom) to lay one down, then everyone else fills in there. If you can win other people’s seed, then you’re really pushing people down and we did that.”



Harbor Springs' Andrew Truman comes up on a giant slalom gate during the morning race. Truman earned an individual state title in the race.

Drew Kochanny/News-Review

Petoskey and Harbor Springs both put up impressive slalom and giant slalom scores, with each having an individual state champion between the two races as well.

In the morning giant slalom, Harbor Springs' Andrew Truman claimed the state crown with a combined time of 50.19 seconds, putting it

together between a pair of first place runs.

Petoskey led in the race overall, followed by Harbor.

Tripp Thomas paced the Northmen in fourth place overall with a time of 51.55 seconds, then Anders McCarthy and Jimmy Flom tied for sixth place with identical combined times of 51.72 seconds.

Nolan Walkerdine also took 14th for Petoskey in 53.23 seconds, Wyatt Mattson placed 18th in 53.93 and Gabe Rothman earned a 27th place finish for Petoskey in 55.14 seconds.

For Harbor Springs outside of Truman, Cole Hoffman also earned an All-State season with a fifth place run in 51.60 seconds and Connor Truman placed 12th in 53.18 seconds.



The Harbor Springs ski teams both had quite a bit to cheer about at the Division 2 state finals at Nub's Nob, with both the boys and girls claiming runner-up state finishes.

Courtesy Photo

Austin Smar then took 19th in 53.97 seconds, Robbie Gillette took 27th in 55.14 and Luke Baker took 37th in 56.48 seconds.

After a long afternoon break for lunch, the teams returned to take on the slalom course, where Petoskey's Flom unseated Truman from the top with a 1:15.54 to 1:15.76 finish.

The win by Flom helped place the Northmen on top with another close finish over Harbor Springs.

"Harbor skied well," said Lundteigen on the Rams. "They skied very well. To beat them we had to have a good day, which we did. We didn't back off and there was a lot of pressure there."

McCarthy earned a top 10 finish with another sixth place time, this one he wouldn't share, in 1:18.38, while Will Goelz placed just outside the top 10 in 11th at 1:20.92.

Walkerdine took 16th in 1:21.80, Thomas took a stumble in his opening run, then rebounded with the race's top run of the day (34.90) to place 17th in 1:22.35.



Petoskey senior Tripp Thomas looks for the finish late in the morning GS race.

Drew Kochanny/News-Review

“That was nice because not only does it move him up, but it moves others back,” said

Lundteigen on Thomas’ push in his second run. “I’ve got a lot of respect for Tripp.”

Gabe Rothman also took 21st for Petoskey in 1:24.54.

With Andrew Truman again leading for the Rams, Hoffman again placed not far behind in seventh overall in 1:20.19. Connor Truman took 13th in 1:20.99, Cal Benjamin placed 14th in 1:21.38 and Smar placed 18th in 1:22.72.

Ian Davis of Harbor also raced a time of 1:29.08, good for 30th.



Harbor Springs’ Cole Hoffman comes out of a turn around a GS gate in the morning at Nub’s Nob.

Drew Kochanny/News-Review

Charlevoix had one competitor in the slalom race in senior Jake Snyder, who placed 19th overall in a time of 1:24.16.

For Harbor Springs, Hoffman, Andrew Truman and Smar will all graduate, while for Petoskey, Thomas and Flom will graduate.

Lundteigen likes the collection of skiers back, which includes McCarthy and Walkerdine, among others.

“Next year, I’m really excited,” he said. “We had some guys just off the ‘A team’ that will be on there next year. That depth is the key.”

As for building the streak back up? Lundteigen has been around long enough and through an eight year run of titles to know you just take things one race at a time.

“We’ll see if this leads to another streak,” he said with a laugh. “One at a time.”

Note: Because of print deadlines, this story can not print in the Petoskey News-Review until Wednesday, Feb. 26.

Follow @DrewKochanny on Twitter

Drew Kochanny

Drew Kochanny is the sports editor of the Petoskey News-Review. He is a native of Midland, MI, though was born in Petoskey. He graduated from Northern Michigan University with a degree in Electronic Journalism.