

If YOU like Walking...You'll Love VOLKSSPORTS!

Volkssports? What's That?

Literally translated, volkssports means "people's sport". It all began about 30 years ago in Europe where a need was recognized for healthy, organized, non-competitive activities, suitable for people of all ages and their families. Efforts in several communities resulted in the development of local "volkssport" clubs, which sponsored events for walking, cycling, swimming, and cross-country skiing. The movement grew rapidly.



Now, across Canada, throughout the United States, and in more than 25 countries around the world, unique opportunities are available for safe, healthy exercise, without the stresses of speed and strain of endurance. A distinctive hallmark of volkssports is that all participants who successfully complete the event of their choice at their own pace, are recognized as "winners"!

To date in Canada, walking events (called volksmarches) are by far the most popular activity among volkssport club members.

Whatever is a Volksmarch?

Organized walking events in the volkssport program are called "volksmarches". They follow planned trails which are safe, scenic and circular (that is, you finish where you started). The trails are usually 10 kilometers (km) and occasionally, longer walks are offered. Volksmarches are held in all weather conditions, so long as life and limb are not at risk. Three kinds of Volksmarches are held: Annual Volksmarch Events; Guided/Map Walks, and Year-round or Seasonal events.

Annual Volksmarch Events are organized by local clubs, and are usually scheduled on weekends. Trails are marked with signs and tape and have checkpoints along the route. Generally, participants may start the walk any time between 8:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. and finish by 4:00 p.m.

Guided/Map Walks are those events where walkers meet at a specified place in order to start all at the same time. A member of the host club usually heads up the group as a guide; however, maps and route cards are sometimes offered as an alternative.

Year-round/Seasonal Events are self-guided walks enjoyable every day of the year. After registering, walkers receive a map and instructions and then proceed along the trail at their own pace.

The International Federation of Popular Sports, or the IVV (International VolkssportVerband) as it's more commonly known, was formed in 1968 to extend the promotion of the volkssports program worldwide, with the aim of contributing to peace and understanding, good health and well-being among the people of all nations by fostering friendship through volkssports.



Volkssports came to Canada in the early 1980's and has grown steadily ever since. The Canadian Volkssport Federation (CVF) was formed in 1986 and now has over 60 member clubs, plus two provincial organizations, and sponsors hundreds of volkssport events across the country each year.



Who May Take Part in Volkssports?

Volkssports are open to everyone. There are no age limits, from youngsters to seniors! Because walking is a relatively simple activity, it's safe and inexpensive form of exercise with health benefits accruing for years. Although membership in a volkssport club is not a requirement, most volkssporters choose to do so and enjoy regular participation in the friendly company of other members. Also, anyone may participate in a volkssport event free-of-charge. However, before starting an event, all participants must register and, at the finish, must return their registration card to ensure their achievement is recorded. Cycling, Swimming, and Cross-Country Skiing are also popular volkssports offered to a broad range of Canadians.

The IVV's Individual Achievement Awards Program is another popular feature of Volkssports, available internationally at low cost. Many participating volkssporters benefit from the personal incentive and satisfaction gained by qualifying for a series of IVV awards based on the number of volkssport events completed, and/or the distances they have walked, biked, swum or skied. After each event, their personal IVV record books are stamped, recognizing their participation in the event and the distance they have completed. Distance is not recorded for swimming events.

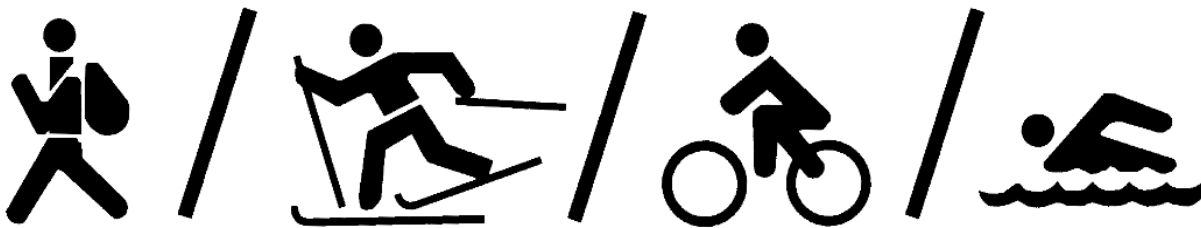


Upon achieving a required progressive level, participating volkssporters forward their record books to the CVF office in Ottawa. In return, without additional cost, they receive their well-earned awards in the form of an attractive pin and a matching embroidered cloth patch, each distinctly marking their accomplishments. There is also an optional certificate of achievement.



Some volkssporters also enjoy collecting souvenir awards of volkssport events designed by the respective host clubs. Usually these awards are either medallions, patches or pins each depicting the theme, location and date of the event.

Come and join us on a walk!



You will be welcomed as a walker or, better still, as an active member of your local volkssport club. If YOU like walking...(cycling, swimming or cross-country skiing)....You'll Love VOLKSSPORTS!