

= Birkebeineren Ski Stadium =

Birkebeineren Ski Stadium (Norwegian : Birkebeineren skistadion) is a cross @-@ country skiing and biathlon venue located in Lillehammer , Norway . Situated 3 kilometers (2 mi) from the town center and at 485 meters (1 @,@ 591 ft) above mean sea level , it has two stadium areas , one for cross @-@ country and one for biathlon . The former has a capacity for 31 @,@ 000 spectators , and the latter for 13 @,@ 500 . The venue was built for the 1994 Winter Olympics , costing 83 @.@ 6 million Norwegian krone (NOK) . It was subsequently used by the 1994 Winter Paralympics for Paralympic Nordic skiing and Paralympic biathlon . After the games , ownership was transferred to the municipal Lillehammer Olympiapark . The venue has since been used for one Biathlon World Cup , three FIS Cross @-@ Country World Cup and nine FIS Nordic Combined World Cup tournaments , the latter with the ski jumping competition taking place at the nearby Lysgårdsbakkene Ski Jumping Arena . Birkebeineren is scheduled to host the 2016 Winter Youth Olympics .

= = Construction = =

The location of the venue was decided in January 1990 , following Lillehammer 's successful bid to host the 1994 Winter Olympics . Construction was managed by the Lillehammer Olympic Organizing Committee (LOOC) . Architects were 2Ø Arkitekter and the main consultant was Tønning & Lieng . Construction started in early 1991 , before planning was completed , and lasted until 1993 . The construction work was subcontracted to several companies . Landscaping was completed in 1994 . The facilities used concrete and wood as the main materials . The stadium included 3 @,@ 000 @-@ square @-@ meter (32 @,@ 000 sq ft) of temporary buildings , a 1 @,@ 620 @-@ square @-@ meter (17 @,@ 400 sq ft) building converted to a riding center after the Olympics , and a 3 @,@ 200 @-@ square @-@ meter (34 @,@ 000 sq ft) tent . The land around the venue is a swamp , and most of the surface soil had to be removed and replaced with harder earth . The soil was used as fertilizer or fill in other parts of the arena . A creek had to be bypassed with a 220 meters (720 ft) long pipe . The arena is also so flat that a drainage system had to be installed . After the Olympics , four temporary overpasses were removed . Construction of the tracks was done to minimize the impact on the forest .

The venue cost NOK 83 @.@ 6 million , and was inaugurated on 28 November 1992 with an international biathlon competition . In December 1992 , the LOOC stated that they wanted to upgrade the stadium spectator capacity , but that the transport systems would not allow more people . In 1993 , the stadium had World Cup tournaments in biathlon and cross @-@ country skiing as a trial before the Olympics . During several events , the computer system controlling the scoreboard and television scores collapsed . President Johan Baumann of the Norwegian Ski Federation criticized the venue and demanded that a new stadium be built . He stated that the stadium had been built to optimize television pictures , and that it had insufficient facilities for the spectators . In particular , he criticized the fact that the spectators were too far away from the skiers and the lack of a television screen and more scoreboards . In May , the LOOC announced that the stadium would be expanded for another 6 @,@ 000 people before the Olympics . On 7 September , the ownership of the venue was transferred from the LOOC to Lillehammer Municipality via the subsidiary Lillehammer Olympiavekst , which later changed its name to Lillehammer Olympiapark . In October , the forest along the tracks were partially cleared to allow spectators without tickets to watch the events .

= = Facilities = =

The arena covers an area of 200 hectares (490 acres) , and is 3 kilometers (2 mi) from the town center . For the Olympics , 27 kilometers (17 mi) of cross @-@ country tracks and 9 kilometers (5 @.@ 6 mi) of biathlon tracks were built . There are two stadiums , one for cross @-@ country skiing and one for biathlon . The former has a spectator capacity for 31 @,@ 000 , while the latter has a

capacity for 13 @, @ 500 . In addition , up to 75 @, @ 000 people watched the events the trackside during the Olympics . Permanent buildings include a 214 @-@ square @-@ meter (2 @, @ 300 sq ft) finishing house for biathlon , a 155 @-@ square @-@ meter (1 @, @ 670 sq ft) finishing house for cross @-@ country , a 355 @-@ square @-@ meter (3 @, @ 820 sq ft) plant room . The cross @-@ country stadium is 200 square meters (2 @, @ 200 sq ft) long , while the biathlon stadium is 150 square meters (1 @, @ 600 sq ft) long . The biathlon stadium has 30 shooting stations . The facility has a 1 @, @ 250 kVA transformer , with an additional transformer used during the Olympics . Critical systems , such as computers and time @-@ keeping equipment , have an uninterruptible power supply .

As a recreational venue , Birkebeineren connects to 450 kilometers (280 mi) of skiing tracks , including a 5 kilometers (3 mi) lighted track which is lit until 22 : 00 every day during winter , and is open to the public . During the summer , the tracks are available for jogging , running , roller skiing and similar activities . There is a café between the two stadiums , which also have dressing rooms and showers . The biathlon venue can be rented to hold private biathlon competition , with or without skis .

The dominant means of transport during the Olympics was by railway . Spectators heading to Birkebeineren were transported by train to Hovemoen Station on the Dovre Line , and would then be transported by shuttle bus to the stadium . In addition , spectators from certain areas were transported by bus directly to the stadium .

= = Events = =

During the 1994 Winter Olympics , the venue hosted ten cross @-@ country skiing events , six biathlon events and two Nordic combined events . Over 203 @, @ 000 people applied for the 31 @, @ 000 seats for the relay . During the 1994 Winter Paralympics , the venue hosted the Paralympic Nordic skiing events and Paralympic biathlon .

The FIS Cross @-@ Country World Cup has been hosted three times , in 1993 , 2000 and 2002 , all in February or March . The FIS Nordic Combined World Cup has been hosted seven times at the stadium , in 1998 , 2000 , 2003 , 2005 , 2006 , 2009 and 2010 . All tournaments have been held in December , and have seen the ski jumping competition hosted at Lysgårdsbakken , the Olympic ski jumping hill in Lillehammer . Birkebeineren hosted Biathlon World Cup events from 1993 to 1997 . The stadium has also since 1992 been used as the goal area for Birkebeinerrennet , an annual ski marathon with thousands of participants . It has also hosted the Norwegian Nordic Ski Championships in 1993 . Lillehammer is scheduled to host the 2016 Winter Youth Olympics . Birkebeineren will host cross @-@ country , Nordic combined and biathlon events .

= = Results = =

The following is a list of all Winter Olympics and World Cup events to be held at the stadium . It includes date , sport (cross @-@ country skiing , Nordic combined or biathlon) , tournament , distance , and top three athletes (gold , silver and bronze) .