

To the

- Members of the Sub-Committee for
World and Continental Cups Cross-Country

For information to:

- Cross-Country Committee
- FIS Management
- COC Coordinators
- National Ski Associations

Oberhofen, 1st October 2024

**Minutes Meeting Sub-Committee for World and Continental Cups Cross-Country
Friday, 27.09.2024, 08:00 – 12:00 hrs**

Dear Ski Friends,

We are pleased to send you today the Minutes of the Meeting of the Sub-Committee for World and Continental Cups Cross-Country held in Zurich, 27.09.2024.

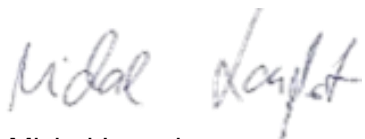
You are kindly asked to send any remarks to the FIS Nordic Office in Oberhofen until **15th November 2024**.

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.

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

Kind regards,

INTERNATIONAL SKI AND SNOWBOARD FEDERATION



Michal Lamplot
Race Director Cross-Country



Chris Grover
Chair S.C. World Cup

INTERNATIONAL SKI AND SNOWBOARD FEDERATION
Sub-Committee for World and Continental Cups Cross-Country

Minutes Sub-Committee for World and Continental Cups Cross-Country
Friday 29.09.2023, 08:00 – 12:00 hrs

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Members present
3. Approval of the agenda
4. Approval of the minutes of the last meeting
5. Report of the last FIS Council meeting
6. Reports and proposals from the Working Groups, Sub-Committees and National Ski Associations
 - Infront TV audience report FIS Cross-Country World Cup 2023/24
 - WG for Tour de Ski
 - WG for Cooperation between NSAs
 - WG for common waxing in Tallinn
 - WG for fluor ban implementation
7. World Cup rules 2024/25
8. COOP FIS Cross-Country World Cup calendar 2024/25
9. Future World Cup calendars
 - 2025/26
 - 2026/27
10. Update Fluor Ban implementation
11. Continental Cup, JWSC and U23 WSC Update
12. Other items arising incl. Q&A WSC 2027
13. Next meeting
14. Closing of the meeting

All proposals and decisions of the Sub-Committee are subject to the confirmation of the Cross-Country Committee on 27.09.2024 and to the approval of the FIS Council, 23.10.2024

1. Opening of the Meeting

Chris Grover welcomed the members of the Sub-Committee for World and Continental Cups and opened the meeting on Friday, 27.09.2024 at 08:00 hrs CET.

2. Members Present

Chris Grover, USA, Chair
 Ulf Morten Aune NOR
 Anders Byström, SWE
 Nejc Brodar, SLO
 Im Yeui Gyu, KOR
 Chris Jeffries, CAN
 Stepan Kaliba, CZE
 Walter Reusser, SUI
 Zofia Kielpinska, POL
 Hannu Koivusalo, FIN
 Özkan Koyuncu, TUR
 Hiroshi Kozakai, JPN
 Sergey Kryanin, RUS
 Albert Manhart, LIE
 Georgio Marchesini, IRL
 Finn Marsland, AUS
 Olivier Michaud, FRA
 Julio Moreschi, ARG
 Andrey Nesterenko, UKR
 Andrey Nevzorov, KAZ
 Enzo Macor, ITA
 Robert Peets, EST
 Milanko Petrovic, SRB
 Ferran Pubil, ESP
 Andreas Schlütter, GER
 Jon Vidar Thorvaldsson, ISL
 Timoleon Tsourekas, GRE
 Lukas Nemcik, SVK
 Alois Stadlober, AUT
 Jostein Vinjerui, GBR
 Peter Zografov, BUL
 Rudi Huber, SRS

Excuses / Replaced by:

Present
 Present
 Present
 Present
 Present
 Substituted by Julia Mehre Ystgaard
 Present
 Present
 Present
 Present
 Excused
 Substituted by Masahiko Watanabe
 Not present
 Present
 Present
 Excused
 Present
 Not present
 Present
 Present
 Present
 Present
 Not present
 Substituted by Juli Sala
 Present
 Not present
 Not present
 Substituted by Jana Huskova
 Present
 Present
 Not present
 Substituted by Steffen Hoos

Uros Ponikvar, Chair CCC Present
 Simon Caprini, FIS Present
 Michal Lamplot, FIS Present
 Doris Kallen, FIS (Minutes) Present
 Synne Dyrhaug, FIS Present

Kern Julia, Athletes representative Excused
 James Clugnet, Athletes representative Excused
 Meier Norbert, CAN – representative of World Cup LOCs Present

Guests

Several guests from different National Ski Associations, Organizing Committees, and Infront were present.

3. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was sent out on 12th September 2024. As there were no additional items reported, the Sub-Committee for World and Continental Cups Cross-Country approved the agenda.

4. Approval of the minutes of the last meeting

No changes to the minutes were proposed and therefore, the Sub-Committee for World and Continental Cups Cross-Country approved the minutes of the last meeting.

5. Report of the last FIS Council meeting

Michal Lamplot reported relevant new Cross-Country information from the last FIS Council meeting.

- Russian and Belarussian Teams are still not eligible to participate in the World Cup.
- The centralization of media rights has moved forward. Work is in progress.
- On the way to 50/50 gender balance within FIS, the FIS Council looked into the nominations for various roles at FIS and the technical committee members. Currently, we aim for a 60/40 ratio with the final goal to be 50/50 – please keep this in mind when nominating representatives.
- The application of KAZ to host of the JWSC 2027 was approved by the FIS Council. Dates to be confirmed.
- FIS and IBU have terminated official collaboration in Para disciplines. Cooperation with classification, sport and calendar planning to continue.
- The next FIS Council meeting is in October. All our decisions are subject to the approval of that meeting.

6. Reports and proposals from the Working Groups, Sub-Committees and National Ski Associations

• Infront TV audience report FIS Cross-Country World Cup 2023/24

Lorenzo Pala presented the Infront TV audience numbers from the past season.

A key factor remains to have good TV starting times, connected (to be directly aired after) Alpine, Biathlon or 4-hills tournament during Tour de Ski.

Cross Country had increased average viewed hours per race compared to the previous season. The biggest growth in total viewer hours by nation happened in Sweden and Germany which may be related to the strong and consistent performances of their women's teams.

The first period of World Cup in the 2022-03 season was impacted by FIFA World Cup and limited airing of cross country ski racing, which explains why viewership improved in Period 1 of the 2023-24 season, when compared to the previous year. 2023-24 Tour de Ski viewership numbers were good with a peak in Saturday's Mass Start race in Val di Fiemme. This is a good example how important the coordination of World Cup starting times are.

The FIS Cross-Country calendar framework reflects also the wishes of the broadcasters by having 2-3 competitions per weekend or event. Broadcasters do not like standalone events and prefer to always stay connected to other disciplines' events. Mid-week competitions perform poorly when compared to those held on the weekend.

According to the broadcaster survey, the most popular race formats are: Relay, Mixed Relay, Sprint, 10km Pursuit, 20km Mst and 50km also in Mst.

- **WG for Tour de Ski**

The main two subjects for the working group for Tour de Ski were to evaluate the sport matters and to discuss the future of the Tour de Ski. The w.g. conclusions are :

Future of Tour de Ski

- The Tour de Ski remains the platform to define the best all-around Cross-Country skiers.
- The Tour is the series during the World Cup where new formats, exceptions in courses and race organization can and should be tested.
- The dates (around New Years), length (c. 7 stages), region (FESA) and connection to 4-hills tournament make most sense in the current combination and must therefore remain. In the future, different venues should be included to keep the Tour vibrant and interesting.
- The number of host nations are not essential to the spirit of the Tour de Ski.
- The Final Climb is trademark of the World Cup.
- The story of the Tour is hard to follow and understand. The w.g. worked on features to explain the connection from each race to the next and make it more understandable.

Sport matters

- The Tour de Ski must be a standout event where different athletes and profiles have a platform. Thus, formats and concept should differ from the World Cup.
- The Tour is most successful when it includes the best athletes, athletes from many nations, and includes Sprint and Distance athletes at the start.
- Prize Money should be increased to award athletes even more.
- The race must be set up so that various athletes get the chance to fight for the best spots and that all competitions stay dynamic. For this reason, the w.g. proposes to introduce the TdS Climber Standing in addition to the TdS Sprint Standing.

Introduction of Tour de Ski Climber Standing

Points can be awarded in specific uphill sections in Distance competitions (except Pursuit). The allocation should generally be according to arrival order, with the exception of the individual start race, where an uphill section can be timed (via intermediate timing points) to identify the fastest climber. The leader will wear a new special bib that identifies the leader of the Climber Standing. Prize Money) will be allocated to top-3 after Alpe Cermis and the amount for the winner is equal to the Sprint Standing winner.

The S.C. approved the introduction of the Tour de Ski Climber Standing and its concept. The S.C. also approved the removal of the bonus seconds in the distance competitions..

Changes in Tour de Ski Sprint Standing

The former Tour de Ski Point Standing shall be renamed to Tour de Ski Sprint Standing.

Prize money will be allocated to the top-6 instead of the top-3.

The S.C. approved the adjustments in the Tour de Ski Sprint Standing.

New set-up of start list and front row start-line in Mst

For better understandability, the Tour de Ski Overall ranking should be taken into focus when putting together the start order of the following race. Michal Lamplot explained the new starting order concept stage by stage.

The TdS Climber Standing leader and TdS Sprint Standing leader shall be given a starting position in the front row in Mst races to provide more visibility to the athletes and the bibs.

The S.C. approved the concept of the start list and front row start line.

Adjustment time limit

The percentages for the time limit shall be equally adjusted for both genders and was proposed to the S.C. to be at 20%. The Jury's right to adhere exclusively to the percentage or not remains unchanged.

The S.C. approves the time limit of 20% for both genders.

- **WG for Cooperations between NSAs**

The working group identified a modified way to allocate extra bibs for cooperation between nations. The new system is based on the participation of the smaller nation and takes their participation from the previous year into consideration. A new calculation will be done after period 3 which may result in more course access for cooperating nations during WSC and in the final period, depending on participation in World Cup Periods 1-3.

The S.C. approved the new allocation of course bibs in team cooperation.

- **WG for common waxing in Tallinn**

Simon Caprini explains the waxing concept for the Tallin World Cup. The main object was to reduce costs of travel in this period for the Teams. The protocol includes no wax trucks allowed on site, a wax tech quota per number of athletes, and a limited number (6 + 1 training ski) of skis per athlete.

On the race day, a common wax protocol will be in place with racing wax products provided by the OC. Working tools will be provided by teams.

- **WG for fluor ban implementation**

The results of the working group were included in the new protocol for Fluor Controls. Simon Caprini explained this in a later point on the agenda.

7. World Cup rules 2024/25

GBR and IRL requested to join the Scandinavia Cup, beginning in the 24-25 season. Their bid is supported by the current members of the Scandinavian Cup. The NSAs have applied to be part of the region and to be eligible for the respective point calculation and the World Cup quota for Scandinavian Cup. Previously, GBR and IRL have not been included in any Continental Cup.

The S.C. approved the request of the expansion of SCAN Cup.

Michal Lamplot presented all applications for Cooperations between nations as well as the applications for the women's course bibs. He highlighted the growth in women in technical positions in the last few years and the fast and positive impact that this rule change has had bringing women into the World Cup.

Organizers can now pay the prize money in their own currency versus the athletes preferred currency, which had been the rule beforehand. The rule change applies to all FIS disciplines. The deadline of the transfer was extended to 31 days with the remaining penalty fee of CHF 999.

8. COOP FIS Cross-Country World Cup calendar 2024/25

After multiple late withdrawals or changes the 24-25 World Cup calendar, a new step in the application for a World Cup event will be introduced. It is a letter of intent, where the NSA and its organizer must approve the ability to provide the most important aspects of hosting the World Cup. The document must be signed and handed in prior to the official application which will be valid for the respective FIS Spring meetings.

Period III

For the upcoming season, the S.C. needed to vote on the replacement of the Nove Mesto (CZE) World Cup. Stepan Kaliba expressed apologies for the late withdraw which was due to economic factors and ensured the subcommittee of the Czech Republic's intention to host the World Cup in upcoming years.

With the application of Cogne (ITA) and Ulricehamn (SWE), the S.C. received two alternative locations to host the weekend in January 2025.

After passing the word to Anders Byström (SWE) together with the OC of Ulricehamn as guests in the audience, as well as Enzo Macor (ITA), the S.C. voted on the replacing host.

With 15 votes, the S.C. appointed Cogne (ITA) as the new World Cup host from 31st January to 2nd February 2025. Race formats remain unchanged.

Lars Brönnimann (SUI) explained the proposal from the Engadin OC to change the format to a A-B race in a Mass Start with the concept of racing on the Engadin Ski marathon course in the opposite direction from St. Moritz to Surlej.

Period IV

The NSF proposed to change the scheduled Mass start in Oslo to an Interval start to provide a longer event and attract more spectators in their market.

The race formats in Lahti will be adjusted to Sprint on Friday and Team Sprint on Saturday. This adjustment is due to the late starting times on Friday, thereby improving recovery time for athletes and increasing the potential to have better sprinters in the Team Sprint on Saturday.

The S.C. individually approved all proposed format changes for the upcoming season 2024/25.

9. Future World Cup calendars

• World Cup 2025/26

Period I

SWE sent a proposal to introduce a rotation system of the World Cup host before Christmas and to alternate Davos with a SWE organizer. Anders Byström elaborated on the proposal and acknowledged the good quality World Cup that Davos has delivered. However, in the sense of sustainability and the basic decision to stay in Scandinavia at the beginning of the season, the proposal suggested a World Cup Period 1 rotation between Sweden and Davos of every two years. This would give the

organizer in SWE also the platform to host the Cross-Country family which they are very interested in.

Lars Brönnimann and Walter Reusser, SUI stated the intention and importance for Davos to be in the calendar every year. If Davos cannot be in the calendar every year, it is unsure how safe the future of the organizer is if they have to alternate.

Olivier Michaud (FRA) remarked on the importance to support an organizer that has always delivered good quality events and also to support OC's in the FESA region. There are not many "traditional organizers" from FESA region and to reduce one would not be ideal. From sports point of view, he felt that Davos is ideal.

Jostein Vinjerui (GBR) pointed out the importance to be in the Swedish market –also referring to the TV numbers and the current performances of their athletes.

The vote contained of two options:

Option 1: Compromise solution SWE/Davos alternation

Option 2: Only Davos on the calendar

With 14 votes, the S.C. decided to keep Davos in their respective World Cup spot every year.

Period III

The application of the German Ski Federation consists of a 2-day event instead of the basic 3-day event. As this event will be the last qualification chance for OWG.

Biathlon will be the week before, therefore there is no space to move to another weekend. Due to the intensity, a two day event was proposed.

The S.C. approved having Germany back in the calendar, including the 2-race exception, and underlined the importance of having Germany back in the calendar for the overall health of the World Cup and the sport.

Period IV

The final period in the 2025/26 season presents multiple conflicts to solve whose origin are not directly involved with Cross-Country. None of the three scheduled organizers can host on the weekend directly after the OWG:

- Falun (SWE) feels they must absolutely avoid hosting the World Cup on this weekend as Vasaloppet is scheduled on 1st March 2026 (conflict of TV times, volunteers and conflict of attention within one country).
- Lahti (FIN) cannot host the Nordic World Cup as SJ already approved to be in Kulm in this weekend and Lahti does not want to split their Nordic Event among two weekends.
- Oslo (NOR) cannot jump in as an organizer as they would like to have the 50km back in the schedule. A back-to-back 50 km (after the WSC Sunday) is not ideal from sports side and will result in very few athletes taking part.

Lake Placid was approved in the FIS Spring meeting 2024. First site visit took place with the conclusion that the venue is already now World Cup ready.

Considered NSAs (Finland and Sweden) got the task to speak with LOC of Lahti and Falun to find a solution of the above-described problem. FIS Cross-Country staff will assist the NSAs. Solution must be presented at the next S.C. meeting in the spring 2025.

- **World Cup 2026/27**

Michal Lamplot remarked that this is the intended season to have a new situation with media and marketing rights. Understandably, it is difficult for NSAs to apply with unknown rights situation by now, however, in sports part of view, the planning must continue with long-term calendar.

Tour de Ski

The dates are challenging with weekends close to Christmas. The provisional dates are therefore from 2nd January, overlapping with Four Hills which is one important element to consider due to the impact TV viewership.

Period I

Ruka cannot move dates once again due to their National holiday, resulting in a gap in this period. Chris Grover, speak for USA, prefers a normal break after Davos and TdS, rather than 2.5 weeks. Andreas from DSV also wants to start season later. Members all agree that having a 3 week gap in this time is not an option. General opinion of the S.C. is that the season should start one week later in this particular season. Finnish Ski Association should again investigate this possibility. FIS Cross-Country team will assist Finnish Ski Association.

Period III

Having a Nordic Weekend in Lahti presents a challenge due to the preliminary calendar of SJ and NC and that they cannot move.

As defined in the Calendar framework, the weekend before the title events should be kept free due to the workload on the various service teams. The S.C. members all agree on this point.

Period IV

It's important to state that Ulricehamn is back in the calendar with 2-3 competition days.

JWSC will take place in Schushinsk, KAZ.

10. Update Fluor Ban Implementation

Simon Caprini explained the principle of the Fluor Control protocol which is set to be more efficient and simple. The Ski Delivery time is reduced from 30 to 15 minutes prior to the race. The testing pattern will be a random test but still to ensure that one athlete per team will be tested per competition. The protocol addresses the Classic kick wax zone at the Start and the handling of challenging and rapidly changing weather.

11. Continental Cup, JWSC and U23 WSC update

A discussion regarding the status of the South American Cup is postponed due to S.C. member not being present. Report from SAC (number of competitors, competitions, etc.) is expected at the next S.C. meeting when the decision about zje World Cup spot for SAC will be decided.

FESA sent a statement that maximum price of CHF 80 for COC is too low for organizers. During the upcoming winter a survey needs to be made showing what the current situation in OPA organizers is. The analysis will be connected to the World Cup Accommodation prize analysis.

12. Other items arising incl. Q&A WSC 2027

The WSC presentation was sent beforehand and Kristin Stemland from Trondheim 2025 answered questions on venue access, the parking situation, grinding machines, etc. Final inspection for Trondheim will take place mid-October 2024.

13. Next meeting

The FIS Technical Spring meetings take place from 5th to 9th May 2025 in Vilamoura (POR).

14. Closing of the meeting

Chairman Chris Grover thanked all present members for an efficient meeting and closed the Subcommittee meeting at 11.30h.