

WINTER TRIATHLON

Some will remember the pictures in French Triathlete Magazine, that appeared beginning of the 1980ies. Mark Allen in pointed cap, winter equipment and with cross-country skis. Classic cross-country skis in those days! His face expressed a mixture of doubts and fear – and the picture was taken at the startline of a multisport event in winter!

Cross-country skiing was discovered by triathletes - as alternative in the daily training for triathletes – a bit like duathlon. Events – winter triathlons – were staged, but remained in complete anonymity.

1997 saw the official birth of winter triathlon as serious sport, when ETU's Secretary General in those days, Erika König-Zenz, organised the first European Winter Triathlon Cup series, helped to organise the first **World Championships** in **Mals/ITA**, 1997 (the race was at the same time final of the European Cup) and developed rules and regulations with the Technical Committee and with the input from athletes and organisers. **European Winter Triathlon Championships** followed in **1998**.



Winter Triathlon has, same as the duathlon, attracted a different kind of athletes – no triathletes but cross-country-skiers!

Today the wish to become an Olympic sport is great, but the IOC has refused the promotion of the sport onto the Winter Olympic Games until and including 2014. The sport self has still to go a long way to grow and prosper. In the moment, winter triathlon is almost 100% “European”. The basis is very thin, the number of international athletes is very low. The enthusiasm is great, the work ahead also.