

## 1996 EVENT

**The Course** (*Loops of Sun Valley*). It was planned for this year that all courses would start in the Nordic Bowl and do a 7 km loop into Sun Valley. On returning from Sun Valley the Joeys would turn off for the finish at the Dam Wall while the Kangaroo Hoppet and Birkebeiner competitors would cross the wall, either on top or via the bench on the south side (water side) of wall. Another 14km loop would be skied in the Watchbed Creek, Park and Heathy Spur areas to make up the first 21km. The final 21km would be around the lake as in previous years. **This is what is now called 'The Full Course'**. At 4 a.m. on the morning of the race, the course was in good condition. At 6 a.m. a wind of over 100 kph from the south east sprang up. Organisers selected a sheltered course to include — Sun Valley, Falls Creek Aqueduct, Aitkens Trail, the Pipeline Track and the lower part of McKay Road and delayed the start by 1 hour. The Kangaroo Hoppet skiers did four loops, Birkebeiner skiers did two and Joeys one loop.

**Weather & Snow Conditions** The weather was atrocious. Very high winds and low temperatures. Plenty of snow.

**Entries** 1,604 entries, but many failed to start or turned back quickly because of the wind.

**Other** The leading man, Muhlegg (GER) did not ski through the finish line but started out on an extra loop. The Jury awarded the win to Muhlegg as it was decided that he had been directed on this extra loop by an official. An appeal went all the way to FIS before the Jury decision was upheld. *Southern Hydro Half-Way Sprint* winners: Men - Anthony Evans (AUS), Women – Hanne Lahtinen (FIN). The Kangaroo Hoppet was the final race in the inaugural *FIS Continental Cup*. Winners were Anthony Evans (AUS) and Hanne Lahtinen (FIN).

**Technical Delegate (TD)** Carl Melvey (AUS-NSW)

**Assistant TD** Brian Keeble (AUS-VIC)

Winners & Best Australians				
	Overall		Best Australian	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
<b>Kangaroo Hoppet</b>	Johann Muehlegg (GER)	Hanne Lahtinen (FIN)	Paul Gray (6th)	Kerryn Rim (2nd)
<b>Birkebeiner</b>	Michael Brennan (AUS)	Belinda Phillips (AUS)	Michael Brennan (1st)	Belinda Phillips (1st)
<b>Joey Hoppet</b>	Paul Murray (AUS)	Kate Spiller (AUS)	Paul Murray (1st)	Kate Spiller (1st)