

27.03.2013. Tolstojeva 19, Belgrade

Respected Excellencies, distinguished guests! On behalf of skiers from the mountain Zlatibor I want to thank you for inviting us to participate in the celebration of 120 years of the arrival of Henrik Angel to the Balkans, who learned cross-country skiing Serbian King Petar I Karađorđević.

My name is Glisovic Milos, a chairman and one of the former contestants of the Skiing Club Zlatibor. I was taught how to ski, like many of my Zlatibor fellows were, by my grandfather, who used hand made wooden skis.

Skiing on Zlatibor was founded out of sheer need. Because of the heavy snowfall and impassable roads thoughtful Zlatibor natives from various villages began to make skis themselves and use them to move around and do village chores, like checking on the cattle, carrying food to the mountain ... In literature, we find data supporting the fact that skis were initially used during the twenties of the past century.

Blacksmith and carpenter masters were using their skills and crafts to start making ski equipment that was given to village children. The equipment was adapted for walking on skis. Bindings system was with free heels, with a spring in the middle of the ski.

Skiing, besides being useful, slowly became a favorite winter amusement activity for all generations of Zlatibor natives. In the mid-thirties of the last century, Zlatibor starts to be visited by skiing enthusiasts who come mainly from Belgrade and Uzice.

Organized skiing began in Zlatibor in 1938, when "Skiing Organization Rudine Zlatibor" was founded. Its founders, Janićije Jeremic, Milija Glišović, Drago Jeremic and Milos Mišović competed and passed on their knowledge to younger generations. Since then, along with the fate of this country and its people, the SK went through turbulent historical changes.

During the 60-ies the skiing club changed its name to "Skiing Club Janićije Jeremic" and in 2001 after being registered again under a new law, it started using its current name.

Since the mid 70-ies of the last century up to 1992, SC Zlatibor is the leader in cross country skiing and biathlon in Serbia.

Since the end of the Second World War the club has organized a great number of competitions in cross country skiing and biathlon. Among others, a very popular championship in former Yugoslavia was a Marshal Tito cup, held in each of the six Yugoslavian republics (in Zlatibor it was called Zlatibor Memorial and was regularly held until 1973), as well as Trimach of Serbia, Bosnia and Montenegro, Serbian Championship, MOSI games and School Olympics.

Many generations of students from the territory of the Municipality of Cajetina have trained and competed in the ski club. With the help of the local community and the skiing equipment manufacturers from the entire territory of former Yugoslavia, the club was able to organize cross country skiing trainings at all local schools. Village schools have chosen the most talented competitors who have successfully represented the club and Serbia at many competitions in former Yugoslavia. The popularity of this sport in that period is supported by the fact that there were between 350-700 participants at the Zlatibor Memorial races.

At that time, the greatest success at the national level, was achieved by Zlatibor competitors, who

became the state champions two consecutive times, in 1975 and 1976, in Dražgoše, in Slovenia.

During the 1990-ies, because of the general chaos created in this part of the Balkans, club activities were suspended, until the re-registration of the club by its former club members in 2001.

The club is now a member of the National Branch Sports Association, Serbian Skiing Association and Biathlon Association of Serbia and through the Municipal Sports Association it is an indirect member of the Sports Association of Serbia. Our members are active participants in the work of these organizations through the IO SSS, the presidency of Biathlon Association and the Nordic Committee. One of our members is also a member of the Board of FIS, for the regulations and financial control.

Since 2002, two of our coaches are active coaches of national team of Serbia, and in the period from 2003 to 2007 one of our coaches was training the women's biathlon team.

Currently, the club has about 80 members, 30 of which are active competitors, and the rest are professional staff, amateurs and fans of cross country skiing. The club has a referee section, with more than 20 of our members being certified referees.

Club activities regularly take place with the great enthusiasm of coaches, former cross country skiers, fans and the help of Tourist Organization of Zlatibor and the Municipality of Cajetina.

Winter activities are taking place every day in the central part of Zlatibor, in an area called Tić Polje, where in 2009 we have been able to homologized FIS cross country skiing tracks of various lengths (1.2, 1.5, 2.5, 3.3, and 5 km). At a location 20 km from the center of Zlatibor, in Murtenica, there is a backup track for cross country skiing and biathlon, where snow does not melt for a long time.

During this season, with the help of good people, we were able to fix a very old snowmobiles that is almost a museum piece, and to make attachments for track preparation for skate and classic techniques. With the help of sponsors, we regularly maintained the track in Tic Polje, and after nearly 25 years a 10km track for the classical technique in Murtenica.

Activities and trainings are conducted throughout the entire year. In the period without snow, members are engaged in cycling, rollerblading, jogging, hiking, exercising on machines, etc.

Club organizes international races such as the FIS races Balkans Cup, which can be regularly found in the FIS calendar, national championships, Zlatibor Cup, Christmas night sprint race.

Since 2001 the club has trained more than 200 active athletes who have competed at various competitions in the categories of Ciciban to seniors and veterans.

Club members represent Serbia in the national team for cross country skiing and biathlon.

Our biggest success is the participation in the Winter Olympics of 2006 in Torino, Italy. The contestants also took part in competitions such as World Championships, Winter University Competitions, Europe

Youth Festival EYOF, European championships and cups, Balkan Championships and FIS races.

We regularly participate in competitions of national and regional characters.

Since 2001 our members have won more than 600 medals and the club is a multiple team champion of Serbia.

Our goal is the promotion and popularization of cross country skiing in Serbia. We wish for the Zlatibor hills to once again be traced in the winter with children`s ski prints and for the ski club to function on the principles of harmonious relationship between children, parents and the community. Every child on the entire territory of Zlatibor should have a chance to learn and practice cross country skiing.

Zlatibor is becoming a ski resort and its activities are based primarily on the capacities of its people, using successful examples from around the world.

We wish to enable children who have ambitions to compete to have the proper equipment and conditions in order to achieve the best possible results and to prevent our competitors from being forced to take breaks from their careers, exactly when they start achieving the best results, because of financial difficulties. Our intention is to establish a continuous education of our coaches.

With the help of our own well-equipped and well-trained referee personnel and friends of the club, who have been irreplaceable support, we would like to continue regularly organizing competitions of both national and international character.

We look forward to the support of the Tourist Organization of Zlatibor, to help us permanently solve a problem of not having adequate club head office and other necessary space, which we have never had before.

We see cross country skiing as a compulsory part of physical education in schools, which fits into the strategy of MOS. We would like to engage women, as an example of under-represented groups, to practice a healthy habit and thus make cross country skiing an integral part of life.

Together with the Municipality of Cajetina and the representatives of other related sports we are making plans for the preservation and development of the nordic center Tić Polje, as a multifunctional sports center in the open, both in winter and summer. Tic Polje is an area specified by the regulatory plan for the settlement of Zlatibor for the sports purposes. The combination of Zlatibor tourist facilities and sports offers has a great potential and provides security in the implementation.

Ahead of us is the establishment of partnership with Srbija Sume (Serbia Forests) and private land owners about planning and use of forest roads for the purpose of cross country skiing in Murtenica during the winter period. It is also important to establish cooperation with Srbija Sume and Skijalista Srbije (Serbian ski tracks) about the construction of tracks for cross country skiing on the ski center Tornik, which possesses good capacities to support these activities.

This admission, together with recent numerous activities of our friends, skiers from Norway, have given us additional positive energy and belief that we are on the right track in the further development of cross country skiing in Serbia.

And finally, as Milos Nišavić has written in his book "Skiing", in 1965:  
"Skiing is a phenomenon. It should be experienced and everyone does it their own way".

I invite you to come to Zlatibor, so we can enjoy cross country skiing together!