



Canadian Birkie E-News:
November 2015



The Greatest Adventure on Snow!

Registration Deadline

Our early bird Registration deadline is tomorrow, **WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18**. [Register](#) earlier to get the best rate!

You can register all of your family members at one time and don't forget to get your tickets for the Vikings Feast Celebration which takes place after the Birkie ski events. The next registration deadline is January 20 and final registration for all events is February 10, 2016.

28th Birkie
SKI THE GREATEST ADVENTURE ON SNOW!
CLASSIC & SKATE
Canadian Birkebeiner Ski Festival
February 12-13, 2016
Edmonton & Strathcona County, AB
55/31/13/4/2.5 km Classic & 40 km Skate Distances
Canada's Premier Nordic Ski Event
CanadianBirkie.com

Once the Halloween gremlins have gotten over their last tummy aches from eating so much candy, us ski enthusiasts start suffering neck aches from gawking up at the sky, watching impatiently for the first flakes to fly. The mountains have been getting some lovely big dumps of the white stuff, but so far, Ma Nature is taking her time preparing a nice blanket of white with which to cover the prairies. Next week is looking good for our first real snowfalls, so hang in there, rest your strained neck, and enjoy a few last dry surface runs, Nordic walk outings or bike rides.

Okay everyone, all together now. Let's start our Snow Dances! Check out our social media campaign below and post, on your preferred Birkie platform, a photo or video of you, your friends and/or family doing your best snow dance. Costumes and props welcome! Deadline for submissions is Friday, November 27th. The winning photo or video entrant earns a Birkie shirt as a prize.

Social Media Campaign We are all familiar with the Birkebeiner [legend](#) from Norway in 1206, and as with all legends, they need to be shared and passed on for the important life lessons they offer to serve and inspire others. We are launching our social media campaign this year in full steam in order to increase awareness and appreciation of the Canadian Birkie, and to give the community of active outdoor lifestyle enthusiasts an opportunity to share the The Greatest Adventure on Snow. We'll be working to provide skiers with information and support, and to provide all of our users with real-time updates prior to, during and following our events.

Our social media accounts are listed under:

[Twitter](#) - @canadianbirkie

[Facebook](#) – Canadian Birkebeiner Society

Instagram – Canadian Birkie

Please join us and help us pass on this amazing tradition (28th Canadian Birkie this Feb.), and share your memories, challenges, and triumphs on the Birkie trail using these platforms... and of course your snow dances!

Long Courses and Maps The eagerly awaited maps of the 55 and 31 km Classic courses and the 40 km Skate course are here. Many thanks to Jim Black, Chief of Course, Bas Delaney, Co-Chief, and the Course committee for their work on developing optimized Classic and Skate courses that are sure to put many smiles on long-course Birkie skiers' faces. Amazingly, the Skate trail will only overlap with 2.7 km of the Classic route (2 km on the wide trail along the fence line from the exit off Goose Lake to the gate at Elk Island N.P. and an additional .7 km where the skaters leave the Blackfoot Trails in the NE of the park and head for the home stretch along the north end of the park). All courses finish in the same finish chute at Waskehegan. That's it; simple and elegant.

Classic (Traditional) Courses: The 31 km course remains unchanged. The 55 km courses are modified a bit, with a few kilometers removed in the trail section loop out to Blackfoot Station and the addition of these kilometers back in with a loop near Islet. The reason for the change is to free up the Blackfoot loops for the Skate event without having to scrub between races (i.e., remove classic tracks) as there won't be a lot of time for the track to harden up.

Skate Course: The Skate course is fantastic. It features a dedicated start and skate tracks on Goose Lake to allow field separation, a beautiful loop on designated skating tracks on the trails in the Blackfoot (NE) section of the Provincial Recreation Area (PRA) and then boots for home (Waskehegan) on trails generally reserved for equestrian use. There is a unique opportunity for skiers to see and

experience some new, completely lovely trails in the park. New event, new trails, new challenge... are you up for the adventure?!

The maps of the two Classic and the one Skate course are provided on our [website](#) - click on your individual event to see them. New elevation relief maps are being prepared.

GoChip Technology: A Gift to Birkie Skiers

This year, our timing and results contractor, Zone4, is introducing GoChip technology for the Birkie. Skiers will get an ankle timing chip the same as any other year. However, this chip will record the skier's time from when they each actually cross the start line – not just when the mass start pistol fires. No more worrying about having to wait for skiers ahead in the tracks to clear the start zone. It also won't matter if a skier goes out and back across the start line a few times while warming up or checking wax; the GoChip will only record the final time across the start line as the individual's start time. So, unless you've been one of the few to start with a toe on the start line, you'll have your most accurate time recorded ever in the Birkie (or any Mass Start event that relies on gun time).

Livestreamed interim results will also be available as interim timing units are placed at several Food/Aid Stations along each course. These units will record and transmit each skier's data as they pass by the unit, in real time. This way the skier, friends, family and others can 'watch' the races unfold on their smartphones. Lots of great applications of this. For example, a participant might use the data to adjust his or her pace during the event to catch skiers who are 'out of sight but within reach up ahead'; perhaps chasing someone in the same race, same age category... or just because. It can also be used to identify where friends and family members are during the event, when they'll likely finish, etc. Cool.

Birkie 2016 Poster and brochure

Our poster and brochure are [available](#) in PDF format for everyone. Please feel free to share them; distribute the brochures or display the poster if you have an area visible to skiers that may be interested in becoming part of the Birkie legend.

We hope you will display and distribute our event information. The Canadian Birkie is a fun, recreational loppet with a distance for everyone.

Birkie Programs

Birkie Training Group: Winter Session is full. Coaches Roy, Mary Ann and Jared are going full-tilt boogie with their groups. The skiers in this group will be super fit by Birkie day.



Birkie Training Group: Midweek Session runs for 10 weeks, beginning November 25th. There is still some room to [register](#) in this training group and they have a lot of fun out with Coach Dave.

Birkie Learn to Loppet, our 5-week lesson-based program starts up on January 9th, but it almost always fills early, so lock in your spot [soon](#).

Birkie Rookie Package is a new offering in conjunction with the Strathcona Wilderness Centre. If Nordic skiing is new to you and you don't own your own gear, [check it out](#).

Snowmaking Update



The Edmonton Nordic Ski Club Snowmaking project at Gold Bar is moving forward, with the water lines installed in the ground before freeze-up and the pumphouse being built this week. Once Epcor gets the power infrastructure in place, the system will be ready to rock. With snow in the forecast five days next week, perhaps Ma Nature will beat the project this year, but it'll be great to know it's there, ready to support Edmonton and area skiers for many seasons to come.

To note, if anyone out there is concerned about the noise made by the snow guns, the units we are getting in Gold Bar are the second quietest available in the world. Each snow gun makes no more noise than a vacuum cleaner (i.e., quieter than a car driving by).

Birkie Art Available: J. Yardley-Jones prints

Over the years the Birkie has collected extra prints from our long-time collaborating artist, John Yardley-Jones. Yardley-Jones created a special, unique print each year based on the theme of that year's Birkie, situated in recognizable scenes from along the Birkie trail. We have a limited selection of prints available and are selling them now. Look back in Birkie history and share the Birkie spirit! See our [merchandise page](#) on our website for these and other cool Birkie Swag.

Volunteers Loved Here



Want to be a part of something BIG? Year after year our skiers extol the virtues of our wonderful volunteers! It's one of the top three things skiers say they love about the Birkie.

It takes approximately 550 volunteers to plan, organize and run the Birkie each year. There are many different positions, but some areas where we need the most volunteers are:

Food/Aid Station: sign up as an individual or group and help nurture skiers as you provide refreshments and encouragement to them
Ski Patrol: people are stationed or ski along parts of the courses to marshal skiers and support anyone in need of assistance
Long Course Sweeps: The Tail-end Charlies that enjoy a long, slow ski while they make sure every participant makes it off the trail safely
Shuttle drivers: Get volunteers to and from their stations, drive skiers to the finish area who aren't able to finish their ski event
Festival Tent: Refreshment service for hungry skiers after the event
Timing and Finish Line: tasks might include collecting timing chips and assisting skiers at the finish line or running results to the Awards volunteers

If you or anyone you know would like more information on these or other volunteer positions, please see our [website](#) and sign up to volunteer!

We appreciate that without volunteers, the Birkie could not happen. As a volunteer, you'll receive a Birkie souvenir and an invitation to the Volunteer Orientation and Appreciation evening with food, entertainment and lots of amazing draw prizes. Our volunteers have fun, meet new people and become one of our treasured Birkie family!

Thank you to Birkie volunteers who have been out waving the Birkie flag over the last month at the ENSC Ski Swap, Snowfest and the Strathcona County Youth Volunteer Fair.

See you out on the trails!



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