

Norwegian Ski Innovation Takes Centre Stage at American Birkebeiner



Photo: Rottefella

This week, Norwegian brands Rottefella, Swix, Madshus, Åsnes, and Alfa are teaming up to showcase cutting-edge ski technology at the American Birkebeiner, one of the biggest cross-country ski races in North America.

With over 15,000 participants and thousands more volunteers and spectators, the "Birkie" is a prime gathering for ski enthusiasts. As both skiing in general and cross-country skiing specifically gain traction in the U.S., fuelled by superstars like Jessie Diggins, Lindsey Vonn, and Mikaela Shiffrin, Norwegian companies see an opportunity to introduce their latest innovations to a rapidly expanding market.

"The U.S. is a key market for us, and we are seeing strong growth here. American skiers appreciate innovation but also want to try products before they buy them. That's why we created a joint initiative with other Norwegian manufacturers to showcase our newest technology," says Torstein Myklebostad, CEO of Rottefella.

Camp Norway: Innovation and Authenticity

For the first time, five major Norwegian winter sports brands are collaborating at the Birkie under the banner of "Camp Norway." Unlike most corporate sponsors stationed indoors at expo areas, *Camp Norway* is set up outdoors, right by the expo and bib pick up, offering a uniquely Scandinavian experience.

Skiers stopping by will be greeted with warm cocoa, traditional Norwegian waffles with brown cheese, and a crackling fire—a true taste of Norway. More importantly, they will have the chance to test state-of-the-art gear, including Rottefella and Madshus' SkateX system, Swix's latest wax and equipment, Alfa's industry-leading Gore-Tex ski boots, and Åsnes' backcountry skis featuring Rottefella's newly developed Xplore binding.

Bringing Norwegian Excellence to U.S. Skiers

As interest in skiing grows across the U.S., Norwegian companies aim to connect with a new generation of American skiers. More than 12 million Americans now participate in alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, or snowboarding.

“The U.S. market is crucial for us. Birkie is a great place to understand what American skiers want and need,” says Mathis Dahl Fenre, Product Category Manager at Swix. “These skiers have high purchasing power, but they also demand the right products tailored to their conditions.”

Camp Norway is organized by the Federation of Norwegian Industries and Innovation Norway, two key institutions dedicated to promoting Norwegian industry and international trade. By hosting Camp Norway at the American Birkebeiner, these organizations aim to strengthen Norwegian brands in the U.S. market, showcase cutting-edge ski technology, and foster closer ties between the Norwegian and American skiing communities.

“Birkie is the place to be for innovative equipment manufacturers,” says Egil Sundet, Industry Director at the Federation of Norwegian Industries. “It’s not just an opportunity to showcase our latest technology to a knowledgeable audience, but also a chance to gain valuable insight into market trends and skier preferences in the U.S.”

The Historical Roots of the Birkebeiner

The American Birkebeiner is inspired by a dramatic chapter in Norwegian history. In the year 1206, during a period of civil war, two warriors known as the Birkebeiners carried the infant prince Håkon Håkonsson across the mountains to safety. Their journey, made on skis through harsh winter conditions, helped secure the future of Norway’s monarchy.

This legendary feat became the foundation for the Norwegian Birkebeinerrennet, a cross-country ski race that honors the endurance and bravery of those warriors. The American Birkebeiner, founded in 1973, carries on this tradition, bringing a piece of Norwegian history and ski culture to the United States.

FACT BOX:

Norwegian Exhibitors at Birkie

- **Rottefella:** A leader in ski binding innovation, known for the revolutionary SkateX system developed in collaboration with Madshus.
- **Swix:** A global pioneer in ski wax and performance equipment, helping skiers optimize glide and grip.
- **Madshus:** Norway’s oldest ski manufacturer, renowned for high-performance skis, including the Redline series.
- **Åsnes:** Specialists in backcountry and expedition skis, trusted by adventurers worldwide.
- **Alfa:** Experts in premium ski boots, featuring market-leading Gore-Tex technology for warmth and comfort.

Press contacts:

* Federation of Norwegian Industries, project manager Annette Hoff, tel. (+47) 97 14 78 22 e-mail: annette.hoff@norskindustri.no

*Rottefella Thea Flatene e-mail: thea.flatene@rottefella.no