



What is a “Loppet” anyway?

We’ve had a lot of people asking us what a “loppet” is and why we changed the name of the event from *Sibley Ski Tour* to *Sleeping Giant Loppet*. Good questions.

The word “loppet” has its origins in Scandinavian culture and commonly refers to a mass participation cross country ski event which includes longer, marathon length distances and both recreational and competitive elements. Some definitions refer to a loppet as a “citizen’s race.” Participants usually challenge themselves physically and mentally over courses of varied terrain, focusing on achieving personal bests or attaining pre-determined goals.

Turns out, that’s exactly the type of event we offer.

While the word is not commonly used in the Thunder Bay area (yet!), it much more clearly identifies what we’re all about to people outside of our community. And we would really like those people to experience the stunning scenery of Sleeping Giant Provincial Park where our event takes place, have their kids come and ski the 8km Mini-Loppet, challenge themselves on the Burma Trail, spend a day or two enjoying the trails at Kamview Nordic Centre, and, well, mark the first Saturday in March to be the one where they come to Thunder Bay to Ski the Giant.

Which brings us to the other part of the name change.

For long-time Thunder Bay residents, making the transition from “Sibley” to “Sleeping Giant” is a tough one. Heck, even as organizers, we’ve been known to make the occasional blunder and allow the wrong name to slip out. But our Loppet takes place in a Provincial Park which changed its name many, many years ago to Sleeping Giant. We felt it was important to reflect the location of our event within this Park and use the name that both the Province of Ontario and the City of Thunder Bay use to promote it. The Sleeping Giant is an iconic landmark in Thunder Bay, and a name that people in other parts of the province, country and world immediately associate with both the community and the essence of Northwestern Ontario.

While we understand this new name will take some time to get used to, we’re glad you now know the reasons behind it. And won’t you look like the smart one the next time someone asks, “What’s a loppet, anyway?”

For more information or to comment, contact info@sleepinggiantloppet.ca