

## **By Michael Onesi - The Chronicle-Journal**

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Here are some interesting stories from the Sibley trial.

**DON'T MISS THE FORK IN THE TRAIL:** Alastair Wehner of Kenora was a very tired 10-year-old on Saturday.

The Kenora kid was skiing in a pack of adults and didn't notice a very important fork in the trail. Instead of going left on the 10-kilometre course, Wehner stayed right, accidentally hitting the 20K trail.

When he saw a sign saying he just completed 10 kilometres and the finish line wasn't around, he knew he made a wrong turn.

"The longest race I've ever done before was 5K," said Wehner. "My tendons and my muscles just kill."

He wasn't the only one to miss that important turnoff.

Norma Maurice of Dorion skied twice as long as originally planned. She hit a checkpoint at the halfway mark and was surprised to learn there was another 10K to go.

"I thought 'Oh well. Here I am. Let's get something to eat and keep going because I'm not going back,'" Maurice said.

She said another lady made the same mistake, took off her bib and quit. No word on how that women got back to the start area.

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**SKIING WITH A BUN IN THE OVEN:** Lana Puumala has a good excuse for not winning this year's 20-kilometre event. Puumala, who won the 20K race 1991 and 1994, is seven months pregnant.

"I'm a little slower than I used to be. The 50K guys passed me and I never wanted to be this person that gets passed by the 50Kers," said Puumala, who lives in Atikokan.

She loves skiing so she wasn't going to let her belly get in the way of doing Sibley this year. Other people tried to talk her out of it but she wasn't concerned about going into labour on the trails.

"Everybody else is worried but I'm not. I know that two doctors from Atikokan are here skiing so that made me feel a little better," she said.

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**HEY, THIS ISN'T THE AUTOBAHN:** The Sibley Ski Tour had an international field this year as skier Uschi Kemeny came from Freiburg, Germany to do the race with her sister. Barbara Kemeny lives in Thunder Bay and the two decided to ski together.

Uschi enjoys downhill and cross-country skier and yesterday was her first race.

"Here in Canada I did my first race. I'm so proud to be here," said Uschi, 48.

"It was fun. I don't know this landscape so I stopped at a few places to take pictures because it is so beautiful. I'm very impressed. It's so wonderful here, the snow is good, the weather is good and the people are so nice."

The sisters did the 20-kilometre event wearing matching fleece dresses and crossed the finish line together.

"That was total fun for us. It was an opportunity for Uschi to check out the scenery and get a feel for the community," said Barb, 50.