

Viking Thursday Tour Report for 7th January 2021

Viking Red Trail (now in the Covid Red Zone!)

It is said that to ensure maintenance of healthy aging, one should take on combinations of physical and intellectual challenges, so what better than to take on skiing the 14 km Viking Red Trail loop with a mere foot of snow coverage!

There were initial thoughts of having to break trail, but it would seem that introductory sections of the trail had already been well trodden by a combination of hikers, snow-shoers and skiers! What was this evidence of....a Westward Ho of anxious gold rush seekers?or just folks desperate to indulge in some now highly valued viral-free fresh air...indeed, the new recreational gold standard!

Staying vertical en route did indeed have its challenges since running streams, and protruding rocks and logs were eager to spend some "Facetime" with you! In particular, the steep rundown near the junction "P" called for the classic side-stepping protocol as a mish-mash of debris awaits one at the bottom!

Arrival at the Montfort Meadow with its sunny exposure prompts a break for lunch coupled with nostalgic memories of "olden days 33km Loppets" whereby at this very location, Viking "refreshment volunteers" would offer passing racers welcome drinks and nibbles, and much sought after advice about how far it was to the finish line!

Topping up with calories at this juncture is very timely as the next section of the Red Trail requires energy reserves to climb, climb, climb, with the eventual reward of seeing the sign reminding one that at 505 m elevation, it is the highest point of the Viking network, phew! In other words, it can only be downhill from now on! Indeed, there is a magnificent long rundown to junction "N" which with enough imagination can give the feeling that you are being effortlessly transported along an airport conveyer belt!

Junction "O" offers the Orange Trail as a more "interesting" return routing back to the clubhouse, compared to the outgoing flat routing.

What better way to have kicked off 2021 than this 4-1/2 hour expedition in brilliant sunshine, with no wind and comfy temperatures of around -8 Deg. C !!

Fellow skiers, be positive, but check negative!

Derek