

Expansion slowed in the late '80s, but in 1991 the Kangaroo Hoppet of Australia was added. In 1994, the Tartu Maraton in Estonia joined the Worldloppet. Finally, in 2000, the Czech Jizerska Padesatka came into the Worldloppet nearly 20 years after Wise first attempted to bring the then Eastern-European race into the international series.

WORLDLOPPET TRAVEL

Tour operators played a key role in the early origins of the Worldloppet. In the late '70s and early '80s, international travel was still challenging for many skiers. And the races were usually located in places unknown to many traditional travel agents.

Travel specialists like Sport-Koepf in Munich, managed by Annelies Waneck, and Worldwide Nordic USA, started by Telemark's Kelly and Birkebeiner race announcer Peter Graves, were instrumental in providing arrangements for hundreds even thousands of skiers during that time. The growing races of the Worldloppet found that they were strong attractions for regional tourism with thousands and thousands of skiers descending on small mountain towns for the Worldloppet races.

Within a few years, many thousands of skiers were travelling around the world to compete in the Worldloppet. For some, it became a lifelong passion. It provided everyday skiers – citizen racers as Tony Wise called them – with an opportunity to enjoy the camaraderie of new friends worldwide.

WORLDLOPPET: 30 YEARS OF MEMORIES

It's been 30 years since Tony Wise brought together race organisers from around the world with his crazy idea. Many of those early organisers have remained close friends and colleagues for many decades. Countless thousands of friendships have been made on snow tracks around the world.

The Worldloppet has embedded millions of memories into the hearts and minds of thousands of citizen skiers. It's the memory of coming into the Hauptplatz on Sunday afternoon in Lienz, or the spectacle of 12,000 skiers crossing the frozen lake in Silvaplana. It's the Italian soldiers shovelling snow onto the village streets in Cavalese, or skiing by King Ludwig's Bavarian castles. It's the sound of the crowds on Hayward's Main Street and the crisp pre-dawn morning air in Lahti and Salen.

It's the anticipation as you board the plane for your first trip to Japan or Australia. It's the thrill of seeing your passport stamped for the first time or your heart pounding as you near the finish line to become a Worldloppet Master.

It's the dreams of Worldloppet founders Robert Steiner, Risto Rytokoski and Tony Wise played out on skis every year by 90,000 citizen racers.

It's for anyone who has ever dreamed to become a champion! Jeder ein Seiger, über sich selbst!

Attendees of 1991 AGM in Oberammergau, GER



FIRST WORLDLOPPET MASTERS (1980)

Medal	Name	Nation
0	Gunnar Sarring	Sweden
1	Carol Duffy	USA
2	Heinrich Popp	Germany
3	Thomas Duffy	USA
4	Robert Vangene	USA
5	Ekkehard Wille	Germany
6	Lennart Hakansson	Sweden
7	Friedrich Hartmann	Switzerland
8	Steve Fossett	USA

Later the list was corrected.

WORLDLOPPET RACE ORIGINS

Start	Worldloppet	Race	Nation
1922	1979	Vasaloppet	Sweden
1932	1979	Birkebeinerrennet	Norway
1960	1994	Tartu Maraton	Estonia
1968	2000	Jizerska Padesatka	Czech Republic
1968	1979	König Ludwig Lauf	Germany
1969	1979	Engadin Skimarathon	Switzerland
1970	1979	Dolomitenlauf	Austria
1971	1979	Marcialonga	Italy
1973	1979	American Birkebeiner	USA
1974	1979	Finlandia Hiihto	Finland
1978	1979	Rivière Rouge (Gatineau Loppet)	Canada
1980	1981	La Transjurassienne	France
1981	1985	Sapporo International Ski Marathon	Japan
1989	1991	Kangaroo Hoppet	Australia