



The Greatest Adventure on Snow!

Canadian Birkie E-News:
January 19, 2016



Register Now!!!



Wednesday, January 20th (11:59 pm) is the next registration deadline for the Birkie and the final cut-off is Wednesday, February 10th. [Register](#) now and save.

Birkie 28: All Systems Go!

It's Green! It's Green! No, thankfully, there's no green showing on the Birkie Trails. I'm referring to the wonderful sight of Parks' Green ratings of all the ski trails in Cooking Lake -Blackfoot PRA. Green means **GOOD**, and the trails are the best they've been this winter. Some long-time Birkie skiers who've been out over the last few days are telling us many favourite trails in the Park are actually Very Good.

Several more centimetres of gorgeous white, trail-rating boosting stuff are forecast for the area over the remainder of this week. And the 14-day forecast (while never something to bet the farm on) suggests lots of stellar ski days, with single-digit below zero highs. Great opportunity to get some lovely long skis in.

All Birkie ski events are a go. So, if you've been holding back on registering, wait no more. The Skate race is on, so get in on this historical running; the first of many to come.

On-line Birkie 28 Program Guide

We are just putting the final touches on this year's program guide and will send out the link to you this week.

Hot Chocolate Sundays



Hot Chocy Sundays at Waskehegan Staging Area are a great chance to drop in, have some cocoa and cookies, and visit with other skiers and our Friends of the Blackfoot. The home fire in the big wood stove will be burning from noon – 4 pm, this Sunday until the final Sunday before the Birkie.

NEW!!! Ukrainian Village to Waskehegan Bus



Based on requests from skiers in our recent survey, we will be offering a bus for spectators and Ole's Tour participants, running from Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village (UCHV) (Start of Long Courses) to Waskehegan Staging Area (Finish Line, Start of Short Courses). Catch this bus outside the Red Barn at **9:50 am** (after the Classical race starts but before the start of the Skate Ski event). All other spectators going to Waskehegan must use the Bethel Transit Station in Sherwood Park as they did last year.

If you have a loved one you want to see off at their Classical long start and then be driven around to see them finish and/or take the kids to ski Ole's, you can do it with just the family vehicle. Buses will run, as always, from Waskehegan back up to UCHV all afternoon.

If you are staying at the Birkie Host Hotel (Holiday Inn at 9 Premier Way), you can take the Birkie bus to your long start at UCHV, departing the hotel at 7 am. To ride, you must sign up at the Birkie Booth at the Nordic Fair. When you are finished skiing or cheering, you can take the shuttle back to Bethel Transit Station. Due to vastly different finish times over the day, we are unable to provide buses to get skiers from Bethel Transit Station to the hotel, but it is a short ride on a public bus or cab from there.

Wax Room

This year we will again have a waxing room available for out-of-town skiers at the Nordic Fair in the Strathcona County Community building from noon - 8 p.m. The room is well-ventilated and the floor and tables will be covered in plastic. Skiers must bring all of their own waxing clamps, tools, equipment and wax.

We had hoped to have a waxing room at the host hotel as well, but have since discovered that the space offered to us does not have adequate ventilation to support safe waxing so we are not using this room. We apologize for any inconvenience.

Birkie Programs Going Great Guns

Our Birkie Training Groups (Winter and Mid-week Sections) and our Birkie Learn to Loppet Programs are gliding along fabulously. Registration in all of our current offerings is closed, but stay tuned for a post-Birkie Skate program offering. We have had over 85 participants this year across our Birkie programs. We'd like to thank our dedicated coordinators, coaches and instructors for providing all of these terrific opportunities for skiers.

Training Tips



With good snow and favourable forecasts, it's time to start putting in some longer ski days. On your long ski day each week, try to work up to a ski at least two-thirds of the Birkie distance you plan to ski. Three-quarters is even better, but not at the risk of adding too many more kilometres per week.

Second, a day or two a week spent doing hill climb repeats will pay great dividends come Birkie day. If you don't have a good hill nearby, you can substitute some arms only and legs only, but climbing is the best choice to really help you develop your ski specific strength. More strength correlates to a stronger push off each foot and stronger push off each pole, which translates to more centimetres/inches covered on every stride cycle or double poling action. This means faster and easier skiing over the day, hills that you're up and over in fewer strides, and more FUN!

See you out on the trails!

