

**Wax the Competition with Loppet Training**

Ski society sponsors training program for its event

*Edmonton* -- For the 18<sup>th</sup> year in a row, the Canadian Birkebeiner Society is sponsoring the Learn to Loppet ski program, running between January 10 and February 9, 2009. The program is designed to improve the techniques of the participants, and make them ready to ski in the Birkebeiner Ski Festival.

Starting on Saturday morning, January 10 with a basic waxing and ski testing workshop, classes will run every Monday evening from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Proper strides, race techniques and Birkie preparation will all be covered in the six weeks of lessons leading up to the event.

Information on the Learn to Loppet program can be found on the Canadian Birkebeiner website, or at various ski and sport stores around the city. Registration for the ski lesson program ends January 7, 2009.

The Birkebeiner Ski Festival is Canada's largest classic style skiing event. The Festival utilizes 100 kilometers of trails set crossing through Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, Elk Island National Park, and the 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 first registration deadline has been pushed back to January 14, 2009, increasing the amount of time that entrants can enjoy the lower early bird fees.

The Canadian Birkebeiner Ski Festival will be held on February 13 and 14, 2009. Participants can register online at [www.eventsonline.ca](http://www.eventsonline.ca) until February 11 or by mail before February 7. Trail conditions and more event information can be found at [www.canadianbirkie.com](http://www.canadianbirkie.com).

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