



A poem by Riva Socha

What's a Beaver Tail?

One sunny day in winter, as I skied along the trail,
I met a man, who, seeing my hat, asked "What's a Beaver Tail?"
I couldn't stop to answer, I was doing the 35,
With only one objective, to finish it alive.
But as I skied I thought about a suitable reply,
It isn't easy to define, but I would like to try...
Of course, we're members of a club, we ski or else we run,
But what else sets our group apart from every other one?
Beaver Tails come in many shapes and all assorted sizes.
One needn't be a member long before one realizes
There is no standard form or mold to which one must aspire,
Some are short, and some breathe air that's up a little higher.
Some young, some old, some in-between, last time I took a look,
One's had so many birthdays he's in the Guinness book.
Some are rather chubby, the lucky ones are thinner,
But it doesn't seem to matter, they all pig out at dinner.
They munch their gorp and drink their juice, although they travel light,
Beaver Tails let nothing interfere with appetite.

Some complain their hair has gotten just a little thin,
If they can't grow it up on top, it does well on the chin.
Some have thick and bushy hair that hasn't yet receded,
It seems a better distribution scheme is what is needed...
Some dress mix-match casual, some stylishly attired,
While some wear lycra suits so tight, no fantasy's required.
I think you'll recognize our acrobat who's never droopy,
He wears a cap that always makes me think he looks like Snoopy.
One wins medals every race, and greatly to my sorrow,
I'd still get the silver if I crossed the line to-morrow.
If you feel stiffness in your neck, we have a great masseur,
Who'll knead your muscles tenderly until you want to purr.
And then there is that friendly guy who smiles that all is well,
But guard your skiis and lock your door if you're in the same hotel.
They all have quirks and foibles, and funny little ways,
But underneath the laughs and tricks are qualities to praise,
The love and joy to be outdoors in any kind of weather,
The helping hands, the comradeship we feel when we're together.
So, whether you're an expert who flies along the trail,
Whether you have just one speed and progress like a snail,
Whether you win medals or are just an also-ran,
Welcome to the Beaver Tails, you do the best you can.
So here's a toast to the Beaver Tails, with wishes warm and hearty,
Good health, long years so we'll enjoy the hundredth birthday party!