

# News from Vasaloppet's Veteran Club

October | 2023 | Number 4

## Heading into a new winter season on skis

After a wet August, we had a few warm weeks in the first part of September before it turned cloudy, and we entered the autumn darkness. These coming two months are usually a somewhat challenging time of year before the snow arrives and brightens up the landscape.

Is there anything more satisfying than taking a shower and sitting down for a well-deserved break after a rigorous training session? Probably not, as us Vasaloppet veterans know!

## Lassalyckan 2024-01-19–20

Please reserve January 19–20, 2024, for an early Vasaloppet warm-up. We're planning an event that gives Vasaloppet veterans the opportunity to ski and stay overnight at Lassalyckan in Ulricehamn.

We're hoping for fine skiing conditions and we will invite a guest speaker or offer activities on the track with subsequent relaxation and dinner. In collaboration with our new regional representative, Börje Enander, we are currently finalizing the programme and we will provide an invitation at the beginning of December.

## Annual Meeting September 2, 2023

Since Mora Parken was fully booked by a group of gymnasts from various parts of Sweden this year, the annual meeting was held at Mora Folk High School on the west side of Saxviken. We all adjusted well to this year's rearrangement, and the reception of approximately one hundred Vasaloppet veterans went smoothly with the help of Vasaloppet's employees Anita Holknekt Andersson and Gerd Källbäck.

Vasaloppet veteran 76 John-Erik Eggen started the annual meeting in the traditional way by the blowing of a birch trumpet. Our sitting chairman, 730 Lennarth Larsson, welcomed everyone, gave a brief retrospective of the past year's activities, encouraged the attendees to sign the attendance book, and reminded them of the candle lit in memory of the Vasaloppet veterans who passed away during the year. Following this, John-Erik played the piece "Koppången" on his guitar.

Chairman Lennarth Larsson presented the activity report for the past year, briefly introduced the members of the current board, mentioned the agreement with Vasaloppet that was signed for the 2022–2025 period and the opportunity for Vasaloppet veterans to participate at no cost with three relay teams in Stafettvasan. He talked about the review of instructions for regional representatives this past year, the adoption of a policy regarding participation in all competitions organized by Vasaloppet, which should be undertaken with discretion about one's own ability, and described how the range of veteran's clothes has been streamlined to a minimum.

Since the membership fee has remained unchanged at 200 SEK since 2014, it was decided, considering the inflation this past decade, to raise the membership fee to 250 SEK per year. The board was discharged any liability for the past financial year. In accordance with the nomination committee's proposal, the following elections took place: 730 Lennarth Larsson was re-elected for one more year, 557 Tommy Bogg and 819 Bo Wallin were re-elected for another two-year term

from 2023 to 2025, and 839 Torleif Bakke was newly elected for the same period. It was also decided to appoint 305 Arne Sundquist as an adjunct board member and secretary for 2023–2024. The two members of the nomination committee, 88 Per Nilsson and 128 Ingvar Hanses, who both recently turned 90 years old, had declined re-election. They were replaced in the nomination committee by 906 Gudrun Hedlund and 926 Leif Andersson.

It was decided, based on the nomination committee's proposal, to appoint the following individuals as regional representatives for the period 2023–2024:

Region 1 (counties Y, Z, AC and BD)	445 Sören Sundström
Region 2 (counties W and X)	357 Erik Troeng
Region 3 (counties D, E, S, T and U)	250 Håkan Mossberg
Region 4 (county O, east/south part)	407 Börje Enander
Region 4 (county O west/north part)	1111 Anders Sörenson
Region 5 (counties AB and C):	989 Birger Fält
Region 6 (counties F, G, H, I, K, M and N)	307 Folke Sjöberg
International veterans	305 Arne Sundquist

The committee for the "Veteran of the Year" award decided to honour Norwegian brothers Arvid and Bent Galborgsen with this title. Committee member Tore Södersten introduced both brothers and interviewed them about their experiences completing fifty Vasaloppet races each. Both of them were overwhelmed by the award.

Next year's annual meeting will be held on **Saturday, September 7, 2024.**

Following the formal part of the annual meeting, new Vasaloppet veterans, and those who completed 40 and 50 races, received diplomas and had their photos taken. Afterwards, former world champion Torgny Mogren delivered a 45-minute entertaining presentation about his numerous races, including his victory in the 50 km at the 1993 World Championships in Falun.

Image Caption: Photos from the annual meeting and the quiz walk.

## **Membership Fee 2023/2024**

At the annual meeting on September 3, 2023, it was decided to raise the membership fee to 250 SEK per year. Membership invoices have already been sent out. Unfortunately, there are two bank giro numbers on the invoices. We kindly request that you use the top one, 5325-1286 Ping Payments, a payment service via Svenskallag, for your payment. If you have already paid using bank giro number 5723-8719, that is also acceptable.

Please note that the membership fee to the Veteran Club includes additional benefits that we Vasaloppet veterans have access to through Stadium, Madshus, and all the facilities with which we have partnership agreements. Additionally, note that the membership fee is personal and should be used by Veteran Club members in a manner acceptable to all parties.

## **The Journey to Biri and Madshus on Friday, September 1, 2023**

At 06:00 AM on Friday morning, September 1, the journey began for about forty Vasaloppet veterans with companions from Mora Parken to Biri and Madshus ski factory, located north-west of Hamar.

Upon arrival in Biri, Madshus CEO Nils "Nisse" Hult gathered us and provided extensive information about the Madshus company, its inception in 1906, and its development to become one of the world's largest ski manufacturers.

Over the years, Norway has had about sixty different ski manufacturers, but acquisitions and closures have now reduced the number to the point where Madshus is almost the sole remaining manufacturer in all of Scandinavia. Madshus is an independent joint-stock company whose majority owner for many years has been the American company K2 Sports.

After the introductory information, we were divided into smaller groups with guides who led us through the factory. Around a hundred employees in production, administration, and sales produce approximately 90,000 pairs of skis per year. Today's skis can be customized to each skier's unique characteristics in terms of stiffness and camber. It's worth noting that two Vasaloppet winners, each with three victories, Jörgen Brink and John-Kristian Dahl, have remained loyal to the Madshus brand. They are also honorary members of the Vasaloppet Veterans Club.

After the tour and a concluding summary, Madshus hosted a lunch for the entire group in the company's employee cafeteria before it was time to return home.

## **Introducing Vasaloppet Veteran 839 Torleif Bakke**

During the annual meeting on September 2, 62-year-old Vasaloppet veteran 839 Torleif Bakke was elected as a new member of the board for the period 2023–2025. Torleif has a diverse background, having served as an officer at the Norrland Artillery Regiment A4 in Östersund, graduating from the Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences GIH, and completing school leadership training at Örebro and Uppsala universities.

Since 2017, Torleif has been the recreation director in Ljusdal municipality. Despite his extensive skiing experience with twenty-one Vasaloppet races and thirteen Öppet Spår races, Torleif has decided not to participate in any more Vasaloppet or Öppet Spår 90 km races. He explains, "In 2018, I suffered a heart attack and underwent an operation with balloon angioplasty. This led to my decision to wrap things up with precisely 34 so-called medal years. Despite almost making a full recovery, I still experience a bit of arrhythmia, which limits me to lighter training and exercise on a bicycle, skis, and long walks. My most recent race was Vasaloppet 10 km in 2023. It's just as fun; you're still part of it and you get to cross the finish line! My advice to all veterans is to train and participate sensibly according to your own abilities. Find the race that suits you best, preferably within the Vasaloppet Arena."

## **Introducing Vasaloppet Veteran 407 Börje Enander**

Vasaloppet Veteran 407 Börje Enander, who is taking on the role of regional representative for the southern part of Västra Götaland County, is 71 years old and completed his first Vasaloppet in 1973. Börje has been highly successful in the Vasaloppet tracks, achieving times and placements that most Vasaloppet veterans envy. He has finished 63rd and 73rd and completed the race in an impressive 4

hours and 21 minutes in 1979. These are truly remarkable accomplishments! Börje has completed a total of forty-eight races between Sälen and Mora, with forty-five of them completed consecutively. He aims to reach fifty races.

Börje has a deep interest in sports and has been active in Ulricehamns IF, both on the board and as a sponsor representative. Ulricehamns Ski Center is the most comprehensive cross-country skiing facility in southern Sweden and has hosted World Cup events in 2017, 2019, and 2021.

## **New regional division in Västra Götaland County**

Västra Götaland County is relatively large in terms of area and the second most populous county in Sweden after Stockholm County. As such, there are a significant number of Vasaloppet veterans within the county. The question of whether to divide Västra Götaland County into two regions was raised at the previous annual meeting and has now been implemented through a decision at the meeting on September 2. The county is divided into an eastern/southern region and a western/northern region. The eastern/southern region includes the entire former Skaraborg County and the southern part of the old Älvsborg County, while the northern region consists of the entire former Gothenburg and Bohus County, along with the northern part of the old Älvsborg County.

The former regional representative, 642 Roland Olsson, had previously expressed a desire to step down, and at the annual meeting, he was honoured for his contributions over the years with applause and a bouquet of flowers. To replace him as regional representatives, Börje Enander takes over the southern part, and Anders Sörensson takes over the northern part.

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Gällö Ski Tunnel has recently obtained new management that is now promoting its facility. As Vasaloppet veterans, we have an agreement with them that is valid until December 31, 2025. Feel free to visit their website to see their offers! [www.midsweden365.se](http://www.midsweden365.se)

## **Open call for Stafettvasan 2024!**

Next year's Stafettvasan is scheduled for Friday, March 1, and just like last year, we Vasaloppet veterans can field three teams at no cost, including one women's team. We hope to do the same in 2024.

Stafettvasan is a suitable challenge for those Vasaloppet veterans who have grown older and no longer want to ski 90 km. However, if you are young, energetic, in good shape for longer distances, and eager to participate, you are also welcome to join a team! The two longest stretches are Sälen – Mångsbodarna and Mångsbodarna – Evertsberg, 24 km each.

Please contact us in good time as "first come, first served" applies here, even though it has been customary that first-time participants have priority over those who have previously skied Stafettvasan. You can email [arne.sundquist@orsalheden.se](mailto:arne.sundquist@orsalheden.se) or call for a brief chat at +4670 – 527 79 28.

## Introducing Vasaloppet Veteran 1111 Sörensson

At the annual meeting on September 2, Vasaloppet Veteran 1111 Anders Sörensson was appointed as the regional representative for the western/northern part of Västra Götaland County. Anders, who turns 50 this year, resides in Munkedal in northern Bohuslän and competes for Team Sweden. He is a relatively new Vasaloppet veteran, having completed his thirtieth Vasaloppet in 2022.

Anders has been a top performer in the Vasaloppet tracks; he has frequently been in the elite group and has been a top 200 finisher 26 times out of 32 races. "When I skied my 30th Vasaloppet in 2021, I became the youngest Vasaloppet veteran ever and also set a personal record with a time of 3:56," says Anders. "The following year, I had the opportunity to ski in Jubileumsvasan with period-appropriate equipment. An incredible experience and a memory I will carry with me for the rest of my life."

Anders concludes his introduction with, "It will be a lot of fun to help as the regional representative for the Veteran Club in the western/northern part of Västra Götaland County."

Image Caption: Vasaloppet Veteran 1111 Anders Sörensson takes a food break at Jubileumsvasan in 2022

## Introducing Vasaloppet Veteran 357 Erik Troeng

At the annual meeting on September 2, Vasaloppet Veteran 357 Erik Troeng was appointed as the regional representative for Dalarna and Gävleborg County, taking over from Torleif Bakke, who is joining the board. Erik, 77 years old, grew up in both Säter and Insjön. In 1970, he did his military service at Dalregementet, I 13, and developed a taste for the noble sport of cross-country skiing, completing his first Vasaloppet that year.

He became a veteran in 2002, and body and mind permitting he hopes to reach his fiftieth race in 2024. In terms of his professional life, Erik worked as a researcher at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), where he earned his Ph.D. in forest ecology with a dissertation on pine tree carbon balance in 1981. After several more years as a research leader at SLU, he left the academic world and worked as a high school teacher in biology and chemistry from 1991 until his retirement in 2013, first in Hedemora and then in Sandviken.

## Membership benefits and discounts

**Stadium:** Vasaloppet's partner Stadium offers, as in previous years, a generous discount to members of Vasaloppet's Veterans Club. The offer provides a **30% discount** on one (1) entire purchase and is valid throughout Vasaloppet's Winter Week at Stadium's temporary stores in Sälen and Mora. **NOTE! The new arrangement simplifies the previous system of personalized discounts, and the 30% discount now applies to all Vasaloppet veterans regardless of the number of "Vasaloppet years" completed!** Please note that the 30% discount is personal and may not be used by anyone who is not a member of Vasaloppet's Veteran Club. The discount conditions apply to regular prices and package deals but not to already discounted products. Misuse of our discount may result in its removal in the future. If you have any questions regarding the discount, please contact Mats Rylander or Gun-Britt Cristofersson at Vasaloppet in Mora.

**Frösö Park:** 15% off standard prices for accommodation including breakfast for members and companions in the same room/cabin, applicable at any time of year. Cannot be combined with other discounts.

**Gällö Ski Tunnel:** 30% off standard prices (both one-day and multi-day cards) for skiing in the tunnel. 20% off standard prices for accommodation in the holiday village.

**Orsa Grönklitt:** 10% off standard accommodation prices for members and companions in the same room/cabin (though not during high season weeks such as Christmas/New Year, sports holidays, Easter and more). Cannot be combined with other discounts.

**Mora Parken:** 10% off standard accommodation prices (though not during high season weeks such as Christmas/New Year, sports holidays, Easter and more). Booking of accommodation should be completed well in advance of arrival at Mora Parken via telephone at +46250-276 00, with reference to your membership. Applicable for members and companions in the same room/cabin. Cannot be combined with other discounts or offers from Mora Parken.

**Högbo Brukshotell and Högbo Bruk:** 20% discount off standard accommodation prices including breakfast buffet during low season for members and companions in the same room. Cannot be combined with other discounts. 30% discount off standard prices for skiing in the artificially frozen ski tracks, when fees apply. This discount applies in addition to other discounts (groups, pensioners etc.) that might be applicable.

**Torsby Skidtunnel & Sportcenter:** 30% discount off standard prices (one-day and multi-day cards) for skiing in the ski tunnel. Cannot be combined with other discounts.

**Voksenåsen, Oslo:** 20% discount on regular accommodation prices (though not during high season weeks such as Christmas/New Year, sports holidays, Easter and more). Booking of accommodation should be completed well in advance of arrival at Voksenåsen Hotel by calling +47 22 81 15 00 or emailing [booking@voksenasen.no](mailto:booking@voksenasen.no), referring to membership in the Veteran Club. The discount is applicable to members and companions in the same room/cabin. The discount cannot be combined with other discounts or offers by Voksenåsen Hotel.

**Kalhyttans Sports & Leisure Arena, Filipstad:** 20% discount on regular prices for all track cards for skiing in Kalhyttans artificially frozen ski tracks, when fees apply. Passes can be obtained by emailing [kalhyttan@filipstad.se](mailto:kalhyttan@filipstad.se) or calling +46590-613 54, with reference to membership in the Veteran Club.

**Täby Konstsnöspår:** 15% discount off the standard price of seasonal cards. Cannot be combined with other discounts.

**Kviberg Park Hotel & Conference:** As a Vasaloppet veteran, you can sign up as a KPH Bonus Member at any time through the hotel's website and receive a 10% discount on regular accommodation prices. As a KPH Bonus Member, you also have additional benefits such as a discounted price for parking, and more. In the adjacent Serneke Skidome, you will receive a 20% discount on regular prices for single-day passes, 10-day passes, and annual passes. A one-time fee for a membership bracelet is required for 10-day passes and annual passes.

You can find more information about the different facilities on their respective websites. For all accommodation, be sure to book well in advance of your arrival. Support our partners!