



30th Canadian Birkie Ski Festival will welcome over 1250 skiers with perfect conditions

Canadian Birkie takes place February 7 – 9, 2020

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The Canadian Birkebeiner Society is anticipating one of the best Birkie Ski Festivals ever, with over 1,250 skiers expected to take part during the three-day event. The fresh snow in the past few days, as well as mild temperatures expected this weekend, will ensure a great experience for all involved.

“We are excited to open the 30th Canadian Birkie Ski Festival this Friday,” said Jim Black, President of the Canadian Birkebeiner Society. “Everyone has Birkie fever! It will be an amazing experience for all participants to ski their race in lovely temperatures, beautiful tracks and a wonderful environment. A big thank you goes out to all of the volunteers and partners who worked tremendously hard to deliver this year’s Canadian Birkie Ski Festival.”

Birkie Friday (February 7th) will be held at the Woodvale Facility, and includes the Nordic Fair, registration pick-up for participants and a complimentary ski waxing area.

Registration for Birkie Saturday (February 8th) closed on Wednesday, with a total of 1,136 skiers signing up for the various races. Over 300 people signed up for the 55 kilometre races, with 131 participants for the flagship race, the 55 kilometre with pack Torskeklubben Birkebeiner. There is a 21 percent increase in participants for the 31 kilometre Birkie Tour, a favourite distance of many racers. Our five other events also saw an increase in registrants. All races will take place at the Cooking Lake-Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area, in partnership with Alberta Parks and the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village.

This year, results of the 55 and 31 kilometre races will be listed on the Worldloppet ranking website, and participants can see how their times compare to other races held around the world. Results for all timed events will be posted throughout the day here: <https://canadianbirkie.com/results/>

Registrants have come from 10 Canadian provinces and territories, eight U.S. states, and as far away as Europe. The oldest skier registered for Birkie Saturday is 95 years old and the youngest is four years of age. Birkie Saturday concludes with the awards ceremony and Vikings’ Feast. Tickets are available at the Nordic Fair, with limited availability at the event itself.

Birkie Sunday (February 9th) is the day when Birkie dreams begin! The family-oriented event is held at Hawrelak Park, in partnership with the Silver Skate Festival, and includes Barnebirkie ski races with distances ranging from 500 metres to three kilometres. Children can win the Viking Costume Contest, try the Birkie Giant Ski Challenge and have their picture taken in the Birkie Booth.

Currently around 100 people have signed up online. With registration also available on the day, the number of participants will likely grow. Children and parents can bring their own equipment, and there will also be free rentals available in sizes ranging from Grade 3 to adult, courtesy of the Silver Skate Festival and the City of Edmonton.

Please find a full schedule and maps for the weekend’s events attached. For media interested in attending Birkie

Saturday, please note that a parking pass is required at the Waskahegan Staging Area. Please contact Delianne Meenhorst for any interview requests and to secure a parking pass.

Public parking is available at Hawrelak Park for Birkie Sunday. Please contact Delianne Meenhorst for any interview requests.

The Canadian Birkie Ski Festival aims to promote cross-country skiing for all ages and abilities. For more information, please visit <https://canadianbirkie.com/> and follow us on social media ([@canadianbirkie](#) on Twitter and [Instagram](#), and on [Facebook](#)).

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Pictures are available on request via: coordinator@canadianbirkie.com. If you would like to attend and experience the event yourself, please contact our Coordinator, Marion Hinteregger, for further information.

About the Canadian Birkebeiner Society:

Since 1985, the Canadian Birkebeiner Society organises Canada's largest classic cross-country ski festival held on the second weekend of February each year: The Canadian Birkie. Along with organising the Canadian Birkie, the non-profit aims to involve participants of all ages in cross-country skiing, promoting an active and healthy winter lifestyle. Birkie Saturday offers race events with short and long distances, starting with the two or four kilometre Birkie Ole's Tour for younger skiers to the 55 kilometre with pack Torskeklubben Birkebeiner for the more advanced skier. Birkie Sunday aims to promote cross-country skiing for families and offers Barnebirkie ski events to get children familiar with the sport and show the benefits of cross-country skiing for families.

In addition to the Canadian Birkie Ski Festival, the Canadian Birkebeiner Society organizes ski training and Full Moon Birkies to allow people to enjoy cross-country skiing in a friendly and fun atmosphere.

The Canadian Birkie Ski Festival allows participants to relive the Birkebeiner legend of how two Birkebeiner warriors rescued the future Norwegian Crown Prince by skiing him to safety in the middle of winter. In the longest race of the Canadian Birkie, skiers still carry a 5.5 kilogram weight that symbolises the Crown Prince Haakon Haakonsson.

Canadian Birkebeiner Society

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