

Fond du Lac County Snowmobile Association Sled Madness

By: Jeff Montsma, FDLCSA board member

Some of the best riding in Wisconsin occurs in the months of February and March, which happens to coincide with the culmination of college basketball tournaments and of course what so many refer to as March Madness. Thousands of people are drawn to the best trails our state has to offer during this time, similar to the draw of people whom fill out their March Madness brackets. That time of year gives the avid basketball fan even more reason to watch and cheer for their favorite teams, as they go head to head, aspiring to be the champion! It is that theme and spirit of competition that was the idea behind Fond du Lac County's Snowmobile Sled Madness.

Beyond the peak sledding time, we capitalized on that seasonal competitive interest and drew even more positive attention to our sport of snowmobiling while letting people compete, cheer and share in our passion for our winter sport. We did this by utilizing Facebook's sharing and polling tools that are available to create our own bracket competition for local snowmobiles.

In February, we opened our Fond du Lac County Snowmobile Facebook page to allow any member of a Fond du Lac County snowmobile club to post a picture to our page and encourage people to "like" their picture. Our inaugural Sled Madness garnered 38 submittals which highlighted their sleds. These pictures varied from anywhere from a wintery sunset, trail picture with their sled; to a vintage, off trail or drag racing sled. These pictures were equally posted by men, women, children, young and old.

Facebook offers a simple poll, so we posted two pictures to compete against each other, highlighting the sled, the member and the club they belonged to. People who follow our page would have it pop up in their Facebook feed and all they had to do was click on the picture of their choice. We selected the top vote getters and sorted out the "Sweet Sixteen". The rounds would proceed with seeded head to head matchups, narrowing the field in a single elimination manner. The final matchup winner in this head to head competition would receive a \$50 gift certificate from one of two of our local snowmobile dealerships and of course the pride of being named the first champion of Fond du Lac County's Sled Madness Champion.

The first-round pictures reached 2000+ people, with 300 votes cast. The momentum of this competition grew as people shared the posts and more people followed the competition. After the month-long competition, "The Final" matchup reached 30,000+ people with almost 1,500 votes cast alone. Over the duration of this event we were able to bring positive attention of our local winter sport to over 100,000 people, many being their first exposure to snowmobiling. Our first ever, Fond du Lac Snowmobile Association Sled Madness, was a resounding success!

If you would like to join the club or learn more, please visit our website at www.nkmcrookedtrails.com. The club meets the 2nd Sunday of each month at 11 am at Dundee's Roadhouse.