

To the

- Members of the Cross-Country Executive Board
- Members of the Cross-Country Committee
- Chairs Cross-Country Sub-Committees

For information to:

- Michel Vion
- Philippe Gueisbuhler
- National Ski Associations

**INTERNATIONAL SKI FEDERATION**

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Oberhofen, 02.11.2021

**Minutes Cross-Country Committee  
Friday, 01.10.2021, 16:00 – 19:00 hrs CET**

Dear Ski Friends,

We are pleased to send you today the Minutes of the meeting of the Cross-Country Committee held online, 01.10.2021.

You are kindly asked to send any remarks to the FIS Nordic Office in Oberhofen until **15<sup>th</sup> November 2021**.

We would also like to take the opportunity to inform you that the minutes are available on the Member Services section of the FIS Website: [www.fis-ski.com](http://www.fis-ski.com).

Thank you very much for your valuable contribution. We wish you a nice summer.

Kindest regards,



Pierre Mignerey  
Race Director Cross-Country

**Enclosure: ment.**

**All proposals and decisions of the Cross-Country Committee are subject to the approval of the FIS Council FIS Council, 05.11.2021 (tbc)**

**1. Opening of the Meeting**

The Chairman Vegard Ulvang (NOR) welcomed the members of the Cross-Country Committee and opened the meeting on Friday, 01<sup>st</sup> May 2021, 16:00 hrs CET.

Cross-Country Committee chairman Vegard Ulvang welcomed all Committee members.

Michel Vion, FIS Secretary General outlined the new FIS structure. FIS President Johan Eliasch's goal is to implement his manifesto. The Extraordinary FIS Congress will meet on 8th October to discuss and decide on the proposal of the updated FIS statutes. The main issues concern governance and to define FIS values, principles, and objectives.

The Extraordinary Congress will also deal with the proposal to change the name of FIS, either to International Snowsport Federation or International Ski and Snowboard Federation.

**FIS Council Nordic Future Vision Working Group**

A FIS Council Working Group for Nordic Future Vision has been appointed.

The mandate of the Nordic Future Vision Working Group is to review and recommend aspirational plans for growing participation and enhancing competition.

Erik Roeste was elected as the Chairman of the Nordic Future Vision Working Group and Martti Jylhä, Franz Steinle, Martti Uusitalo, Elena Vyalbe, Enzo Smrekar and Gumny Wojciech (Vice-President Polish Ski Federation) were appointed as the members. The working group will not interfere with the work of the Cross-Country Committee but its goal is to improve the product of skiing. One of the projects will be a special FIS event for seasons without major event such as WSC or OWG. The new event could have a form of FIS Games or another World Ski Championships.

Pierre Mignerey informed the Cross-Country Committee about the new FIS Cross-Country structure. Sandra Spitz has moved from the FIS Cross-Country team and to become the FIS Event Manager. Sandra is responsible for the overall FIS coordination of major events such as OWG, WSC, YOG. Madeline Nappey has joined FIS Nordic office.

Vegard Ulvang thanked all the members of the working groups for their commitment and work. He praised the involvement of numerous experts, coaches and athletes. The discussions at the working groups have proved to be a good base for the decisions in Sub-Committees and Cross-Country committee. It can also help for all involved persons to better understand the discussion and decision making process in FIS.

## 2. Members Present

## Excuses / Replaced by:

Vegard Ulvang, NOR, Chairman  
Joel Jaques, CAN  
Katsuhito Ebisawa, JPN  
Olivier Michaud, FRA  
Chris Grover, USA  
Daniel Fårhaeus, SWE  
Hippolyt Kempf, SUI  
Zofia Stefania Kielpinska, POL  
Hannu Koivusalo, FIN  
Daniel Schwarz, AUT  
Gabriella Paruzzi, ITA  
Uros Ponikvar, SLO  
Lukas Sacher, CZE  
Andreas Schlütter, GER  
Aleksandr Panhinskii, RUS  
Andy Ping Hong, CHN  
Andrei Kovalenko, BLR

not present

Virginia de Martin,  
Martti Jylhä,

Athletes representative  
Athletes representative

Satu Kalajainen, FIN for the S.C. Youth & Children Cross-Country  
Virginia De Martin Topranin, ITA, for the S.C. Women's Nordic Disciplines  
Uros Ponikvar, GER, for the S.C. Rules and Control Cross-Country  
Chris Grover, USA for the S.C. World Cup and COC Cross-Country  
Martins Niklass, LAT, for the S.C. Rollerski  
Leandro Ribela, BRA, for the S.C. Development Cross-Country  
Tommy Höglund, SWE, for the S.C. Popular Cross-Country Skiing

Pierre Mignerey, FIS  
Sandra Spitz, FIS  
Michal Lamplot, FIS  
Doris Kallen, FIS

Norbert Meier, LOC representative

## 3. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was sent out on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2021. As there were no additional items reported, the Cross-Country Committee approved the agenda.  
No comments were received, and the agenda was approved.

## 4. Approval of the minutes of the last Cross-Country Committee meeting

No remarks have been registered at the FIS Office.  
The Cross-Country Committee approved the minutes.

## 5. Report and information from the FIS Race Director

See point 1 – opening of the meeting.

## 6. Report of sub-committees

### 6.1 Sub-Committee for Rollerski

Martins Niklass informed the Cross-Country Committee about the successful FIS Rollerski season 2022. It featured three World Cup stops. FIS Rollerski World

Championships in Khanty Mansijsk had to be cancelled due to covid. Val di Fiemme could take over and organize the event.

In total 15 nations took part in the FIS Rollerski World Championships, including new nations BEL, MAR, SLO, TPE, THAI. In total 140 competitors participated in the FIS Rollerski World Championships 2021. More details can be found in the presentation.

Martins Niklass also presented draft of the FIS Rollerski World Cup calendar 2023.

The Sub-Committee proposed to the Cross-Country Committee to adjust the start of the FIS competition season 2023. The 1st stage of FIS Rollerski World Cup 2023 in Norway in Midt-Telemark, which will take place from 24-26.06.2022, could fall in 2023 season and the age category restrictions for Junior categories will be applied according FIS calendar season 2022/2023 (year of birth 2003-2007). The Cross-Country did not take a decision.

Several proposals were submitted to the S.C. for Rules and Control (see below).

## **6.2 Sub-Committee for World Cup and Continental Cup**

During the autumn meeting the competition format was discussed and approved.

### **Mixed Team Sprint**

Each team will consist of 1 woman and 1 man. The athletes will alternately ski 6 laps each in the following order: Woman / Man (12 laps in total). The last 2 teams will be eliminated after laps 2, 4, 6, 8, 10. Overlapping rules will apply. No physical contact between the competitors will be required for the exchange. Mixed teams (from different nations) are not allowed. The Sub-Committee voted about the number of teams/NSAs allowed to enter the race. The vote confirmed that 1 team/NSA will be allowed.

For the qualification each athlete will individually ski one lap (interval start). The result of the qualification round will be calculated by accumulating the times of both athletes and the 20 best teams will be qualified for the Final.

### **Mixed Relay**

Each team will consist of 2 women and 2 men. Each athlete will race 5 km in free technique in the following order: Woman / Man / Man / Woman. Mixed teams (from different nations) are not allowed. The Sub-Committee voted about the number of teams/NSAs allowed to enter the race. The vote confirmed that 1 team/NSA will be allowed.

### **Team Sprint format in Dresden**

The USA proposed to change the format of the Dresden Team Sprint F to the previous format, where each leg of the Team Sprint skis 2 laps prior to the exchange, rather than the current format of exchanging every lap.

After the discussion the Sub-Committee decided to keep the existing format in Dresden – exchange after each lap.

**Cooperation between nations** – NSAs were asked to confirm their agreements with other nations as soon as possible.

In regard to the preparation for FIS Cross-Country World Cup events, organizers

and NSAs should closely monitor evolution of travel restrictions and events regulations. Organizers are expected to again provide Covid-19 guidelines (access & onsite rules for each event). The FIS team has updated the Field of Play Guidelines and they will be sent to NSAs and organizers.

C-19 regulations and a risk assessment should play an important role in organization of the team area (changing rooms, catering, etc.).

### **FIS Cross-Country World Cup Calendars**

The Cross-Country Committee was reminded about the main priorities of the calendar frame, which are:

- Athletes participation
- Climate change
- International dimension
- Gender equality
- Financial sustainability
- Audience

There are four main principles, which were approved in May 2021 and which should be kept in mind when the long term calendars are discussed:

- The FIS Cross-Country World Cup season starts on the last weekend of November and ends on the 3rd weekend of March
- The World Cup calendar is organized in 5 blocks and includes free weekends
- The organizing nations and venues will be selected in order to reduce travel and optimize logistics (block of races in the same region)
- Calendar planning will take into consideration the possible coordination with SJ & NC

During the summer of 2021, the distribution of events/weekends between different NSAs has been finalized, taking into account coordination with other Nordic disciplines. In order to finalize the confirmation process of the long term calendars, input from the new FIS top management and the FIS Council working groups is needed. The number of races per event weekend will not be finalized until the general concept is approved by the FIS Council and the FIS Council Working Group for Nordic Vision.

This discussion will continue during the winter. The Working group for the FIS Cross-Country World Cup calendar will meet after the OWG. By the end of March 2022, a long-term calendar proposal will be sent to NSAs. Until 15<sup>th</sup> April 2022 NSAs will be obliged to give written feedback to FIS. Consequently, the long-term calendar will be discussed at the FIS Spring meeting in 2022.

For more details about concrete discussion about the FIS Cross-Country World Cup calendars from 2022 - 2026 please refer to the minutes of the Sub-Committee for World Cup and Continental Cup

### **FIS JWSC & U23 WSC Cross-Country 2022**

In September Polish Ski Association informed FIS that only SJ and NC events can take place in Zakopane. CC competitions cannot be hosted in Zakopane.

Since then FIS has been looking for alternative solutions with different NSAs:

Intensive work by NSF (dates would change to "Lahti week")

Official application by FIS (dates to be discussed)

The sub-committee supported the proposal to increase the maximum price for

accommodation from 100 CHF to 125 CHF. Cross-Country Committee also supported the proposal. Depending on the host venue, the competition program could be compressed to offset the extra costs for teams.

Final decision will be made by FIS Council and then communication to NSAs and teams

### **Continental Cup**

The Cross-Country Committee supported the proposal from Ukrainian Ski Association to leave Eastern Europe Cup and join the Slavic Cup.

## **6.3 Sub-Committee for Rules and Control**

S:C. chairman Uros Ponikvar informed the Cross-Committee that the principle of the working groups will be changed. In order to encourage the discussion and commitment of the S.C. members, some working groups will be replaced with specific tasks assigned to one leader. Persons from the Sub-Committee or from the outside can be invited to join the discussion. If no member of the Sub-Committee volunteers to lead the task the Sub-Committee Chairman can search for a person outside of Sub-Committee.

Homologation Working Group should be kept, as its field is very specific. Allan Serrano (USA) is proposed to keep coordinating work with Regional Homologation Coordinators.

Report from the leader of each task is expected at next meeting of the Sub-Committee. Any proposals for the S.C. should be sent 1 month prior of the meeting.

Cross-Country Committee approved this new approach.

The Cross-Country Committee approved following ICR changes:

- Jury composition at WC/WSC/OWG
- Jury composition at ROL WSC/WC
- Obstruction and overtaking rules and updated decision chart
- IRM Ranking
- Cancellation and validation of events in case of force majeure situations
- Possibility to appeal a Jury decision

For more details please refer to the presentation of the Cross-Country Committee, to the minutes of the S.C. for Rules and Control and to the reports of ICR and homologation Working Groups.

Cross-Country Committee confirmed the nomination of Anna Rosa (ITA) to become the vice-chair for appeals commission.

## **6.4 Sub-Committee for Popular Skiing**

Tommy Hoglund summarized main outcome of the Sub-Committee meeting. One of the main topics of the Sub-Committee was to discuss the issues related to competitions in very cold temperatures. A working group had been formed and was working during the summer. The group included experts from different fields (medical Dr. expert on frostbites, army specialist teaching soldiers how to deal with weather). Frostbites come from different reasons – weather, wind, equipment, competitors experience of being in cold weather. It is very important to communicate with and educate LOCs, Juries, and athletes about the risks. It is a common responsibility of all stakeholders to prevent health risks related to cold temperature.

## 6.5 Sub-Committee for Youth and Children

Saru Kalajainen presented the results of the meeting. There were 16 out of 23 members present. A. Cholinski gave an update of the Bring Children to the Snow/World Snow Day. FIS supports organizers with a toolkit, new thing this year is a wish list for customized items to help to expand actions. Organizers are encouraged to register their event and apply for support.

M. Lamplot presented the status of the JWSC & U23 WSC. Important topic to discuss in NSAs is if and how the competition program at the JWSC & U23 WSC and YOG should be adjusted.

Clean as Snow: Professor Cornelia Blank/AUT (UMIT) gave a presentation of the survey made to identify status quo of the level of awareness and knowledge of FIS anti-doping activities amongst our athletes, phase two in the form of an online workshop 6<sup>th</sup> Oct to elaborate the topic more

The Sub-Committee carried out a youth survey in spring 2020, which they intend to repeat spring 2022 with some enhanced questions. Survey aimed to 13-14/15-16/17-18/19-20 year-olds. It covered various topics such as training, race format, mental wellbeing, motivation to ski etc. Questions and answers should help to reflect the current task to define the future of the cross-country skiing in terms of 'gender balance', race formats etc.

The aim of the survey is to gather interesting (comparable) data amongst different nations in various areas, to hear our "customers" voice hopefully resulting to some trends that can be picked up from the results in the long term when regularly executed. Online based survey was prepared by the Norwegian colleague Brit Baldishol, local translations will be available. Local responsibility lies to distribute the link and market the survey; reply analysis will be automated. Nations willing to participate should contact the S.C. Chair.

The Sub-Committee proposed Mr. Georg Zipfel/GER as Honorary Member for Youth & Children sub-committee for his tremendous work in the field of youth and children. Cross-Country Committee approved the proposal.

The Sub-Committee made a provisional request for budget allocation for Youth and Children Coach Seminar for spring /autumn 2022

## 7. Report from the Working Groups

### 7.1 Competition formats

The main three discussion topics of the working group have been:

- Team sprint
- Equal racing distances for women and men
- Competition program at WSC/OWG (mixed relay, relay)

#### Team sprint

The modified team sprint format will be tested at the FIS Cross-Country World Cup in Falun. It will be a mixed team sprint, qualification as individual sprint (times of skiers in the team will be added up) and elimination race in the final – 20 best teams in the final.

#### Equal racing distances for women and men

Different NSAs give different importance to this topic. However, gender equality is a big and important topic for both IOC and FIS. FIS Cross-Country has done very well already (equal World Cup, prize money, etc.). However, a next step

should be done in this direction. Cross-Country Community should be proactive and should come with proposals and solutions. New norm for distance competitions such as 10 km – 20 km – 42 km (50 km) could be a base for the discussion. NSAs are encouraged to discuss this topic in their federations and to come with proposals at the next Cross-Country Committee meeting.

#### Gender specific vs. mixed relay

The number of NSAs taking part in relay competitions has been declining despite the effort from FIS (individual World Cup points in team events, positioning of relays in World Cup calendar, etc.). The prediction for OWG 2022 is that only 10 NOCs will have enough athletes for Olympic relay

In the future there will possibly be new Olympic disciplines such as Ski Mountaineering, or more athletes - inclusion of Nordic Combined women. However, the total athlete's quota will remain the same. As a consequence, there is a risk that Cross-Country will get smaller quota for OWG 2026 than for OWG 2024.

At the same time there is a strong support in the Cross-Country community to include mixed events at the OWG and WSC. However, mixed events cannot be added on top of the existing program but have to replace something – gender specific relay.

The Cross-Country Committee should discuss this issue and come back next spring with a proposal.

Competitions and distances at JWSC & U23 WSC and YOG should be reviewed and discussed at the next meeting in the spring.

As far as timeline for any possible change is concerned, IOC is working on the OWG program for OWG 2026. Confirmation of the program is due next spring. Cross-Country Committee should discuss a proposal at its spring meeting in 2022. Clear feedback and decision is expected from NSAs.

Should any changes be made, they could be effective from effective from 2024/25 season (possibly earlier for JWSC & U23 WSC).

## **7.2 Waxing**

The Working Group had its meeting during the summer. Several proposals how to lower the costs and impact of waxing were discussed (e.g. stronger limitation of staff, limitation of number of skis). However, should there be a significant change, new way of thinking is needed. The Working Group proposed to involve in the discussion SRS management and management of ski industry. Also the topic should be addressed to the newly created FIS Nordic vision Working Group.

## **7.3 Athletes participation**

The working group for athletes participation had found common ground on the definition and importance of the topic, mainly pointing out that the fact if an athlete takes part at an event or not will define the future of our sport. Top athletes participation but also a wide and divers field of participants is key. To achieve this, the Cross-Country World Cup must trust that decisions at all levels (athletes, coaches, NSA) - whether to take part at an event or not - shall be made also in consideration for the event itself.

The next step is to evaluate a status quo on key factors that are decisive if an athlete takes part at the World Cup or not. In this step, a questionnaire is prepared and sent to athletes and coaches. The answers shall be evaluated by the working



group and athletes representatives.

**7.4 World Cup LOCs**

Norbert Meier underlined that for LOCs it is very important to know the long term vision of FIS, including the long term calendar. In the short term – for the upcoming season – it is necessary to know the FIS C-19 testing protocol for the winter 2021/22.

**8. Next meeting**

FIS Congress Vilamoura (POR), 22. – 28.05.2022

**9. Closing of the meeting**

Vegard Ulvang thanked all participants and closed the meeting.