

Be Ready to Dominate the Birkie This Year

Start your training for the Birkie with smaller loppets

Edmonton – The 21st annual Canadian Birkebeiner Ski Festival is less than two months away, which means that there is less than two months to train for the premier event. Luckily, there are multiple smaller ski events that can get you warmed up.

- On January 4th the Edmonton Nordic Ski Club is holding its **Troll in the Park**, held in Goldstick Park, Edmonton. Visit www.edmontonnordic.ca for more info.
- January 24, 2009 brings us the **Ole Uffda Loppet** at the Camrose Nordic Center. Get in touch with your inner Norwegian as the Birkie draws nearer. Visit www.camrose.com/ski for more info.
- The **Beckie Scott Loppet** is being held on January 31st at the Vermilion Provincial Park. For more information, call 780-853-4697.
- In February, the Parkland Ski Club is hosting the Bob Johnstone Loppet in Red Deer on the 7th, which should be a perfect warm-up for the Birkie the following weekend. Information on this loppet can be found by visiting www.parklandxcskiclub.org, and clicking on their Loppet Pages link.

The Birkebeiner Ski Festival is Canada's largest classic style skiing event. The Festival utilizes over 100 kilometers of trails set crossing through the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, Elk Island National Park, and Cooking Lake-Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area.

This year, the Festival is holding five ski events of differing lengths and difficulties. This is to ensure that all skiers, no matter the level they are at, can enjoy the festival, feel the heartbeat and ski the legend of the Birkebeiner. The early bird registration deadline has been pushed back to January 14, 2009, increasing the amount of time that entrants can enjoy a lower registration fee.

The Canadian Birkebeiner Ski Festival will be held on February 13 and 14, 2009. Participants can register by mail or online at www.eventsonline.ca. Trail conditions and more information can be found at www.canadianbirkie.com.

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Media Inquiries can be directed to:

Ryan O'Byrne
Marketing Director
780-430-7153
canadianbirkie@telus.net

or

Cathy Schreiner
780-430-7153
canadianbirkie@telus.net