

# **A Loppet Sport and Loppet Adventures response to the Murder of George Floyd.**

To see the official Loppet Foundation statement on racism, [click here](#).

## **Systemic Racism. Endurance Sport. Police Brutality. Racial Profiling.**

One of these expressions rarely appears with the others. Pheww, what a relief.

### **Endurance Sport.**

It's in the woods, it's green, it's clean, it's a little sweaty —

We're not bothering anyone, right?

We — in our white, affluent bubble — feel pretty good about our Endurance Sport lives

We don't "discriminate" against "others".....

We just don't see or touch the "others," and therefore ignore them and their absence.

### **White Privilege. White Indifference. Inward Focus. Endurance Sport.**

These expressions do often go together.

The days since George Floyd's murder have been a difficult process of introspection for us personally, and I believe for all of us in the Loppet Sport division (Loppet Nordic Racing, Loppet Cycle Works, TRAIL KIDS, and Loppet Run 365) of the Loppet Foundation I think we all realize that our city, and our country, are at a historic turning point that we cannot turn our backs on, even if we wanted to. Our city, our country, our park, our Trailhead, will never be the same.

We as an organization must be an active engine of change — not passive bystanders. Many of us are happy to go hide in the woods, literally and figuratively. I personally can't wait to take an entire day to go for an epic mountain bike in Duluth, or a 100 mile road ride to Prescott, or a 3hr rollerski down a country road. But I find it harder to go with my family to march in a protest march to honor George Floyd that is 2 miles away in downtown Minneapolis.

As I write this, I don't know exactly what I can do to close the Education Gap, the Wealth Gap, the Criminal Justice Gap. What I do know, is that it needs to start with a clear statement that as the Loppet Sport Community, we believe that:

- Black Lives Matter
- Real criminal justice and policing reforms must happen immediately
- We must not shy away from difficult conversations on the topic of race and equity
- We must make the changes to our own behaviors that perpetuate racial stereotypes
- We must reach out through our love of the outdoors and endurance sport to create a welcoming community to people of color at The Trailhead

As I write this, I am listening to [Al Sharpton's eulogy for George Floyd](#), and I'm embarrassed thinking of what content follows in the rest of this Loppet Sport/Adventures newsletter. All our Loppet Sport news seems trivial in the context of the last 2 weeks of crisis and introspection.

Nevertheless, I think we all know that a physically active, outdoor lifestyle is important for the mental and physical health of all of us — children, adults, and the elderly.

Now we must make sure the benefits that WE enjoy can be shared with children and adults of ALL Colors, especially those who are BLACK. The staff members of Loppet Sport and Loppet Adventures are committed to finding ways to do this over the coming weeks and months.

We as an organization must embrace racial justice. It is a journey that is personal. There are no right or wrong paths or answers. It is a journey of self exploration on what we believe as humans. The more we can support each other to explore these feelings and thoughts, the stronger our organization will become. It is time to have these conversations as the Loppet Foundation by truly understanding how each and everyone of us can [support our mission](#) of using outdoor adventure programming as a tool for racial justice. It is what we do on a personal level and now it is time to reach out to our communities of color and invite them to enjoy what we know is essential to a healthy existence. It does not need to be this epic change in our mission. It is simply asking ourselves, how am I supporting the Loppet mission? Am I considering how my actions and decisions will affect folks of color? Am I stepping out of my whiteness to find that discomfort? Am I reaching out to the communities of color to understand their struggles, culture and barriers to adventure programming? These are the personal questions that will move the needle of our mission statement as we as a Loppet community become true leaders in racial equity.

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