

**WMA National Director's report**  
**Canada**  
**2024**

The 2023-2024 Canadian XC ski season was challenging for many regions with very low or no snow throughout the entire winter. While there were areas of our country with good conditions many skiers simply could not ski close to home which resulted in less skiers skiing throughout Canada. Many of the popular ski events were canceled or staged on poor snow conditions which resulted in low numbers of competitors. The good news is there was snow in some regions and snow is still falling in our western mountain regions.

Canadian Masters lost a very good man, father and skier in the fall of 2023. Bill Gairdner passed away in October. Bill was our founder who believed strongly in fair, safe and fun competitions for Masters skiers. Bill started our first Masters discussions and created our first Masters XC Ski Association here in Canada out of his office in Ontario. Bill was also responsible for the beginning of our current World Masters Association and eventually our Masters World Cups.

The Canadian Masters Association recently named our Masters Championships the **Bill Gairdner National Championships** to honor Bill's legacy as our founder. Bill's legacy was also honored by Dieter Heckman, WMA Honorary President during the opening ceremony of the Vuokatti, Finland, Masters World Cup. Thank you Dieter for your kind words honoring Bill. Bill's desire to create fair competitions for the 30 plus age groups for competition for life will be celebrated at nordic ski events for many years to come. Thank you Bill and your family for allowing our members to celebrate your legacy for years to come at our annual Bill Gairdner National Championships!

Masters World Cup, Vuokatti Finland 2024 - Vuokatti Sport and the local organizing committee did an amazing job of hosting a great event last February at the Olympic Training facilities. Cold weather created challenges but the races eventually went ahead with great grooming and exciting racing on fantastic race courses! A big thank you to the technical committee who created safe and fair competitions for all the competitors. Canada's small team of 9 skiers won 4 individual medals and one team relay medal against a very strong field. Good food, safe, fair competitions and saunas were the highlights of the Masters World Cup in Vuokatti, Finland.

Team Canada for the next Masters World Cup in Klosters 2026 is currently at over 60 skiers so far and many are returning to compete again at our only Masters World Cup next March, 2026. Wishing for better snow, good health and peace in our world next season.

Mike Bell  
Canada

