



ALPENTRIS and EUROLOPPET – the precursors of Worldloppet

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The WORLDLOPPET SKI FEDERATION is an international union of long distance cross-country ski races. The aim of this union is to promote the sport of cross-country skiing through the provision of high-quality ski marathons around the world. The idea was introduced by American Tony Wise in 1978 and the organisation was founded in the same year by the 9 biggest ski marathons in the world.

Today the Worldloppet unites 14 ski marathons from 4 continents: Europe, America, Australia and Asia:

- American Birkebeiner (United States of America)
- Birkebeiner-rennet (Norway)
- Dolomitenlauf (Austria)
- Engadin Skimarathon (Switzerland)
- Finlandia-hiihto (Finland)
- Keskinada Loppet, from 2008 Gatineau Loppet (Canada)
- Jizerska Padesatka (Czech Republic)
- Kangaroo Hoppet (Australia)
- König-Ludwig-Lauf (Germany)
- Marcialonga (Italy)
- Sapporo International Ski Marathon (Japan)
- Tartu Maraton (Estonia)
- Vasaloppet (Sweden)

Approximately 90 000 athletes enjoy every year the pleasure of skiing in the Worldloppet marathons and meeting new friends around the globe.

The name of the organisation, Worldloppet (during the first period 1978-1981 World Loppet League), sounds well, but at the same time, the last part of it – loppet - has also been confusing, especially for people outside Scandinavia. Obviously the name of the world's most famous ski race Vasaloppet of Sweden has been the trendsetter for the followers without any need for profound explanation. The supplement loppet which has been used through the years in multiple names of ski and running race series over the world, does not tell most of us anything. Many ski friends do not believe that this word has any real meaning, and have accepted this loppet-word as something abstract but nice. The real explanation is: the word "lopp" means in Swedish language run and race. A substantive translation of the phrase Worldloppet is the slogan of the organisation – SKI AROUND THE WORLD!

The first thoughts of the foundation of a worldwide association of long distance ski races – the Worldloppet – sprang from earlier experiences in Europe with two race series: firstly the Alpentris and later the Euroloppet.

In 1968 the Koenig Ludwig Lauf ski marathon in Oberammergau, Germany, was founded, followed shortly afterwards by Dolomitenlauf, Lienz, Austria, and the Marcialonga in Cavalese, Italy. A group of cross-country enthusiasts soon grew up who did not want to miss the chance to participate in every available cross-country ski race that was on offer and those responsible for the three major ski marathons decided to establish an Association of Cross-Country Skiing. After numerous meetings and complicated negotiation the race series called 'Alpentris' was established in Oberammergau in the autumn of 1973. The name represented the fact that the series consisted of three different races in three different alpine countries.

