



**WORLD MASTERS ASSOCIATION**  
**CROSS COUNTRY SKIING**  
**AUSTRALIAN ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24**

**June-August 2023: Winter in Oz and the Kangaroo Hoppet 2023**

- Australia provides great opportunities for Masters skiers from the northern hemisphere to get some off-season ski training 'down under'. Most winters we see European, US and Japanese athletes coming down to train on our trails. If any WMA Masters are interested in heading 'down under', please feel free to contact the Australian ND for more information.
- The 2023 ski season had good snowfalls in our cross-country ski centres in the Australian states of New South Wales (at Perisher Valley - photo below) and Victoria (at Falls Creek). Unfortunately, it warmed up too quickly at the end of the season and the *Worldloppet* Kangaroo Hoppet race on 26 Aug 2023 had to be cancelled, for the first time ever.

- Even so, lots of other events and races were successfully held through the season. Perisher XC Race Week 5-12 August was a highlight.



## **August 2023: Merino Muster, New Zealand**

- The *Worldloppet* Merino Muster was held "across the ditch" (between Australia and NZ) on 2 Sep 2023 at Snow Farm, above the Cardrona Valley, between Queenstown and Wanaka on the South Island of NZ. Of the 122 competitors in the 42km main event, 27 were Australians, of which 22 were in Masters categories.
- Australian competitors in the Masters categories were Ross Hamilton (U40), Tim David (U55), Luke Ryan (U50), Charles Taylor (U60), Michael Bednorz (U70), Martin Vaughan (U60), Andrew Walker (U75), William Miles (U35), Vince Humphries (U65), Len Budge (U75), Brian Wallace (U65), Margaret Hayes (U65), Daniel Taylor (U55), Christopher Wraight (U65), Ross McKinnon (U60) Bethan McDonald (U45), James Hoffman (U55), Kate George (U35), Sophie Van Doorn (U35),

Malcolm McKinnon (U70), James Finnie (U75). and Phoebe Cliff (U35). Their results can be found at [Merino Muster Australian Results](#)

## **October 2023: World Masters Association (WMA) Annual Meeting, Klosters, Switzerland**



- The Australian National Director, Warren Feakes, attended the WMA Annual Meeting in Klosters from 6-9 Oct 23. The meeting summary says: "Thanks and recognition were given to long-time Australian National Director Warren Feakes, who is leaving the WMA at his own request. Feakes represented Australian Masters cross-country skiers very actively and successfully in the WMA from 2006 to 2023. He managed to compete with an Australian team at every MWC. He was given a standing ovation by those present. He will be greatly missed by the entire WMA Board."
- Warren is still actively involved in Australian cross-country skiing as a Nordic ski instructor at [K7 Ski School](#) at Perisher Valley, New South Wales, Australia.

## January 2024 - Sapporo Ski Marathon, Japan

- The *Worldloppet* Sapporo Ski Marathon is popular for Australians as it is held relatively early in the northern ski season and is also a relatively short flight north from Australia. In 2024 it was held on 4 Feb 24.
- Seven Australians in the Masters categories completed the 25km Freestyle race: Monika Binder (U65), Nadia Mellor (U70), Consuelo Merluzzi (U65), Mark Schulze (U65), Alan Levy (U65), Doug Hamilton (U70), Jennifer Kent (U60). Their results can be found at [Sapporo Marathon 25km Results](#)
- Three Australians in the Masters categories completed the 50km Freestyle race: Ross Hamilton (U40), Ian Franzke (U50), and Ken Moylan (U65). Their results can be found at [Sapporo Marathon 50km Results](#)

## February 2024 - MWC Vuokatti, Finland

- Australia had 13 registered participants for MWC2024 in Vuokatti, Finland. They were Ben Barr, Adrian Blake, Peter Cunningham, Robert Eddy, Allan Hope, Catherine Lambert, Peter Lambert, Wayne Pethybridge, Deb Purss, Acacia Rose, David Simpson, Chris Tattersall, and Zac Zaharias.
- In Race 1, Ben Barr came 5th in the M03 5km Classic. Adrian Blake came 29th, and Rob Eddy 30th, in the M08 5km Classic. Acacia Rose came 10th in the F08 5km Classic.
- In Race 2, Ben Barr came 9th in the M03 5km Freestyle. Wayne Pethybridge came 22nd, and Chris Tattersall 26th, in the M07 5km Freestyle. Zac Zaharias came 37th, Adrian Blake 39th, David Simpson 40th, and Peter Lambert 41st, in the M08 5km Freestyle. Allan Hope came 29th in the M09 5km Freestyle. Deb Purss came 6th in the F05 5km Freestyle.
- In Race 3, Ben Barr came 4th in the M03 30km Classic. Allan Hope came 17th in the M09 30km Classic.
- In Race 4, Ben Barr came 8th in the M3 30km Freestyle. Wayne Pethybridge came 22nd, and Chris Tattersall 24th, in the M07 30km Freestyle. David Simpson came 29th, and Zac Zaharias 30th, in the M08 30km Freestyle. Deb Purss came

5th in the F05 30km Freestyle. Acacia Rose came 9th in the F08 20km Freestyle.

- In the Relays, Adrian Blake (CT), Peter Lambert (CT), David Simpson (FT), and Zac Zaharias (FT) raced in the M08 4x5km relay to place 6th.
- Despite the cool conditions, all the Australian competitors, and the Australian support team and cheer squad, had a great time. Thanks again to the MWC Vuokatti Organising Committee.

### **April 2024 - FIS Australian Rollerski Championship**

- The 2024 Australian Rollerski Championships were held at Stromlo Forest Park in Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, on 13/14 Apr 24.
- In the Sprint Free Technique, Masters participants were Ivar Berget, Ian Franzke, and David Simpson. Results can be found at [FIS AUS Rollerski Sprint](#)
- In the Open Criterium, Masters participants were Ivar Berget, Ian Franzke, Andrew Paul, Wayne Pethybridge, and David Simpson. Results can be found at [FIS AUS Rollerski Criterium](#)

### **April 2024 - Victorian FIS Rollerski Internationals**

- The 2024 Victorian Rollerski Internationals were held at Yarra Boulevard in Melbourne, Victoria on 27/28 Apr 24.
- In the Sprint Free Technique, Masters participants were Luke Ryan, Gleb Belov, and Len Budge. Results can be found at [VIC FIS Rollerski International Sprint](#)
- In the Mass Start event, Masters participants were Kevin Tory, Luke Ryan, Tamas Boldogh, Len Budge, and Gleb Belov. Results can be found at [Vic FIS Rollerski Internationals Mass Start](#)

## Freidl Bartsch and the Australia vs Great Britain 'Ashes' Competition

- Very sadly, one of our Australian Masters cross-country skiing competitors, Friedl Bartsch, passed away at the end of 2023. He was also an accomplished biathlon competitor. He was a keen follower of the sport of cricket, in which Australia and Great Britain annually compete for the "Ashes" trophy.
- In Masters cross-country skiing as well, the Australian team is highly competitive with the British team, if not the rest of Europe. In the style of a cricket tragic, Friedl Bartsch created the *Mount Kosciusko Alpine Ashes AUS vs GBR Masters World Cup XC Skiing* trophy (pictured below).
- The Ashes were initially won by Australia at MWC 2019 in Beitostoelen, Norway, and were retained by Australia until MWC 2024 in Vuokatti, Finland. GBR won the trophy by a whisker at MWC 2024! We will continue with Freidl's legacy and compete for this trophy at future MWC...we look forward to MWC2025 in Klosters...

