

# Montreal Girl to Ski 160km at CSM for Cancer Research

In 2008, Jessie Krejcik is setting out to do something that no 13-year-old girl has ever done before: she's going for her *coureur des bois* gold bar in the Canadian Ski Marathon (CSM). For the uninitiated, this means cross-country skiing 160 kilometres over two days carrying at least a 5kg backpack and camping out under the stars. The distance doesn't seem to faze this high school student; she's done all of that in 2005 and 2006, even though it necessitates serious training every weekend once the ski season starts. But she does admit to having apprehensions about the camp-out.



CSM

"In 2008, I will be camping out under the stars [bivouacking] for the first time. I'm a little nervous about that. All that the organizers give the campers is hay and a fire. You have to dress very warmly for the camp-out and always try to stay warm. We won't have tents, so the technique is to dig a trench in the snow [to sleep in] and cover ourselves with hay [to stay warm].

"While skiing, I try to set many goals in my head; I'm thinking of making the next checkpoint, of food and staying warm. It's usually minus 30° C when I'm skiing the marathon. And I'm hoping to ski a little faster on the first day so that I get to the campsite earlier and can thus get a better spot close to the fire. You can't do anything the next day unless you get a decent night's sleep."

To train, she sometimes skied eight kilometres from her parent's cottage, did her five-hour lesson and then skied back to the cottage. By the age of six, she'd skied 500 kilometres over the season. At age seven, she entered her first CSM. By age nine, Krejcik skied seven of the 10 sections at a reasonable speed. Her father suggested that she try skiing the entire 10 sections in 2005, which she did, to become the youngest girl ever to complete the 160-kilometre distance. — *John Symon*