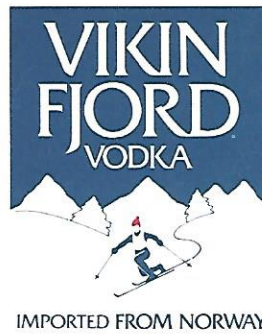


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USSA ANNOUNCES THIRD SEASON FOR
VIKIN FJORD NATIONAL TELEMARX SERIES

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO -- The United States Ski Association recently announced that Vikin Fjord Norwegian Vodka will return again to sponsor the 1988 Vikin Fjord National Telemark Series.

"This is the premier nationwide series for telemark skiers," said Lee Todd, USSA Nordic Program Director. "It will showcase one of the newest and most versatile forms of skiing -- telemarking."

This season's Vikin Fjord events feature an expanded format designed to maximize awareness of both telemark skiing and Vikin Fjord. The Vikin Fjord Series will consist of five event weekends coast to coast.

The circuit kicks off January 9-10 at Vail-Beaver Creek, Colo., followed by events January 30-31 at Mount Cranmore, N. H.; February 6-7 at Stratton Mountain, Vt.; February 19 at Telemark, Wis.; and March 5-6 at Alpine Meadows, Lake Tahoe, Calif.

"Vikin Fjord Vodka and telemark skiing are a great fit," said Constance Williams, marketing vice president at Heublein Inc., which imports Vikin Fjord Vodka from Norway. "We are very excited to be expanding our involvement with this fast growing sport at a time when Vikin Fjord also is growing." This is the third year that Vikin Fjord Norwegian Vodka has supported telemark skiing through sponsorship of the race events.

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WHAT IS TELEMAR SKIING?

Telemark involves skiing downhill on cross-country equipment and is characterized by the drop-knee telemark turn. The technique was named for its inventor's home in the Telemark region of Norway and is considered one of the roots of modern skiing. Telemark racing combines the excitement of alpine with the fluid grace of cross-country skiing, lending an effect that is "both graceful and gutsy," said the USSA's Todd.

Telemark skis are narrower than downhill skis and the racers' boots are attached to the skis only at the toe. The light weight and versatility of modern telemark equipment has enabled enthusiasts to ski the steepest moguls with ease, and slalom race courses with speeds comparable to those of alpine racers.

Although the telemark technique originated in Norway, American skiers are credited with "reviving" the sport in the 1970's. USSA was the first national sports governing body to recognize telemark as a "new" ski discipline and has set the pace for international competition.

The '87 Vikin Fjord events drew racers from as far away as Norway, Japan, and Canada, and yielded the first United States Telemark Ski Team. Team members traveled last April to Hemsedal, Norway to compete in the first ever International Telemark Championships. Twelve countries are currently involved in telemark, and organizers are hopeful of future Olympic and World Cup events.

"We learned a lot from the Europeans," says USSA Telemark Coordinator Jim Fox. "Although Americans excel in telemark slaloms, the international trend seems to be towards more diverse events that include jumps, bump contests, and other features."

The '88 Vikin Fjord Series will pattern itself after the European events with an expanded two-day format. One day will feature either a telemark bump contest or telemark terrain race. The terrain race includes several downhill obstacles with prizes for consistency, technique, and costumes.

The second day will be devoted to challenging competition with a dual telemark slalom followed by a telemark giant slalom. This gives the travelling racers the chance to post two formal race scores. World-cup style points will be awarded to top slalom and GS (giant slalom) finishers, with series winners determined from season-end points totals.

Vikin Fjord Series weekends are open to skiers of all abilities and coincide with local winter carnivals including "Winterfest" at North Conway, N.H.; "Snowfest" at Lake Tahoe, Calif.; and the Curel American Birkebeiner Cross Country Ski Marathon at Telemark, Wis. Weekends also feature Vikin Fjord welcome and awards parties, Telemark equipment demo's, group skis, and telemark instructional clinics.

The Vikin Fjord Series is presented by Outside Magazine and the United States Ski Association.