

■ **SUPER DAVE FACT:** For the ultimate challenge this year try the Cariboo Marathon on Feb. 11 or the Whistler Loppet Feb. 26. Check out these and other events at www.crosscountrybc.ca.

SOURCE: Metro Vancouver

■ **HOT SITES:** Check out the following great sites: www.silverstar.com, www.jackrabbits.com, www.cypressmountain.com.

SOURCE: Metro Vancouver



WESTCOAST WEEKEND

What's a loppet, anyway?

Tips for getting involved in cross-country ski event

By DAVE NORONA
for Metro Vancouver

What the heck is a loppet?

A loppet is a cross-country ski event with a distance over 15 kilometres with the emphasis on participation and fun. Any type of racing can be intimidating at the best of times, however it does not have to be. Most people think that they are going to show up and be last! They hate being last. So, if you are thinking about joining in the fun, I thought I would pass on a few tips to make the decision a little easier.

10. Pick a fun event: There are a number of loppets throughout the province. Pick one that sounds fun or has an easier course. The Kelowna Apple Loppet, Cariboo Marathon and Whistler's Chateau Cup are all awesome events with great courses and spectacular scenery.

9. Make it a get-a-way: Enjoy the whole weekend. Instead of rushing back to the city after the event, take time to enjoy the area and explore.

8. Half the course: All loppets offer various distances for children and newcomers. There is no shame in doing half the course. In fact this is a great way to get involved if you can only train a little bit.

7. Train: You are only going to be as good as your training so make sure you get out and ski. You don't have to look the part or do speed workouts, but just make sure you can ski the distance.

6. Wax your skis: Cross-country skis need to be waxed. Take the time out before your first loppet to have your skis waxed. You can do it yourself or have your favourite store do them up.

5. Pick a buddy: Choose a friend to join you. This way you can train, travel and race together. It is so much better than going alone.

4. Take some fuel: All the events provide refreshments along the way. However, it is much better if you take what you like and maybe some chocolate to pump you up!



Dave Norona trains for the next loppet at Cypress Mountain.

PHOTO BY LEISURE WORKS IMAGE, PAUL GERMAN

3. Start easy: Most first-timers start out way too fast only to slog in the last few kilometres. Start out at a pace you can hold all day and then, if you can, pick it up to the finish.

2. Look around, and enjoy your surroundings: Once, during the Manning Park Loppet, I took the lead and then mooned all my buddies. They al-

most all fell over in laughter when they looked up the trail and saw my white little butt.

1. Relish in your accomplishment: Treat yourself to a spa treatment, snowmobile tour, or just sit by the fire and read a book. You deserve it!

For more Super Dave info, check out the website www.davenorona.com.

Gear Guide



FISHER SL SUPERLIGHT CROWN

Description: Want to classic ski but hate waxing. Fisher's Superlight Crown Classic skis deliver the same level of speed, performance and durability as Fishers high-end race skis. However, the lower price and racing fish scales make this the ultimate ski for Cypress Mountain.
Price range: \$359 **Where to find it:** www.fisherskis.com.

SALOMON VITANE PILOT

Description: This sporty women-specific boot features a moulded heel counter, SNS PILOT Active two-part outsole and Double action Energyzer cuff. The adjustable heel strap, lower leg memo strap and Autofit lace system ensure comfort and proper fit.



Price range: \$309
Where to find it: www.salomonnordic.com.

CRAFT PRONTO GLOVE

Description: This ultra-light cold weather glove allows you to grip your poles with ease. Thinsulate insulation, windproof backing and Terry thumb make this the ultimate cross-country ski glove.



Price range: \$49
Where to find it: www.craft-usa.com.

SUGOI'S WOMEN'S INVERTER JACKET

Description: The four-way stretch Inverter Jacket will protect you from the wind, rain and cold. Flat lock stitching, fitted tapered seams, and reflective detailing ensure that you will look great while hammering up those unforgiving hills.



Price range: \$180 **Where to find it:** www.sugoi.com

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Day Trip \$54- includes return transportation, trail pass, wine and cheese

Weekend Getaway \$369- BC Interior

Skate Skiing Rental Package \$30

Skate Skiing Lesson Package \$119-

includes return transportation, rental package, instruction and trail pass

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