



For Immediate Release

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Bringing the Birkebeiner Legacy to Life at the Birkie

Descendants of Founding Birkie Skier Selected as 2019 Birkebeiner Warriors & Inga

Hayward, WI (February 23, 2019) – The American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation is pleased to announce the selection of the trio of cross-country skiers who will depict two Birkebeiner Warriors and Inga, the mother of baby Prince Haakon. On February 23, 2019, William Andresen (Ironwood, MI), Carolyn Andresen Warren (Ironwood, MI), and David Andresen (Ironwood, MI) will portray Torstein, Skjervald, and Inga, respectively.

Each year, in homage to the legacy of the race, a trio reenacts the historic trek of warriors Torstein and Skjervald, and Inga (mother of Prince Haakon) on wooden skis and in full costume along the entire 55K classic American Birkebeiner cross-country course. Inga and the Warriors will carry a baby doll along the race course, and pick-up a real baby “prince” prior to skiing down Main Street to the finish line. The portrayal is a true celebration of the roots, legacy and traditions of the race.

What makes this year’s Inga and Warriors selection all the sweeter, is that the trio are the descendants of Karl Andresen, one of the original 35 founding American Birkebeiner skiers from 1973. Karl’s son, William (Torstein), skied in the first Kortelopet at the age of twelve and has since racked-up a total of seven Kortelopet races and eighteen American Birkebeiner races. Karl’s grandchildren, David (Skjervald) and Carolyn (Inga), have never experienced a year without a Birkie, including skiing in eleven Barnebirkie races each. David went on to ski one Kortelopet and six American Birkebeiner races, and Carolyn with one Kortelopet and nine American Birkebeiner races. Combined, this trio has 64 Birkie-related events behind them. Founding skier, Karl Andresen’s great grandson’s, Axel and Sten, will portray the infant Prince Haakon throughout Birkie Week too, continuing the family’s deep-rooted Birkie tradition

“My fondest Birkie memory was skiing with my Dad (Karl) on his final 9-hour Birkie finish at the age of 79...ignoring his doctor’s advice because 30-finishes sounded so much better than the 29 he had already completed,” said William Andresen.

In addition to skiing the 55K classic race on Saturday, the trio will act as Birkie Ambassadors at multiple events throughout Birkie week.

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“For many years the Birkie has tested our athletic abilities and we’ve taken the sport seriously, yet we have also enjoyed many fond family memories throughout,” said William Andresen. “This year, we look forward to supporting our Birkie friends as they ski by in their own race journey and to honoring my Dad’s legacy and continuing our family’s ongoing Birkie journey since 1973.”

Each February more than 10,000 cross country skiers gather in Cable and Hayward, Wisconsin to take part in North America’s largest and greatest ski race. To date, more than 250,000 skiers have finished Birkie ski events. An estimated 40,000 spectators and skiers gather for the Nordic sports festivities and in celebration of the courage, perseverance, character and determination of the Birkebeiner warriors, the “Birkies.”

About the American Birkebeiner® Ski Foundation and Birkie® Events

Located near Hayward and Cable, Wisconsin, the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation (ABSF), a 501(c)(3) organization, is known for its signature American Birkebeiner Ski Marathon held each February. Today, the Birkie has grown to encompass a variety of year-round, silent sport events that promote a healthy, active lifestyle for thousands of outdoor fitness enthusiasts. The ABSF also acts as steward of the legendary Birkie Trail, providing year-round grooming, mowing and maintenance to all 100+ kilometers. From the iconic American Birkebeiner ski race, to the Birkie Trail Run Festival, and Fat Bike Birkie, the ABSF and the Birkie Trail attract skiers, runners, bikers, trekkers, and hikers, from casual day-trippers to elite athletes. Learn more at www.birkie.com. *BIRKIE Ski. Run. Bike. Live!*

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