



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Yeaton and Dyrhaug Top the Podium in the 46<sup>th</sup> Slumberland American Birkebeiner**

### ***Skiers from 27 countries & 47 States Competed in the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Race***

**HAYWARD, WI (Feb. 22, 2020)** – Cold overnight conditions and freshly groomed trails set the stage for a fast and firm course for the 46<sup>th</sup> Slumberland American Birkebeiner ski marathon. Niklas Dyrhaug, Trondheim, Norway, and Jessica Yeaton, Albuquerque, New Mexico, former Australian National Team member, were the first elite skiers to cross the finish line on Hayward’s snow-covered Main Street, in the men’s and women’s skate/freestyle race.

Yeaton finished with a time of 2:13:20 in the 50K freestyle race, a full 41.7 seconds ahead of Riitta -Liisa Roponen, Haukipudas, Finland, with a second-place finish time of 2:14:02. Erika Flowers, Bozeman, Montana, U.S.A., rounded out the podium with a time of 2:15:00.

“It was fresh corduroy the whole way and I kept thinking to myself this is the best Nordic skiing I’ve done,” said Yeaton. “This win means more to me than any victory in my career. It’s just so special.”

In the men’s freestyle race, Dyrhaug raced to the finish with a time of 1:59:01.7, a mere :01.6 seconds before Ian Torchia, Rochester, MN, U.S.A., with Robin Duvillard with a time of 1:59:03.3, Chappelle-En-Vercors, France, finishing in third place with a time of 1:59:03.7.

“I was together with a group on the lake, and I managed to take the sprint to the finish, and I’m really happy,” said Dyrhaug. “The finish with so many spectators is a really special moment. It was a good day.”

The morning started out with low temps and a cloudless sky with temperatures soaring to the high 30s in the afternoon. A perfect day for spectators and volunteers alike. Thousands of spectators lined Hayward’s snow-covered Main Street, ringing cowbells, eating brats, celebrating with friends, and watching the international kaleidoscope of colors as skiers passed by.

In the Slumberland American Birkebeiner 55-kilometer classic race, the U.S.A. filled out the top three spots on the podium:

Peter Holmes, Ketchum, ID, U.S.A.-- 2:26:46.4  
Chris Pappathopoulos, Sun Prairie, WI, U.S.A. - 2:38:38.8  
Evan Wetzel, Waukesha, WI, U.S.A. - 2:38:40.7

It was an international podium for the women in the 55-Kilometer classic race.

Nichole Bathe, Great Britain - 2:49:47.0  
Anja Gruber, Germany - 2:55:20.3  
Delaney Fitzpatrick, Minocqua, WI, USA - 3:00:38.3

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The excitement at the 2020 Birkie was palpable with a strong showing of elite athletes from around the globe. This year's race found competitors from 27 countries and 47 states competing in this, North America's largest cross-country ski marathon.

The 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Slumberland American Birkebeiner week of festivities is slated for February 25-27, 2021. Official registration for the 2021 race opens on May 1, 2020.

### **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 107 kilometers. From the iconic American Birkebeiner ski race, to the Birkie Trail Run & Trek, 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](http://www.birkie.com). *BIRKIE Ski. Run. Bike. Live!*

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