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Fairbanks skier David Norris wins 51Kilometer Birkebeiner race in Wisconsin

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Feb 21, 2016



Former Fairbanks skier Lex Treinen, left, and Alaska Pacific University Nordic Ski Center's David Norris pose after Norris' win in the American Birkebeiner race, a 51-kilometer freestyle race in Cable, Wisconsin. Photo courtesy Kikkan Randall
Photo courtesy Kikkan Randall

FAIRBANKS—A few weeks after winning his first career United States Ski and Snowboard Association SuperTour titles, Fairbanks' David Norris has captured his first American Birkebeiner title.

Norris, who skis for the Alaska Pacific University Nordic Ski Center, won the 51-kilometer freestyle race on Sunday in Hayward, Wisconsin in his time competing in the race, which began in Cable, Wisconsin.

The former Alaska Nanooks skier made his move to the front of the lead pack in the final 3K before holding off Ivan Perrillat Boiteux and Benoit Chauvet over the final couple hundred meters, which were mostly uphill.

Norris also had to avoid the final group of skiers from the elite women's wave that were finishing at the same time.

The former Lathrop skier crossed the finish line in 2 hours, 5 minutes, 35.4 seconds. Boiteux, from Paris, followed 1.1 seconds later.

"I just hung in the pack early and was trying to ski towards the front. Around 10k people were getting antsy," Norris told usskiteam.com. "I'm not generally confident in my sprint so I wanted to come off the lake in the lead. I was blown away no one was coming up on my side."

Chauvet, from Saint-Jean-de-Moirans, France, finished third in 2:05:36.8. Chauvet had finished runner-up twice in the American Birkebeiner.

On the women's side, Caitlin Gregg became the first ever four-time winner of the American Birkebeiner when she crossed the finish line in 2:22:44.5.

Former Nanooks skier Lex Treinen finished 15th overall in 2:07:10.9 while Tyler Kornfield, another former Nanook, took 17th in 2:09:44.8.

Rebecca Konieczny, a former Nanooks skier, finished 360th overall and 38th in the women's 25-29 age group in 2:47:51.8.

Fairbanks' Bob Baker finished 66th overall and 64th in the men's 55-59 age group of the 55K classic race in 3:33:15.7.

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