



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
**THUNDER BAY GOES TO CANMORE**

MARCH 18TH, 2017 – Canmore Alberta

You don't have to look far on the ski trails at Canmore Nordic Centre this week to find a Thunder Bay skier. Over 50 Thunder Bay athletes and support staff are among the 900 or so Canadian athletes and crew who have descended on the picturesque town of Canmore, Alberta in preparation for competition at the 2017 Haywood Ski Nationals March 18<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>.

To compete at the National Championships in nordic skiing, you don't just show up at the start line and ski your heart out. In each location the courses are different and the snow is different. There are fleets of skis and different combinations of waxes to test, new trails to try out, and circulatory systems that need time to adjust to altitude.

Among the early birds from Thunder Bay are Kai Meekis and Fred Serratore of Big Thunder Nordic Ski Club (BTNSC). They arrived last weekend in order to maximize time spent scouting the trails and adjusting to the thin air. By midweek the BTNSC contingent had swelled to 19 athletes plus another 8 coaches, waxers and support staff.

National Team Development Centre (NTDC) athletes began arriving midweek as well. Many of these athletes have skied these trails numerous times – but they too are testing skis and courses. By next week they will number 13 athletes plus 4 coaches and waxers.

Lappe Nordic Ski Club's 5 athletes are accompanied by their coach and Rod Somppi. Rod has been busy getting updated on the latest advances in race timing, since he will be the Chief of Timing for the 2018 Ski Nationals which will be held back home in Thunder Bay .

Finally, several of the Thunder Bay athletes will be donning the distinctive yellow and blue suits with the wolf paw on the back. They will be skiing for the Lakehead University Thunderwolves in the Canadian College and University Championships (CCUNC) competition. These races also are part of the Ski Nationals and the Lakehead University Thunderwolves were the CCUNC Champions in 2015 and 2016.

As the opening of racing approaches, the focus sharpens here on the high mountain trails. Skis have been race prepped, the engines in fit young bodies have been revved , recovery foods have been prepared, and everyone is set to go.

Now they really are ready to toe up to the start line and ski their hearts out.

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4 Images attached

Title: Image 1 Big Thunder Skiers Fred and Kai in Canmore  
Caption: Big Thunder Skiers Fred Serratore and Kai Meekis adjusting to altitude.  
Photo Credit: Chris Serratore



Title: Image 2 Lappe Team in Canmore  
Caption: Lappe Skiers Gavin , Hannah and Kevin Shields, and Niklas Harkonen prepping for a start.  
Photo Credit: Rod Somppi



Title: Image 3 NTDC Testing Skis in Canmore  
Caption: NTDC Athletes Testing Skis  
Photo Credit: Fergus Foster



Title: Image 4 NTDC Skier Levi Nadlersmith in Race Form  
Caption: NTDC Skier Levi Nadlersmith in race form.  
Photo Credit: Shelley Woodman

