

# A Brief History of Cross Country Ski Racing in Australia

## Part 3

1994 – 2004

*by Finn Marsland*

### 1994

- Olympic Winter Games, Lillehammer, Norway. Manager cross country: Bernie Evans. Wax Technician: "Tarry" from Norway. Skiers: Anthony Evans and Mark Gray. Coach-biathlon: ??, Skiers: Kerryn Pethybridge and Sandra Paintin-Paul.

- Australian Olympic Squad, Europe. Manager: Bernie Evans. Skiers: Anthony Evans, Mark Gray, Tom Landon-Smith, Alina McMaster, and Finn Marsland

- World Junior Championships, Breitenwang Germany. Manager/Coach: Finn Marsland. Skier: Cameron Morton.

- Paul L'Huillier resigns from National Development Officer/National Coaching Director position? or was this in 1993?

??-Chris Solly is appointed as National Development Officer.

?? the ASF is turned into Skiing Australia ??

### 1995

- Senior World Championships, Thunder Bay, Canada. No Australians competed.

- No official senior team formed. Finn Marsland is the only A-team member to go overseas, trains at Folkhogskola in Mora. Competes in Scandinavian Cup and World Cup competition only in Sweden.

- World Junior Championships, Gallivare, Sweden Manager/Coach: Simon Edmondson and Monica Larsson-Edmondson. Skiers: Gregor McLennan, Tom Horniblow, David Greber, Sean Donohue and Andrew Slocombe.

- "Team Nagano" formed, travels to Canada to train and compete for 6 weeks. Manager: Brian Keeble. Coach: Mark Gray. Skiers: Larissa Trease, Myfanwy Cross, Jessica Hart, Belinda Crebbin, Natasha Coleman, Ben Derrick, Richard Butterworth, Lucas Molloy, Andrew Slocombe, and Geoff Vietz.

- World Student Games, ??, Spain. Cross country competitors: Lucas Molloy, Richard Butterworth.

- FIS introduces World Cup qualification standard of 75 FIS points.

- Finn Marsland takes over from Mark Gray as Sport Development Officer with the Victorian Ski Association.

??- Brian Evans becomes National Coaching Director on part-time basis. ?? When did he become the SDO for NSW?? mid 1996 I think.

- Australian Ski Institute is formed. Christer Skog and Karin Lamberg-Skog from Sweden are appointed as Program Manager and Head Coach.

-Chris Solly resigns from NDO position to take up management position with ASI. This was the end of the NDO position with Skiing Australia.

## 1996

- ASI team is based at the Folkhogskola in Mora, Sweden, for the 1995/1996 season. Anthony Evans and Finn Marsland have full scholarships and compete on World Cup only in Scandinavia.

- ASI Development Team in Sweden includes Cameron Morton (part-biathlon), Myfanwy Cross, Jessica Hart, Natasha Coleman, Paul Murray, Jim Miles, Andrew Slocombe, and Sean Donohue.

- Anthony Evans scores 86+ ml/kg on VO2 test used by Swedish team in Falun

- World Junior Championships, Asiago, Italy. Coach: Christer Skog. Skier: Jessica Hart.

- Andrew Slocombe takes over from Finn Marsland as SDO with the VSA. VSA merges with Skiing Australia.

- After the Australian winter Paul Gray joins Anthony Evans and Finn Marsland on full scholarship with the ASI.

Inaugural Cross Country Congress is held at Charlotte's Pass.

## 1997

- Senior World Championships, Trondheim, Norway. Coach: Christer Skog. Assistant Coaches: Tommy Larsson and Karen Lamberg. Wax Technician Micke Jonsson???. Skiers: Anthony Evans, Paul Gray, Finn Marsland, Ben Derrick, and Matthew Murtagh.

- Anthony Evans records Australia's best ever placing in World Championships, 36<sup>th</sup> place out of XXX in the 10km classic.

- ASI team is based in Mora for most of the 1996/1997 season at Moraparken Hotel. Trains at altitude at Jakobshorn near Davos in Switzerland prior to World Championships.

- ASI Senior Team in Sweden includes Anthony Evans, Paul Gray, Finn Marsland, Myfanwy Cross, Megan Woodward, Ben Derrick and Matt Murtagh. Junior team includes Paul Murray, Jim Miles and Larissa Trease. Larissa returns home after 1 week due to ongoing leg problems.

- Skiing Australia Junior Development Team is also based in Mora, Sweden. Coach:

Robert Findlay. Manager: Sue Donoghue. Skiers: Leon Spiller, Andrew Johnson, Michael Evans, Katie Calder, Christie Dowling, Alena Sarri, Kate Spiller and Jo Vanzella.

- World Junior Championships, Canmore, Canada. Coach: Karen Lamberg. Assistant Coach? Manager: Skiers: Paul Murray, Jim Miles.

- World Student Games, ??, Korea. Cross country competitors: Myfanwy Cross, Tim Greville?? Meg Woodward??

- Camille Melvey travels and competes in Europe with coach Mick Sullivan. Finishes xx in Worldloppet??

- Paul Gray and Camille Melvey become first Australians to win Kangaroo Hoppet.

## 1998

- Olympic Winter Games, Nagano, Japan. Coach: Christer Skog. Skiers: Anthony Evans and Paul Gray. Paul Gray is initially overlooked for selection by the AOC, and is added to the team after winning appeal through the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

- Anthony Evans records Australia's best ever placing in World Cup, 37<sup>th</sup> place in 30km Freestyle in Ramsau, with FIS points of 32.89. Was up in top 25 until last 5km.

- ASI team based again at Moraparken Hotel, Anthony Evans, Paul Gray, and Finn Marsland. No ASI Junior or Development team formed.

- World Junior Championships, Pontresina, Switzerland. No Australian juniors competed, for the first time since 1986.

- Cross country skiing is dropped by the ASI, which makes its first name change to Australian Institute of Winter Sport. The major change to the organisation is that the AOC has come in as the major backer.

- FIS raises qualification standard for World Cup, now 50 points for men and 75 points for women.

## 1999

- Senior World Championships, Ramsau, Austria. Coaches: Tim Greville and Pip Daley. Wax Technician Alfred Stauder from Italy. Skiers: Ben Derrick and Camille Melvey.

- Australian Team trains with Italian Team in Livigno prior to World Championships.

- Senior Team members Finn Marsland, Ben Derrick and Camille Melvey travel to Canmore, Canada, to compete in Continental Cup. They then join Tim Greville and Pip Daley in Europe for further Continental Cup and FIS International Competition.

- World Junior Championships, Saalfelden, Austria. Coach: Matt Murtagh. Manager: Chris Derrick. Skiers: Kate Spiller, Katie Calder, and David College.

- Winter Universiade, ???. Cross country competitors:?? any ??
- Tony Greville successfully lobbies the ASC for funding for the establishment of an Elite Development Program.
- Finn Marsland appointed National Team Coach and High Performance Manager with the Elite Development Program, a full-time position.

## 2000

- World Junior Championships, Strebske Pleso, Slovakia. Coach/Manager: Finn Marsland. Assistant Coach: Nick Almoukov. Skiers: Katie Calder, Christie Dowling, Matt O'Rourke, Chris Darlington
- Australian Senior and Junior Team based in Canmore, Canada in December. Coach/Manager Finn Marsland. Assistant Coach: Nick Almoukov. Senior skiers: Ben Derrick, Belinda Phillips, and Camille Melvey. Junior Skiers: Katie Calder, Christie Dowling, Matt O'Rourke, Chris Darlington, Rhiannon Palmer, and Kieran Step. Junior team then moves to Ramsau, Austria, prior to championships.
- Ben Derrick and Belinda Phillips remain in North America to compete in US Championships in Soldier Hollow.
- Camille Melvey travels with junior team to Europe and competes in Transjurassienne World Cup, first Worldloppet event to be combined with a World Cup.
- Ben Derrick places 2<sup>nd</sup> in Keskinada, Australia's best male result in a Worldloppet event outside of Australia.
- Australian Institute of Winter Sports changes name to Olympic Winter Institute. No cross country program or athletes on individual scholarships.
- Camille Melvey becomes first person to win 2 Kangaroo Hoppets. Ben Derrick becomes second male Australian to win Kangaroo Hoppet.
- Snowy Mountains Classic established in NSW to replace Paddy Pallin Classic.
- Inaugural Australian Sprint Championships held at Perisher Valley. Winners Paul Murray and Esther Bottomley.

## 2001

- Senior World Championships, Lahti, Finland. Coach/Manager: Finn Marsland. Assistant Coach/ Wax Technician: Bob Cranage. Wax Technician Marco Passila from Finland. Skiers: Ben Derrick, Paul Murray and Camille Melvey.
- World Junior Championships, Karpacz - Szklarska Poreba, Poland. Coach/Manager: Robert Findlay. Assistant Coach: Finn Marsland. Skiers: James Rickard, Chris Darlington, Duane Butcher, Ben Sim (observing).
- Australian Senior and Junior Teams based together in middle Europe. Coach/Managers: Finn Marsland and Robert Findlay. Assistant Manager: Leon Spiller.

Senior Skiers: Ben Derrick, Paul Murray, Camille Melvey, Katie Calder, Matt O'Rourke, Rob Curtis. Junior Skiers: James Rickard, Duane Butcher, Rhiannon Palmer. Primary location was to be Worgl, Austria, however poor snow saw the team move frequently and locations included Obertilliach and Ramsau in Austria, and Stalden and Marbach in Switzerland.

- World Student Games, Zakopane, Poland. Cross country competitors: Leon Spiller, Duane Butcher, Katherine Calder. Wax Technician: Matt O'Rourke.

- Paul Murray, Ben Derrick and Katie Calder ski their first World Cup events, sprints in Engelberg Switzerland.

- NSW Junior Team based in Strebzke Pleso. Coach/Manager: Nick Almoukov. Skiers: Chris Darlington, Ben Sim, Kieran Step. Just prior to the World Junior Championships Kieran Step injures his back falling on ice and Nick Almoukov accompanies him back to Australia.

- Esther Bottomley and Rhiannon Palmer train at Jarpen Ski Gymnasium in Sweden for 4-5 months.

- Ben Derrick wins back to back Kangaroo Hoppets. Belinda Phillips becomes second Australian woman to win Kangaroo Hoppet.

## **2002**

- Olympic Winter Games, Salt Lake City, Utah. Unfortunately no Australian cross country skiers qualified. First time since 1976 no Australian cross country skiers at Winter Olympics.

- Olympic Squad competed in World Cup trying to qualify for Salt lake City. Coach/Manager: Finn Marsland. Skiers Ben Derrick and Paul Murray. Unfortunately Ben Derrick came down with chicken pox two weeks prior to the only 30km freestyle event. Paul Murray skied well in Sprint World Cup and recorded his best FIS points, however was just outside the AOC Olympic qualification standard.

- World Junior Championships, Schonach, Germany. Manager: Brian Keeble. Coach: Finn Marsland. Assistant Coach: Nick Almoukov. Assistant: Andrew Circosta. Skiers: Chris Darlington, Andrew Mock, Ben Sim, Rhiannon Palmer, Esther Bottomley, Sally Cunningham (observing). Andrew Mock skis best % since 1989, Ben Sim in top 30 after 2km in 10km then blows up.

- First U23 Championships held on OPA (Alpen) cup. Coach/Manager: Finn Marsland. Skiers: Katie Calder, Rhiannon Palmer, Esther Bottomley, Andrew Wynd.

- Belinda Phillips wins back to back Kangaroo Hoppet.

- Australian Sprint Team established.

- Allison McArdle takes over from Paul L'Huillier as editor of Australian Cross Country News.

## **2003**

- Senior World Championships, Val di Fiemme, Italy. Manager: Brian Keeble. Coach: Finn Marsland. Assistant Coach: Nick Almoukov. Wax Technician Nicola Corradini from Italy. Assistants: Matt O'Rourke and Andrew Circosta. Skiers: Paul Murray, Andrew Mock, Ben Sim, Katherine Calder, Esther Bottomley, and Duane Butcher.
- World Junior Championships, Solleftea, Sweden. Manager: Brian Keeble. Coach: Finn Marsland. Assistant Coaches: Nick Almoukov and Allison McArdle. Skiers: Ben Sim, Esther Bottomley, Nick Grimmer, Daniel van der Ploeg, and Sally Cunningham. Ben Sim finished 25th in 30km freestyle, Esther Bottomley 21st in 1km sprint freestyle, and Nick Grimmer 41st in 1km sprint freestyle - the three best placings ever recorded by Australians at the World Junior Championships. Esther also scores 74.?? FIS points, the best ever FIS points by an Australian female.
- Paul Murray achieves the best result on World Cup since Anthony Evans in 1998, 52nd place out of 74 starters in the Sprint Freestyle World Cup in Linz, Austria, with FIS points of 42.20.
- Paul Murray moves to Sweden to train???
- U23 Intercontinental Championships, Val di Dendro, Italy. Manager: Brian Keeble. Coach: Finn Marsland. Skiers: Andrew Mock, Katherine Calder, Matt O'Rourke, Esther Bottomley, Nick Grimmer, and Andrew Circosta. Unfortunately more than half of team (Calder, Mock, O'Rourke, Circosta) were either sick or recently sick.
- World Student Games, Tarvisio, Italy. Manager: Chris Solly. Cross country competitors: Andrew Mock, Katherine Calder, Tim Retchford, and Andrew Circosta. Wax Technician: Matt O'Rourke.
- Belinda Phillips wins 3rd Kangaroo Hoppet in a row. Ben Derrick wins 3rd Kangaroo Hoppet.

## 2004

- World Junior Championships, Stryn, Norway. Coach: Nick Almoukov. Assistant Coach: Allison McArdle. Skiers: Ben Sim, Sally Cunningham, Amy Watson and Ewan Watson??
- Esther Bottomley and Ben Sim make World Cup debut.