

Canadian Birkie News

Nov. 19, 2020 [View this email online](#)



Registration opens Nov 27

The Canadian Birkebeiner Society volunteer committees worked hard on your behalf to ensure Birkie ski events take place in 2021. Their revised plans follow Alberta health guidelines. Registration for the 13, 31 and 55 km events will open on **Friday, November 27 at Noon MST**. See details on our [registration](#) page.

Registration for the Birkie Sunday Barnebirkie family ski events with Silver Skate at Hawrelak Park will open in **January**.



Cap on 13, 31, 55 km events

Our first priority is the health and safety of our volunteers and skiers. The 2021 Canadian Birkie is designed to follow Alberta Health Services Stage Two

Guidelines for Sports, Physical Activity, and Recreation. The long distance ski events are extended over four days, February 12-15, 2021 with a cap on the number of skiers per day. This allows for the most people possible to ski the Birkie events.

We redesigned the course to form one-way loops starting and finishing from [Islet Lake Staging Area](#) for 55 km skiers and at the [Waskahegan Staging Area](#) for 31 km skiers, on February 12, 13, and 14.

There will be separate morning and afternoon starts from [Waskahegan Staging Area](#) for the 13 km skiers on Monday, February 15th.

A maximum of 80 participants are allowed in each event, spaced over three waves. Each day has a separate registration form; please be sure you register for the correct day and time.



Secure Your Spot Insurance

You can purchase [Secure Your Spot Insurance](#) when you sign up for the 13, 31, and 55 km ski events. If your ski event is cancelled by **extreme weather** or unacceptable **snow conditions**, your registration will be transferred to the same event in 2022. You get a full carry-forward credit for one year! The Birkie online registration form offers 13 km skiers a \$10 insurance option, and 31 km and 55 km skiers a \$15 insurance option. Please note this insurance is available only at time of registration.

If the government cancels our event due to **COVID19**, all registrations will be carried forward to 2022, regardless if a person purchased Secure Your Spot Insurance or not.



A free Birkie mask

All skiers in the 13, 31 and 55 km events will get a free cloth Birkie mask upon arrival at their ski event this year. Your volunteer Birkie Board and Loppet Committee have been working overtime to figure out how to keep our skiers and volunteers safe. They have devised an exceptional plan to decrease touch points and eliminate gathering areas. COVID-19 protocols are subject to changes in the AHS Guidelines. Registrants will be informed if any changes occur.



New tracks put to the test

We are very excited to tell you that our new \$25,000 rubberized tracks for the Birkie Grooming machine were put to the test. After the first snowfall in Birkieland, Alberta Parks staff tried them out and confirmed they work very well. This will make a large difference to our track setting capability during times of low snowfall.

Thank you so much to all who donated money to help our society purchase this necessary upgrade!



Looking for volunteers to help

Are you able to help the Birkie? Here is a position we are currently looking to fill.

Human Resources Director (board member) We need an enthusiastic person to support our staff and volunteers. You will be helping to match up people's skill sets and interests with available jobs.

Other positions available are on our [webpage](#). Please contact us at our [office](#) or sign up with our [online form](#).



Scaled-down Birkie

The Birkie will feel different this year to ensure health and safety. This is in accordance with Provincial Health Authority Guidelines. There are numerous changes in order to comply; please note the following:

- **Timing chips at the start.** You will pick up your timing anklet at the entrance to the start area. Skiers will remove and return their timing anklet at the finish area.

- **Bibs mailed** to you in advance and must be shown to gain access to the site.
- There are **no buses** or shuttles. Skiers must arrange to be dropped off and picked up, or park their personal vehicles on site. Please share vehicles with a cohort member where possible.
- **No spectators** will be allowed at the start, finish, or on the course.
- You will be required to fill out a pre-screening **health questionnaire** online prior to leaving for the course. Only skiers that have completed forms on file will be allowed to proceed to the parking zone.
- Skiers are encouraged to **wax prior to leaving** home, with touch up at their vehicles prior to proceeding to the start.
- You must **wear a mask** at all times on site, from your vehicle to the start, and again from the finish to your car. It is not a requirement to wear your mask on the course. We encourage you to wear a face mask at aid stations.
- You are encouraged to **time your arrival** no earlier than 30 minutes prior to your wave start time, to park only where directed, and then proceed as quickly as possible to the start zone. Skiers in later waves will not be permitted to park or start early.
- 55 km with pack participants will **weigh their own packs**.
- There will be **no warmup track**, clothing tent or mass start.
- ALL participants will be asked to choose a **wave** in which to start. Choosing an appropriate wave is a critical step towards achieving optimal spacing on the course and to minimizing passing. Please read this [wave document](#) to choose your wave.
- Starts will be continuous throughout the waves, allowing for **two skiers** to start at 30 second intervals.
- Please respect skiers when **passing** by indicating your presence in advance. Then move to the opposite lane and return to the traffic lane when you are at least three metres past.
- There is a total of **five aid stations** spaced along the 31 and 55 km courses and **one aid station** on the 13 km course. Volunteer and medical personnel will be on site. Re-hydration will be provided in 300 ml bottles. Nutrition shall be in the form of prepackaged individual servings (and YES! there will be fig bars!)
- **No medals** distributed this year.
- There will be **no Festival Tent** at the finish; there will not be indoor food, beverage, or alcohol service. Please bring your recovery beverage and nutrition with you for individual consumption in your vehicle.
- **No changes** due to strict limits on participation. We are not able to make any changes to your ski event or wave choice this year.

More details will follow. Please refer to our [Frequently Asked Questions page](#).

Please do not reply to this newsletter, it will go to an unmonitored mail box.

Contact us at our [office](#).

Photo credit: JaN Studios

Canadian Birkie Ski Festival

Feb 12-15, 2021

Canadian Birkebeiner Society

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