

## The Canadian Birkebeiner's Haakon Haakonsson Award

The Haakon Haakonsson award was started in the early 1990's by the founder of the Canadian Birkebeiner, Brian Peters. A special award would be presented to skiers who completed the long distance events in the Norwegian, American and Canadian Birkebeiners. The three long distance events, ranging from 52 km (American) to 58 km (Norwegian) need not be skied in one winter season. Skiing the long distance, with or without a pack, would be – and still is - the criteria to become a member of this elite awards club.

A Scandinavian potter living in Edmonton was commissioned to design and produce the original award plates and mugs. Susanne Balslov-Kulak emigrated from Denmark in 1977, where the Balslov family name has been well known for three generations of craftsmanship. The family was part of the Royal Copenhagen Porcelain legacy in Denmark.

The pieces created for the Haakon Haakonsson award were painstakingly hand painted and double fired in an outdoor kiln to produce the beautiful “Danish blue” effect. All of the pieces were numbered before awarding to the recipients.

With the increasing popularity of the Haakon Haakonsson award, Susanne was not able to create enough pieces (because of the amount of time required to hand paint the intricate artwork and fire each plate and mug separately). In 2000, the Canadian Birkebeiner Society commissioned Beaver Flats Pottery to create a new Haakon Haakonsson award. Kathy and Lorris Williams, who have been skiing and hand-crafting pottery for 30 years, are now producing distinctive the hand-crafted Haakon steins annually for the awards. The steins are decorated with three skiers, representing the three Birkebeiner events the award commemorates.

In 2004, the Canadian Birkebeiner created a permanent trophy to display all of the award winners. It is called the CANBi Shield and it is on display at the Chamber of Commerce in Sherwood Park. The CANBi acronym stands for Canadian, American, Norwegian Birkebeiners, the wording of which flanks the flags of the three countries and the names of each Haakon Haakonsson award winner.

From 1992 to present day, there have been 74 skiers awarded the coveted Haakon Haakonsson Award.

Canadian Birkebeiner Ski Festival  
Haakon Haakonsson Award winners

1992	Brian Peters, founder of the Award Olve Punsvik, Kelowna BC John van Wees, Calgary, Alberta
1994	Carl Covello, Edmonton, Alberta Herbert Riese, Edmonton, Alberta
1996	Brian Abear, Revelstoke, BC Jerome Bier, Portland, Oregon
1997	David Blais, Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta William Chester, Tunbridge, Vermont Mike Bogar, Milwaukie, Oregon Pierre Harvey, St. Ferreol, Quebec Bob Gross, Park City, Utah
1998	Robert Buschman, Portland, Oregon Francis Noel, St. Albert, Alberta Paul Bailey, Grande Cache, Alberta Cathy Schreiner, Edmonton, Alberta John Rintoul, Edmonton, Alberta
1999	Frank Haley, Edmonton, Alberta Dale Tuck, Grande Cache, Alberta Frank Dennis, St. Paul Minnesota Deanna Wilkins, Maple Grove, Minnesota Michael Anderson, Duluth, Minnesota Michael Babbit, Portland, Oregon Ellen Bartholomew, Portland, Oregon Gary Fichter, Park City, Utah Nancy Fichter, Park City, Utah Arne Stefferud, Maplewood, Minnesota
2000	John Davina, Kelowna, BC Kirk Loberg, Edmonton, Alberta Cliff Morrison, Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta Irvin Servold, Devon, Alberta John Toonen, Devon, Alberta
2002	Julian Coward, Edmonton, Alberta Dave Filipchuk, Calgary, Alberta Glen Hornland, Edmonton, Alberta Robb Hornland, Edmonton, Alberta Richard Knowles, Haines Berit Kuykendall, Boise, Idaho Michael Larson, Rexburg Terry Slemko, Onoway, Alberta Patrice Yancey, Boise, Idaho
2003	Scott Campbell, Hammonds Plains, Nova Scotia Joanne Schmitz, Walla Walla, Washington Einar Viddal, Edmonton, Alberta

2004	Chi Melville, Alta Wyoming
2005	Robert Ashton, Calgary Alberta Greg Fangel, White Bear Lake Minnesota Craig Francis, Regina Saskatchewan Hal Herbison, Regina Saskatchewan Barry Mang, Regina Saskatchewan Grant McLeod, Indian Head Saskatchewan Darlene Quinn, Cloquet Minnesota Tom Rowe, Livingston Montana Eric Schneider, Calgary Alberta Silvia Stettler, Canmore Alberta Harry Ulmer, Calgary Alberta Elizabeth Wagner, White Bear Lake Minnesota
2007	Doug Bear, Kamsack Saskatchewan Ron Bergin, Cable Wisconsin Catherine Campbell, Orangeville Ontario Marvin Franson, Eau Claire Wisconsin Erik Grimm, Rochester New York Glenda Hanna, Edmonton Alberta Lloyd Hornland, St. Albert Alberta Carl Johnson, Ontario New York Kaasa Stein, Trondheim Norway John Kotar, Eau Claire Wisconsin Ken McNeil, Camrose Alberta Philip Mees, Edmonton Alberta Warren Popick, Yorkton Saskatchewan Douglas Read, Carnelian Bay California Alan Ritchie, Chelsea Quebec Mark Specht, Sherwood Wisconsin
2008	Frank Gibson, Edmonton
2009	John Addicott, Calgary Marc Champagne, Whitehorse, YT Ian Daffern, Calgary Mark Duperreault, Calgary Sean Huggins-Chan, Calgary Christina Johnson, Calgary Ken Johnson, Calgary Mark Serediak, Edmonton Nancy Serediak, Edmonton Peter Hoffman, Waterloo, ON Norry Kaler, Halifax, NS
2010	Chris Algeo, Calgary Jon Amundson, Calgary Katherine Armitage, Calgary Robert Bergum, Hayward Wisconsin Bas Delaney, St Albert Bryce Dreeszen, Interlochen Michigan Ian Duncan, Madison Wisconsin Ken Hill, Calgary

	Patrick McLellan, Calgary Connie Meek, Hayward Wisconsin Eihel Morse, Hayward Wisconsin William John Olson, Hayward Wisconsin Chris Power, Edmonton Ken Rice, Edmonton Ellis York, Clinton Wisconsin
2011	Lynette Carani, Highland Park Illinois Christopher Carani, Highland Park Illinois Nancy Caviet, Dokkum Netherlands Daniel Leider, Ringle Wisconsin Connie Johnson, Calgary Robert McConnohie, Begium Wisconsin William Poull, Brookfield Wisconsin Ben Toane, Edmonton Alberta