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FIS Cross-Country Skiing World Cup to be held in the United States after two Decades

Minneapolis, Minn. (August 16, 2019) — For the first time in over a generation, the world’s best cross-country skiers from 25 countries will compete against one another on U.S. soil in a World Cup race held at the new Trailhead facility at Theodore Wirth Regional Park in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The race will cap off a four day winter festival, which will provide winter activities for all ages and abilities from March 14-17, 2020, and is expected to draw thousands of spectators to the Twin Cities.

The Coop FIS Cross-Country World Cup, which is the preeminent cross-country skiing world tour, is held each winter between November and March and consists of a series of cross-country ski races around the world highlighting various techniques and distances. This March, The Loppet Foundation, U.S. Ski & Snowboard, and The International Ski Federation will partner to host the World Cup Sprint Finals, which will be the season’s last opportunity for the athletes to race head-to-head on a 1.7 kilometer freestyle sprint course before the awarding of the Crystal Globe to the 2020 sprint champions.

The World Cup Sprint Finals will be part of the second annual Fastenal Parallel 45 Winter Festival, organized by the Loppet Foundation. The festival will combine the World Cup race with four days of live music, craft beer gardens, and spectator events, including fat-tire bike races, skijoring races (pairing skiers with their furry friends), SkiCross and BikeCross races, talks and presentations from past Olympians, and both citizen’s and children’s ski racing and touring events. This unique festival will showcase the best of winter in a way only possible in Minnesota.

The last time a Coop FIS Cross Country World Cup event was held in the U.S. was in 2001, so this race will be the first time that most of the 100+ expected foreign athletes will have competed

in America. This will also mark the first time that the current U.S. Cross-Country Ski Team will have the home course advantage in a World Cup race.

The announcement of this event came after Minnesota-native Jessie Diggins and her teammate Kikkan Randall won the women's team sprint at the 2018 Olympic Games, ending a 40-year medal drought for the U.S. in Cross-Country Skiing and securing the country's first ever gold medal in the sport. Diggins, who grew up in Afton, Minnesota, and competed for the Stillwater Area High School ski team, has played an integral role in bringing the international competition to her home state.

"I'm so proud to represent Minnesota as one of the first American athletes to win Olympic Gold in cross-country and now to bring the sport I love to the state I call home," said Diggins. "Hosting the World Cup is our chance to show skiers from around the World how Minnesota embraces winter — through sport and through our hospitality."

More information on this historic event, including how to secure tickets, volunteer, or become a partner, can be found at mnworldcup.com or on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, all of which have the handle @mnworldcup. Don't miss out on this once-in-a-lifetime experience!

About the Loppet Foundation

The Loppet Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that creates a shared passion for year-round outdoor adventure in the Minneapolis area, focusing on underserved youth and families. Since 2002, the Loppet Foundation has worked to create high-quality public events, youth education, and outdoor recreation programs for the local community. Learn more at loppet.org.

About U.S. Ski & Snowboard

U.S. Ski & Snowboard is the Olympic National Governing Body for ski and snowboard sports in the USA. One of the oldest and most established sports organizations worldwide, directly tracing its roots back to 1905, the organization, based in Park City, UT, provides leadership and direction for elite athletes competing at the highest level worldwide and for tens of thousands of young skiers and snowboarders in the USA, encouraging and supporting all its athletes in achieving excellence wherever they train and compete. By empowering national teams, clubs, coaches, parents, officials, volunteers and fans, U.S. Ski & Snowboard is committed to the progression of its sports, athlete success and the value of team. U.S. Ski & Snowboard receives no direct government support, operating solely through private donations from individuals, corporations

and foundations to fund athletic programs that directly assist athletes in reaching their dreams and achieving the shared goal of being Best In The World.

About FIS

FIS is the governing body for international skiing and snowboarding, founded in 1924 during the first Olympic Games in Chamonix, France. Recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), FIS manages the Olympic disciplines of Alpine Skiing, Cross-Country Skiing, Ski Jumping, Nordic Combined, Freestyle Skiing and Snowboarding, including setting the international competition rules. Through its 130 member nations, more than 7'500 FIS ski and snowboard competitions are staged annually. Specific initiatives are undertaken by FIS to promote snow activities as a healthy leisure recreation, notably for the young. For more information, please visit www.fis-ski.com.