



McKenzie Fotos.

Faster and Cheesier

SKIJORDUE WILL RETURN TO THE CALGARY POLO CLUB near Okotoks, AB, this February 2 (weather permitting) and promises to deliver an even bigger and cheesier soirée this year. New additions to the wild, winter gathering include grandstands, additional tents, Maker's Market and fun new menu items to enjoy on the sidelines. Hosted by Skijor Canada, organizers are gearing up to handle a huge crowd of 4,000 people this time, in support of Prairie Sky Equine Assisted Therapy.

Skijoring is a steadily growing sport, attracting riders from many disciplines. It also brings top level skiers down from the slopes and pairs them in competition for \$10,000 cash and swag. Skijordue is the only skijoring competition in North America to offer four events; circuit, relay, sprint and long jump. The invitational

Lounge Race and Calcutta auction is the kirsch-soaked cherry on top of an action-packed day and when the competition concludes, everyone is invited to the dance floor for a bumpin' après-ski party.

Spectators have an opportunity to express their fashion flair with fringe, fur and vintage finds, vying for best après-ski ensemble prizes from Cody & Sioux. Visit the new chalet photo booth and borrow from the tickle trunk for a skijor-style portrait with Amanda Ubell.

Horses are the heart of skijoring! Serious competitors spend all year preparing their equine partners for winter fun. Courses are built by Claire Perks, a lifelong equestrian competitor and coach and her husband, Michael Perks, who oversees course creation for the Lake Louise Audi FIS Ski World Cup, men's downhill race. The course is crafted to require skill as well as speed, ploughed to optimal depth, graded for an even texture and

test-ridden, with a primary focus on safety.

If you want to attend as a rider, a solid training foundation is essential for your horse, as Skijor Canada does not allow hard rigging. Riders must use a western saddle, dally with one hand and rein with the other. Champion steeds are fit and handy, experienced with a rope and competitive by nature. Riders are encouraged to thoroughly warm up and cool down, use protective boots and consider which shoeing options best suit their mounts. Horses run well and comfortably barefoot in the snow, but some people prefer shoes with snow pads and borium, or corks. Skijordue's veterinarians and marshals keep a watchful eye to ensure horses run only once in each event and will excuse any rider or mount appearing unfit, unsound or unsafe for competition. The safety and comfort of equine athletes is Skijor Canada's primary focus.

Tickets, entries and info on www.skijorcanada.com

-Jenn Webster