

CAMROSE CROSS-COUNTRY SKI AREA

The Essentials

Name of Area	Camrose Nordic Centre
Location	100 km southeast of Edmonton
Km trails	20 km
Km classic	20 km
Km skate	20 km
Trail Rating	Easy to advanced
Signage	Fair
Grooming	Good
Facilities	Heated washrooms at Stoney Creek Centre trailhead + heated club waxing room (combination lock). Heated clubhouse at Biathlon Range (unlocked).
Trail Fees	None
Access Points	From either Stoney Creek Campground or Biathlon Range
Other facts	Trails looked after by the Camrose Ski Club
Loppet	Olle Uffda Loppet (classic): 1.25, 2.5, 5, 15 & 30 km in January
Description of trails	<p>The trails are situated on the southern edge of Camrose, along the picturesque Stoney Creek valley. All trails are set for both classic & skate skiing. Many of the trails are one way. The perimeter route is about 18 km long and climbs up past the biathlon centre. The trails are generally very undulating with some steep uphill & downhill sections. Some of the downhill sections can appear quite daunting but because the trails are wide they are not as tricky as they may appear from the top. The easiest route is to take the Rotary Trail that follows the valley floor quite closely.</p> <p>The main trailhead is at the Stoney Creek Centre campsite. Here there is a large heated building opposite the luge hill & old ski jump. The washrooms in this building are usually open during the day and there is ample room to change. On the lower level is the Camrose Ski Club's waxing room which is open for events and has a combination lock entrance for members otherwise. There is a 2.25 km lighted loop for night skiing from this centre.</p> <p>The SE part of the trail system can also be accessed from the biathlon range.</p>
Trail map	http://ab-camrose.civicplus.com/DocumentView.aspx?DID=328
Website	www.camroseskiclub.com
Trail conditions & more information	Club website or from Nthn Alberta ski area report linked to ENSC website
Directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proceed east from Edmonton on either Hwy 14 or head out past Sherwood Park and turn south onto Highway 21. • Drive south for ~60 km to junction with Hwy 13 & turn left onto Hwy 13. • (Alternatively head south on Hwy 2 from city & then east on Hwy 13) • Follow Hwy 13 into Camrose and turn right into 53 Street just before the bridge over the small lake • Follow road round for about 1.5 km and turn left into 39 Ave. Proceed through a fancy new sub-division and park near the clubhouse building that is across the valley from the old ski jump. • Travelling time is about 1 hour from centre of city. • To access the biathlon range: on Hwy 13 continue across the bridge over the lake and at the top of the hill turn right into 50 Street • Go past the college, go under the railway & over Camrose Rd (Ring Rd) • Right at 'T' junction onto Twp Rd 463 • Bear right at next 'T' junction into the biathlon centre.

Mike's Two Skis Worth

I prefer to start from the Stony Creek Centre because at least you have some heated washrooms and a place to change. Don't count on finding the waxing room open unless local club members are present. Years ago there used to be a tearoom on the upper level which made for a nice break between skis. I don't usually recommend starting out from the Biathlon Centre because the gate to the gun club range / biathlon range is only open when they are in use. If the gate is open the clubhouse is accessible as it remains unlocked. Also this can be a remote and windy area.

Many of the trails can appear a bit challenging for novice skiers but luckily they are wide and some of the steepest hills can be bypassed. The trails are signed as a series of distance loops marked out from either the Stony Creek centre or from the Biathlon Range. The major trail junctions are also numbered. Despite this the trails can be a bit confusing owing to the number of cut-offs and parallel trails, so take a map. The map is a bit out-of-date and has some inaccuracies but it gives a pretty good general idea of where you are. The club is undertaking an extensive signage project that will make the trails much easier and safer to use by winter 2011/2012.

For a nice challenging ski, I find the route around the perimeter trails a good option. The route can be shortened at many points by taking one of the numerous cut-off loops. To start I usually head north from the Stony Creek Centre past some houses and circle back along the east side of the creek behind the ski jump hill and head south down the valley under the railway trestle and road bridge. The climb up to the biathlon range can be a bit of a grunt but you are rewarded with a swift return along a ravine back to the main trail systems. After passing under the railway again, keep left and head back via a few more ups & downs on the west side of the creek to the clubhouse.

For a gentler ski take the Rotary trail along the valley floor (more or less) and pass under the railway & road until you reach a ploughed service road before heading back.

The Olle Uffda Loppet is one of the more arduous courses on the loppet circuit. The main event is normally two 15 km loops around the trail system broadly following the perimeter trail up to & back past the biathlon range.