



**News release
for immediate release**

JUST A FEW HOURS LEFT BEFORE THE BIG START!

Gatineau, Thursday, February 14, 2008 – The organizers and the organizing committee, as well as the hundreds of volunteers, are thrilled at the thought of welcoming thousands of skiers and spectators in style to make this 30th anniversary an event to remember for everyone. You don't get to turn 30 every day!

Close to **3,000 skiers** will be heading off on the different trails of Gatineau Park as part of the Gatineau Loppet. Skiers are expected from **some 20 different countries**, including Japan, Australia, Russia, the Netherlands, Germany, England, France, Spain, Luxembourg, Italy, Finland, Estonia, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, Slovenia, Israel and the United States, as well as the four corners of Canada and Quebec.

Weekend Registrations

The organizers would like to remind everyone that it is not too late to register for the different activities and races. The registration booth in the Salon du ski, in École secondaire Mont-Bleu, will open on Friday evening at 5:30. Last-minute registrations will be accepted up to the morning of the race, starting at 7 a.m.

WORLDLOPPET MASTER

These skiers will include two of the greatest legends of the Worldloppet: **Hanes Larsson** from France and **Jan Jasiewicz** from Switzerland. These two are the only skiers to have earned the Worldloppet Master title 15 times. This means that they have completed one of the 10 Worldloppet races 15 different times, including one overseas. Canada's **Robert Palliser**, who earned the Worldloppet Master title seven times, will also be there to ski the two 53 km races.

OUTDOORS ACTIVITIES...

The **Norway/Gatineau Giant Ski Competition** promises spectators some fine moments with the following teams: the MicroNuts, CREDO, Revue, Boules de neige, the Embassy of Austria, the Embassy of Finland, the Embassy of Japan, and the Embassy of Norway. The Gatineau team, helped by valorous skiers from DE-CLDG, will also be back to defend its 2007 title.

Children accompanied by their parents are invited to take part in the **Mini Gazifère**, a fun 2 km race. This year, the children who are registered will receive a shoulder bag, compliments of the Embassy of Germany. Two inflatable structures will also be set up at the Mini arrival area to keep things rolling after the traditional hot chocolate break. This race, the only one that is not timed at the event, is a way to help families enjoy an outdoor activity together!

Cross-country ski lovers are invited to participate at this popular event with their friends and family. Race-courses also include the 5 km Rossignol and the 16 km classic style, as well as the 10 km freestyle. Athletes can get their kicks with the 29 km Fischer and the 53 km classic style, and also with the 29 km and the 53 km Bell free style.

...AND INDOOR ACTIVITIES

Health will be a big item, with the help of partners such as *Fontaine Santé*, which will provide salad meals after the races and offer an initiation to Nordic walking throughout the weekend. *La Boîte à grains* will be offering healthy eating clinics around topics ranging from health through nutrition, the Atrosan solution, the Bio-Strath fortifier and the Maca superfood, all presented by professionals. *Moca Loca*, the official mood designer, will also offer healthy snacks at the Salon du ski de fond. All of these workshops are free.

Booths will be set up in the **Ski Show**, the gathering place for skiers and the public, for the following: Zone Boîte à grains, the embassies of Finland, the Tchek Republic and Japan, Demsis, Fresh Air Experience, Lafleur, Moca Loca, Pecco's and MBM, the official boutique of the Gatineau Loppet.

The **Winter Sports Industry Agora** will give visitors the opportunity to discover innovative products by the big names, including Salomon, Rossignol, Fischer, Swix, XcZone and Fontaine Santé, all amidst the backdrop created by Moca Loca. **Theme-specific activities** and workshops will also be available.

NEW: SMILE, YOU ARE ON CAMERA!

Skiers should not forget to smile this year! XcZone.tv, the world's leading producer of Nordic Ski Films will be on site, to capture images from the Gatineau Loppet. These images will be used on a limited edition DVD about the event. On the DVD, you will find training and technique advices, as well as course visualization. The DVD will be on Sale in spring 2008!

53 KM TOQUES

In addition, skiers who complete the 53 km Classic Style or Freestyle will receive a **toque with the Gatineau Loppet emblem**.

***NEW: 30th Anniversary Recognition Program**

In this anniversary year, the organizers have set up a special **30th Anniversary Recognition Program** to reward skiers who have taken part in 5, 10, 15, 25 or 30 races since the event first started. These people will get a pin indicating the number of times they took part. The pins will be available starting on Friday evening at 5:30 and all weekend at the Salon du ski de fond at the medals table. To get this lovely souvenir, you must be registered for at least one race in the 2008 edition.

CROSS COUNTRY SKIERS AND TRAILHEAD TO RAISE FUNDS FOR LITTLE ANGELS

Cross Country skiers in this year's Gatineau Loppet will be striving not just to ski fast but also to raise funds for the Little Angels Charity. Sponsorship by friends, family, and colleagues will help skiers to raise funds for Little Angels. The Fund assists bone marrow transplant and blood cancer patients during treatment by providing financial help for non-medical expenses. In 2007 54 skiers raised more than 20 000\$. This year Trailhead hopes to help double that number by donating 3 incentive prizes to skiers who raise funds over \$250, \$500 and \$1000.

For details about the different activities taking place over the long weekend, check our Web site at: **www.gatineauloppet.com**

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