



Press Release

25 YEARS OF THE KOSCIUSKO TOUR - 1977 TO 2001

The first part of this article (1977-92) I have inherited from an anonymous author, possibly Chris Allen who organised the early Tours. The rest I have composed from sources within the CCCSC. I would appreciate reader's responses including additional information, results from early Tours and corrections of fact.

Bruce Porter

The Kosciusko Tour Race was born at a NSW Nordic Committee Conference held at Alpenhof in Perisher Valley in 1975. At that conference Ross Martin suggested that there should be a tour race held to close the season. After some discussion it was stated that only racers could run a race and they had no time to organise another race. Members of the NSW Touring Committee discussed the matter and considered that non-racers could run such an event. After much deliberation the idea of an event connecting the five resorts j.e. Thredbo, Charlottes Pass, Guthega, Perisher and Smiggins Holes would compare with any tour race in the world. More thought was put into the idea and the existing tour races examined and ideas were sought from the organisers. The logistics were considered and the general idea was for the tour race to start at Thredbo, go through the Summit area, down to the Chalet, across between Perisher and Paralizer to Guthega, over Blue Calf Pass to Perisher then via Mt Piper to finish in Smiggins. It was decided that the event would be aimed at non-racing skiers.

It was obvious that a sponsor would be needed to cover the costs, which were considered to include transport of people and luggage between the start and finish, safety check and feeding stations, track finding and setting, communications, lifting etc. If the full costs were borne by the participants, then few would take part.

Manpower, finance, time taken were estimated and it was felt that a shorter route from Thredbo to Perisher would be enough for start. The finance side appeared to be insurmountable until a chance meeting in Adelaide by one of the organising committee and friend, Chris Edwards. Chris was about to be moved to Sydney to become NSW Sales Manager of Volvo. The idea of the event was covered and subsequently Volvo Australia decided that it would be worthwhile contribution to the 50th anniversary of the start of Volvo. Potentially one problem was solved.

The work started. NSW National Parks & Wild Service ranger, John Gallard, at Smiggins Holes was contacted and the idea was discussed and passed up the line within the Service. Discussions took place with the NSW Department of Sport & Recreation, Thredbo, Charlottes Pass and Perisher management as well as a stack of others who would be involved.

The NSW Department of Sport & Recreation agreed to provide accommodation at Jindabyne. The NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service agreed, provided that the time taken by the

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participants between Thredbo and Charlotte. Pass was kept to a minimum and other safety steps were considered. They agreed that over-snow vehicles could be used above Charlotte. Pass for survey, track setting and sweeping after the event.

1977

Finally in 1977 most of the requirements came into place and the **Volvo Kosciusko Tour Race** was on its way.

Buses were used to transport the majority of participants from Perisher with collection points at Smiggins, Sawpit Creek, Sport & Recreation and the Jindabyne-Thredbo turn-off. Others made their own way to Thredbo and some skied from Charlotte Pass. 177 people made their way up the Thredbo chair-lift and skied to Perisher. The day was fine but the snow slow. Fortunately there was enough snow to ski all the way with some concern on the strength of the snow bridge at Spencers Creek. The presentations were awarded by the then Director of the NSW Department of Sport & Recreation, Cedric Bayliss. The day seemed to be a great success and enjoyed by all, including those that decided to make detours on the way which concerned the organizers who were worried they were lost.

The following morning just as the official party was crossing the Spencers Creek Bridge after leaving Charlottes Pass the snow bridge which had been used in the Tour collapsed with a roar. Heart felt thanks to Ullr and everybody else that it did not happen the day before.

1978-1992

Since then the Tour was run every year with the exception of 1982, 1983 and 1988 when lack of snow prevented a course being found. 1978 was run on a short course at Perisher after busing people back from Thredbo in poor weather and visibility. There was a contingency plan for this but it can not claim to have worked to anyone's satisfaction. Not a vintage Tour.

The Family (Norski) and Inter-Services trophies were hotly contested with the Tour being used by the Service as their Inter-Services Nordic Championship. Traditionally glasses were given out as prizes for the various classes and everybody that completed the Tour received a commemorative Badge.

The Tour was run in these years with the able organisation of Chris Allen, the co-operation and support of the Thredbo, Charlottes Pass, Perisher and Blue Cow management, the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service, Perisher and Thredbo Ski Patrols, Police, The Man from Snowy River, Peter Hart and a group of very willing helpers who showed up each year.

Since 1988 the organisers have used the Ski Tube to transport participants from Perisher to Bullocks Flat where they are then bused to Thredbo.

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1993-2001

In 1993 the Canberra Cross-Country Ski Club (CCCSC) took over the running, initially as the **Jurkeiwicz Kosciusko Tour**, but lack of snow prevented a course being found that year. The 1998 Tour was also called off due to whiteout at Crackenback and lack of snow elsewhere so we held a Presentation and gave away the prizes anyway.

Canberra Cross-Country Ski Club has run the Tour on the historic three resorts course in 1995, 1997, 1999 and 2000, with the 2000 Tour finishing at Spencer's Creek due to lack of snow.

The 1994 Tour was run on a circuit course from Thredbo toward Seaman's Hut. The 1996 Tour was run along the road from Perisher to Spencers Creek and back twice due to excessive snow and wind. The 2001 Tour was run at Perisher on a double loop of combined trails due to high winds at Crackenback and a NPWS ban on backcountry travel.

The Tour has been organised as the **CCCSC Kosciusko Tour** since 1998 by Bruce Porter, and in earlier years by Brian Bateman and Fil Giles. It has been made possible by:

- the CCCSC volunteers who marshall each year,
- Technical Delegates Peter Ward and Brian Evans,
- NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service,
- Thredbo, Charlotte Pass, and Perisher-Blue management,
- Perisher and Thredbo Ski Patrols, and
- a myriad of other supporters and sponsors.

The **CCCSC Kosciusko Tour** has developed into a friendly sociable event attracting some 100 to 150 skiers ranging from the fancy dress contingent, families and recreational tourers to elite Australian Olympian, Defence Force and foreign racers. It is one of the few point-to-point races on the race calendar, from Thredbo through Charlotte Pass to Perisher, passing some of Australia's most beautiful & breathtaking scenery, the Main Range near Mt Kosciuszko. Transport by bus, chairlift and Skitube are provided within the entry fee to complete the round trip.

I am accumulating a history of the Tour and would appreciate copies of any Tour results or other anecdotes or memorabilia readers might be able to provide.

Visit the **CCCSC Kosciusko Tour** web site

for further information on

<http://www.cccsc.asn.au>

Or contact Bruce Porter on

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