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Preface

The Finnish Society for Sport History, the Finnish Society of Sport Sciences, the Department of History and Ethnology of University of Jyväskylä, and the Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences of University of Jyväskylä organized Ski Congress 2017 at University of Jyväskylä, Finland, 1st–4th of March 2017. The previous Ski Congress was organized in 2011 during the FIS Nordic World Ski Championships in Holmenkollen. It took place in Bø in the middle of Telemark country. Jyväskylä congress was held simultaneously with FIS Nordic World Ski Championships 2017, organized in Lahti. The congress days took place in Jyväskylä; and on Saturday, congress participants had a possibility to join an excursion to FIS Nordic World Ski Championships in Lahti. The Ski Congress 2017 was arranged under the auspice of the International Society for the History of Physical Education and Sport (ISHPES).

The topics dealt with in the Congress were the international relations of skiing; its societal significance; the impact of skiing on people's physical and mental wellbeing; and national climactic moments and sore points, related to skiing as a sport. In the congress, history was the main

field of study but snow sport was to be approached in multidisciplinary way. Consequently, the concept of skiing was understood as a multi-faceted construction, which included both snow exercises and outdoor life. All traditional winter sports in skiing and ways to move and exercise on skis, including skiing tourism, were included in the congress.

As hoped, the congress drew participants from different disciplines. Inter alia the representatives of History, Ethnology, Sport Sciences, Economics, Museology, Sociology, and Communication Sciences gave comprehensive overview of skiing during the congress days. There were 33 congress participants coming from eight countries. Apart from one invited keynote presentation, which was held in the first congress day, presentations were divided between two days and, in total, they were 26. In addition, there were a panel discussion and an interview included in the congress program. The congress languages were Finnish and English; thus, presentations were heard in both languages in collateral sessions. The congress program included four invited keynote presentations. Invited keynote lectures were E. John B. Allen, Emeritus Professor; Anna-Liisa Ojala, Doctor; Gertrud Pfister, Professor; and Kalle Virtapohja, Doctor.

During the four keynote presentations and nine separate sessions, audience heard presentations, held from many different perspectives. For instance, cross-country skiing and its significance were dealt with through such topics as skiing president, wars, ethnic stereotypes, and the expansion of the Scandinavian skiing to America. As in many other sport types, equipment and wear have always been essential in skiing. In the congress, their development and significance came under consideration in presentations on Finnish ancient skis and the significance of Finnish wooden ski manufacturing during the World War II and in a talk on the first century of the fashion in winter sport.

The congress presentations also dealt with various sport events, such as the Asian Winter Games, Swedish participation in Cortina d'Ampezzo in 1940s, Lahti as a winter sport center, and women's participation in Winter X-Games. When it comes to women in the history of skiing, discrimination was also a theme from the perspective of the different skiing types in the FIS World Ski Championships. In Finland, ski-jumping has been a traditional and successful sport during the past. Ski-jumping, especially Finnish one was approached by interviewing a sportsman and a review made by a jour-

nalist. Furthermore, there were presentations that were dealing with topics of ski-jumping and society, the expansion of the Finnish ski-jumping, and contextualism and goal-orientation. In addition to skiing and ski-jumping, ski sports were surveyed by scrutinizing alpine skiing and snowboarding. For instance, a presentation on the economics of snowboarding brought economical aspects to the fore. On the other hand, sportsmen's and sportswomen's rewards and earnings have been an inseparable part of the discussion on the amateur question and professionalization, which were also dealt with in the presentations dedicated to these themes.

As mentioned above, it was hoped that the congress would provide multifaceted views to skiing. The program of the congress was supplemented by presentations on the significance of the artificial snow in the Finnish skiing centers; research on the motoric skills of children, who are skiing; goal-orientation; and importance of archives on the research of the history of the skiing.

The planning and organization of the Ski Congress 2017 began in the spring 2016. The members of the Organization committee were Heikki Roiko-Jokela, Adjunct Professor; Piia Pöyhönen, Master of Sport Sciences, Congress Secretary; and Jari Kanerva, Doctor of Philosophy, who took part in planning and starting process of the congress but later took care of other tasks.

There are many, who must be acknowledged due to their role in making the congress possible, organizing it, and making it successful. Firstly, we want to thank the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Finnish Society for Sport History, the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies because they make the congress possible. The Finnish Society for Sport History, the Finnish Society of Sport Sciences, the Department of History and Ethnology of University of Jyväskylä, and the Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences of University of Jyväskylä managed the congress; inter alia, they provided congress venues and gave resources to organize the congress. In particular, we would like to thank Jari Ojala, Professor, Head of Department of History and Ethnology; and Heikki Herva, Head of Administration of Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences, who were supporting the idea to organize the congress.

We also want to thank Hannu Itkonen, Professor; Heikki Roiko-Jokela, Adjunct Professor; Anssi Halmesvirta, Adjunct Professor; Jari Kanerva,

Ph.D.; Arja Turunen, Ph.D.; and Antero Holmila, Ph.D., who belonged to the scientific committee of the congress. We also thank Linda Raivio, from the Finnish Society of Sport Sciences, due to her great help in the practical preparations for congress and Kari Keskinen, Executive Director at Finnish Society of Sport Sciences, who was an influential background agent for the congress. In addition, Leena Laine, Emeritus Chair of the Finnish Society for Sport History and board member of ISHPES, gave us precious advices for the arrangements of the congress and we especially would like to thank her due to her work to obtain ISHPES to act as a patron of the congress.

When it comes to practical arrangements Heikki Roiko-Jokela and Piia Pöyhönen were in central role. When the congress was close in future and during the congress, Anne Raunio, Department Trainee, and Wiivi-Maria Jouttijärvi, Department Trainee, made everything go smoothly. During the congress days, Tarja Markkanen, who oversaw the service of the opening ceremony, and Aino Sarje, who helped in other practical arrangements, helped a lot. We also want to thank Irish Mixture band, which was entertaining congress participants during the evening dinner and Suvi Kuisma, Researcher of Lahti Ski Museum, who helped to organize the excursion to FIS Nordic World Ski Championships in Lahti. But the greatest acknowledgement goes to the congress participants, who eventually made it possible of the congress to be the event it ultimately was.



Some participants of the Ski Congress 2017 during the excursion to FIS Nordic World Ski Championships in Lahti. Photo: Andreas Brugger.