

EDITORIAL

45TH EFNS ENDS SUCCESSFULLY

Following Croatia's selection four years ago to host the 45th European Foresters' Competition in Nordic Skiing (EFNS), the event was held from February 17 to 23, 2013, in the area of Delnice and Mrkopalj. The competition was sponsored by the Government of the Republic of Croatia and organized by the company Hrvatske Šume Ltd. The original plan to prepare the venue Zagmajna above Mrkopalj had been abandoned due to lack of interest of the local community as a partner and the impossibility to ensure artificial snow. An alternative venue that provided the greatest certainty of natural snow was Vrbovska Poljana above Begovo Razdoblje (this area has been used as a reserve variant for skiing competition for years). Activities to prepare the venue for the competition were launched two years ago.

Owing to the dedicated work of the employees of Hrvatske Šume Ltd and expertise of the foresters from Gorski Kotar, all the work, including the widening of the forest road and parking areas, preparing the competition polygon with the shooting lanes, and arranging the skiing tracks and the accompanying facilities was accomplished at the highest possible level.

In accordance with the programme of the first and fourth day of the event, the meeting of the European foresters began with seven specialist excursions to the adjacent areas containing specific professional, cultural and tourist contents. The event was rounded off with two specialist lectures, evening debates and the competition itself. The extent with which we as a host have managed to present our forests, forestry and forestry profession, as well as our country as

an attractive tourist destination, is best illustrated by oral and written commendations of all the participants, who consider this as one of the best organized EFNS meetings.

For the majority of about 600 participants from 21 European countries this was the first visit to Croatia. The impressions they gained, however, prompted most of them to announce a family visit to Croatia in the near future. The weekly stay of the participants in the area of Gorski Kotar also provided the local population with some financial benefits through board and lodgings, catering services and economic and tourist offer. Namely, all travelling, accommodation, food, excursions, competition and insurance costs were covered by every team themselves in the amount calculated by the host, while extra expenditures that were made depended on individual wishes and offer by the hosts.

The 45th meeting of European foresters ended with a closing ceremony and announcements of the competition results, gala dinner, socializing and passing the EFNS flat to the Finnish representatives, hosts to the 46th EFNS in March 2014.

All these events received positive coverage by paper and electronic media; yet, there were also those who gave sensationalist, malevolent and untrue comments aimed at denigrating the company Hrvatske Šume Ltd.

In the end, we would like to remind the readers of the sometimes forgotten fact that the participation of the Croatian team in the EFNS has since the beginning been organized and even financially supported by the Croatian Forestry Association.

Editorial Board