

News from Vasaloppet's Veteran Club

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Vätternrundan 2019

Vätternrundan 2019 took place according to plan on June 14–15 with relatively good cycling weather but a distinct headwind on the Västergötland side. Fastest around the track was a group of ten cyclists who got around the lake in six hours and thirty-seven minutes; an average speed of about 45 kilometres per hour! Famous cyclist Anders Johansson, Grästorp, biking for Team Serneke, came first in this year's Vätternrundan. Anders started his sporting career late, in his forties, and also has very good results in his five Vasaloppet races, finishing in 4:18 at best!

Klarälvsloppet on roller skis

The third edition of Klarälvsloppet along the asphalt embankment for the long since shut down railway Nordmark-Klarälvens Järnvägar, NklJ, was held on Sunday, September 22 in beautiful late summer heat. Among the starting participants were three Vasaloppet veterans who all completed the race; 926 Leif Andersson, Loos IF, who skied 90 km in 4:35; 502 Anders Karlén, Norberg, also 90 km at 5:09 and our club chairman 730 Lennarth Larsson, skiing 60 km in 3:42.

Annual Meeting in Mora Parken

The annual meeting 2019-09-07 mostly followed the same procedure as previous years but with more time for members to socialize between scheduled events. Outdoors activities were therefore limited to the traditional group photo at Mora Parken while quiz walks, team darts and so on were left out. As in many previous years the meeting was opened by the blowing of a birch-bark horn by well-known Vasaloppet veteran no. 75, John-Erik Eggens, after which a short memorial with words for the veterans who have left us this past year.

140 members participated

The chairman, Vasaloppet veteran 730 Lennarth Larsson, then welcomed the 140 or so members and on the recommendation of the election committee Bengt Jernhall, former chairman of the Mora municipal council for many years and present chairman of Mora's Culture and Recreation committee, was elected chairman of the meeting while Vasaloppet Veteran 305 Arne Sundquist was elected meeting secretary. Most formalities (call to order, agenda, electoral register, attestants, elections, etc.) were handled swiftly with unanimous support from those present. Our chairman Lennart Larsson accounted for the activity plan for the upcoming year and Mats Rylander from Vasaloppet gave brief information on the club's economy where the budget for this coming year was accounted as 295,000 SEK. The board, of which every member was present, was discharged from liability for the past year and Lennart Larsson was re-elected as chairman for the upcoming year. The previous election committee was re-elected with Vasaloppet veteran 158 Erik-Åke Transberg as chairman and convener.

The "Vasaloppet Veteran of the Year" award was presented to Vasaloppet veteran 250 Håkan Mossberg, Kopparbergs IF; see special feature here in the newsletter. Finally it was decided that the next annual meeting would be held **Saturday, September 5, 2020**. For further details on the annual meeting, see the annual meeting protocol as published on our website.

After the formal annual meeting concluded Veteran diplomas were distributed, as were 40 and 50-race medals with photos after which Vasaloppet icon Mattias Svahn, "Vasa-Svahn" took the stage to give a talk about his own experiences both on the recreational and elite level. Included in this very entertaining performance were tales and anecdotes from his many ski races. Mattias reached tremendous success as a cross-country skier with three wins in Engelbrektsloppet, one win in Skinnarloppet, two fourth places in Vasaloppet, and more. Mattias gave advice on training for cross-country skiing, advocating well-rounded training with roller skiing, Nordic walking/rowing or other arm-focused exercise and pure strength training in addition to running or cycling.

Dinner and entertainment

Later in the evening a well-composed dinner was served, Vasaloppet's CEO Eva-Lena Frick held an exhilarating speech, there was a lottery with prizes and the café stage welcomed Billy Opel, local talent from Mora who, with wonderful drive, performed an almost hour-long and highly praised one-man show with lyrics set to very competent guitar playing. The evening concluded with dancing to the No Man Band orchestra who quickly filled the dance floor.

Vasaloppet Veteran of the Year

The Vasaloppet Veteran of the Year committee decided that this year the honour should be awarded Vasaloppet veteran 250 Håkan Mossberg, Kopparbergs IF. Håkan, who started Vasaloppet skiing in 1969 became a Vasaloppet veteran in 1999 and completed his fiftieth Vasaloppet this year. The committee chairman Birger Fält gave a broad presentation of Håkan who, besides his fifty Vasaloppet races, has also completed all forty-one Stockholm Marathons, an achievement shared with only eight other people. Furthermore Håkan has been active in orienteering, competing in over fifty different countries and also arranging many trips to Vasaloppet in Minnesota, USA. Undoubtedly a worthy winner! Håkan was thanked with a diploma, a bouquet and well-deserved and long-lasting applause for his comprehensive sporting activities, in addition to the award itself.

Vasaloppet's Summer Week

This year's Summer Week attracted about 32,000 registered cyclists and runners. The opening cycling weekend had some rain but the track held well after reparations. Many people had trouble with their gears and chains due to the rain and had to break off from the race.

Participant record

Ultravasan 90 saw a participant record with 1,118 participants getting all the way from the start in Sälen to the finish line in Mora. During the running relays digital alerts were given for the first time, which worked well. 2019 saw a record number of people completing Vasaloppstrippeln. 287 participants (219 men, 79 women) managed three 90-kilometre races over the year while 166 participants (56 men, 110 women) skied, cycled and ran 45 kilometres. The Summer Week ending means that we can look back at a successful Vasaloppet year. Over 95,000 people in total registered for one of Vasaloppet's many races and about 80,000 reached the finish line.

One iconic skier who reached the finish was Vasaloppet veteran 276 Gunnar Olsson, Stora Tuna IF, who biked Cykelvasan 90 Öppet Spår for the 5th time. There was rain at the start and up until Mångsbodarna but at Risberg it dried up and the weather improved. Gunnar finished with a time of 4.35. In five cycling races he has had times between 4.19 and 4.45 – amazing! Gunnar will soon turn 81 and has also completed 49 Vasaloppet!

Among other veterans were married couple 883 Margareta Östensson Lindblom and 948 Sören Lindblom, now completing Vasaloppstrippeln 45. Margareta also completed Vasaloppstrippeln 90 last year.

Torsby trip with about 30 veterans

About thirty veterans and some companions started the winter season by testing their skis in Toby's ski tunnel on September 6. Many took the bus from Mora, others joined up on location in Torsby.

The bus from Mora stopped for a snack at Lisskogsåsen, a place that once served as a drinks checkpoint in the traditional Skinnarloppet.

In Torsby additional veterans met up, among others the Veteran Club chairman Lennart Larsson and veteran 256 Sune Persson, SK Bore Torsby, who completed his 50th Vasaloppet this past winter. The oldest to try his skis in the tunnel was 145 Hadar Davidsson, Borås, turning 92 in November. The youngest veteran, 48-year-old Magnus Darin, Härlövs IF, living in Fjälkinge, Skåne, was also there. Madshus had service staff in place, helping people try skis appropriate for the tunnel and offering hefty discounts to those who happened to be interested in a purchase.

Lecture about training, past and present

After lunch Råland Strind held an interesting lecture about training, then and now, with lots of information about how elite skiers have trained in different ways; knowledge gathered during many years directing activities at the "training laboratory" in Torsby, one of the five foremost in the country.

Discounted prices for Vasaloppet Veterans during the Vasaloppet Week 2020

(skiers who have completed Vasaloppet and/or Öppet Spår 30 years)

Registration for Vasaloppet must be completed before December 31, 2019. Vasaloppet has 300 spots reserved for Vasaloppet Veterans in Vasaloppet 2020. If you know you're participating, early registration is advised.

Registration

Veterans can register in three different ways. Registration is personal and cannot be transferred to anyone else.

1. Go to www.vasaloppet.se and then Registration/My pages. Sign in with your account, choose your race, follow the instructions and when you are asked for a coupon code, use the code: **VETERANKOD-2020**. Complete the payment using your card or internet bank (this code can also be used for Öppet Spår Monday, giving you a free start).
2. Register by paying the fee to **pg 1922-4**, Vasaloppsföreningen Sälen-Mora. Specify the race you're participating in, your name, personal identity number and club.
3. When registering for a free race (your 31st, 41st and 50th and beyond) register by emailing info@vasaloppet.se with the same information as above, or call **+46250-392 00** and choose Vasaloppet.

Registration fees for veterans in Vasaloppet's Winter Week 2020

Kortvasan 21/2	310 SEK
Tjevvasan 22/2	430 SEK

Öppet Spår Sunday 23/2	645 SEK
Öppet Spår Monday 24/2	Free start
Halvvasan 25/2	410 SEK
Vasaloppet 1/3	895 SEK

Free starts

New veterans start their 31st race completely free. Those who have skied their 40th race can start for free in Vasaloppet 1/3 or Öppet Spår Sunday 23/2. The 50th race is also free and when you have skied 50 races you start free in all races moving forward.

Startklar insurance

You can buy insurance coverage in connection with your registration. The basic insurance is called Folksams Motionslopps-försäkring bas. It insures you against illness and accident and it costs 155 SEK per year. The larger Folksams Motionslopps-försäkring stor costs 275 SEK. If a doctor's note is provided to Folksam they will refund your registration fee if you are unable to start the race.

Stafettvasan 2020

Winter comes sooner or later and, with it, Stafettvasan 2020! The Veteran Club has for years participated with two relay teams and hope to do so again in March 2020!

Take the opportunity to get in touch if you are interested in participating in either team; four or five registrations have already come in but there's still time for those interested to get in touch with arne.sundquist@orsalheden.se or via +4670 527 79 28. It's "first come, first serve" as always and first-time participants have priority.