



OFFICIAL WELCOME



Welcome to the Kangaroo Hoppet



Bob Flower

It is with great pleasure that, on behalf of the Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club, I welcome all of our visitors to Falls Creek for Australia's Worldloppet race - the Kangaroo Hoppet.

The staging of the first Worldloppet race in the Southern Hemisphere is the culmination of many years work for a small group of local people dedicated to cross country skiing.

Local identities Paul and Helen L'Huillier have been the driving force behind the

Birkebeiner club, and its annual long distance tour race, since the late seventies.

They have been joined in their efforts by a growing band of others who enjoy the serenity of cross country skiing and the thrill of racing.

Three years ago our club members, mostly local families, decided to support the push for Worldloppet accreditation for our race.

Last year the race was known as the Australian International Ski Marathon

and was held in ideal snow and weather conditions. As well as the 42km course, the race now offers participation for all with 21km and 7km courses.

The success of last year's event has resulted in the race being granted Worldloppet status, and this year it will be 'bigger than ever' with more services offered to skiers, and a variety of ski events occurring in the week leading up to the race.

Falls Creek is now recognised as Australia's

premier ski resort, and the Bogong High Plains as the mecca for ski tourers in Victoria. The race course has been designed to take in some of the most scenic areas, and makes use of the historic cattlemen's huts for food and drink stations. We are pleased to share this wonderful environment with visitors from other areas.

I would like to extend a special welcome to our international visitors. We are pleased to have you as guests in the Australian Alps

and trust you will enjoy the 'Australian experience'. If we are blessed with fine weather for the race you will be skiing across "the roof of Australia"

After the race, please join in the celebrations in Mount Beauty and take part in some traditional Australian bush dancing.

To all visitors and participants, we wish you a successful race and an enjoyable stay in the area.

Bob Flower, president,
Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club.