



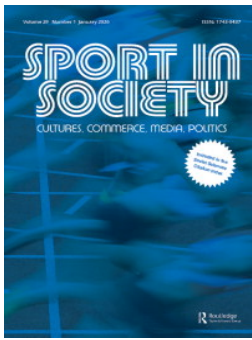
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Insiders, outsiders and allies: Inga Löwdin and the promotion of women's international XC skiing, 1946–1960

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ABSTRACT

This article traces the pivotal role of Swedish skier Inga Löwdin and her colleagues in institutionalising women's XC skiing in the mid-twentieth century, in particular the strategic work within the male-dominated International Ski Federation (FIS) to advance women's inclusion in World Championships and Olympic Games. The article highlights Löwdin's use of 'proximal authority' and collective female networks to navigate gendered barriers, contrasting her role with male 'bohemian' outsiders who challenged norms through individual action. It also sheds light on tensions between different strategies for advancing women's participation due to differing national socio-political contexts. Löwdin's pragmatic approach – balancing institutional conformity with strategic resistance – enabled gradual structural change. Her work exemplifies how gendered outsider positions can be leveraged to influence sport governance, while also underscoring the limitations and compromises faced by women in leadership roles in sport. Ultimately, the article reframes notions of outsider agency through a gendered and institutional lens.

KEYWORDS

XC skiing; FIS; gender; women's skiing; sport leadership; Inga Löwdin; Elsa Roth

Introduction

In 1949, the International Ski Association (FIS) introduced 10 km races for women at the 1952 Olympic games in Oslo, making it the first time that women were allowed to compete in XC skiing in the Olympics. This was the beginning of a slow development continuing until the World Championships of 2025, when the 50 km for women was on the programme for the first time, thus allowing women to compete in all the same distances as men in international competitions, over 70 years after the 1952 Olympics. The 1949 decision was made when FIS leadership was all male, as were the boards of the national skiing associations. Sport has a long history of being male-dominated, and this has been especially evident in the leadership of international sport organisations. The few women who have reached leading positions in these organisations have been viewed as outsiders; they faced numerous challenges and had to navigate difficult terrain (Cervin and Nicolas 2019). While

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improvements for women athletes have indeed happened, they have been slow, and are the result of hard, strategic, and often pragmatic work. One of the women taking part in such work was Swedish skier and sports leader Inga Löwdin. Löwdin started her career in sport leadership within the Swedish Ski Association (SSA) in 1947 and in FIS in 1949. In both organisations she was responsible for women's XC skiing. However, she did not conduct her work in isolation. Her personal archives show a wide correspondence with international female sports leaders, with whom she corresponded in English, German, French, Russian and the Scandinavian languages. This material reveals the hard, strategic work and strong networks behind the important gains in equality of female skiers during the 1950s and 1960s.

Löwdin conducted this work in a position that can be described as an outsider on the inside. While she was clearly an outsider as a woman in the male-dominated XC field, she came from a privileged social position and shared both education and practice of skiing with the men surrounding her. This liminal position gave her the potential to enact change, while also forcing her to adapt to the context she wanted to change. Considering this position, we analyse how Löwdin, together with her international network, worked to further an agenda of gender equality within the sport of skiing from a position as outsider on the inside of the male-dominated context of international sports leadership. What kinds of changes did she and her colleagues aim for, and what challenges did they face, as advocates for gender equality and recognition of rights in this particular position? Which strategies and practices did they use to overcome these challenges and to further their agenda while navigating the roles of insider/outsider?

Aims and previous research

We aim to use the example of Inga Löwdin to study the role of female leadership in international sports organisations in the 1940s and 50s, in particular her work within the SSA and FIS. Although Löwdin was active in other sports associations (orienteering, for example), our focus on skiing is due to the fact that XC skiing is a large international sport where women have reached gender equality in several areas, while simultaneously being a sport with a strong tradition of male gender-coding and connections to hunting, the military and nationalism (Lidström 2025; Sörlin 1995; Yttergren 2006). Female elite skiers in Sweden have similar possibilities and structures (including access to training, equal salaries, equal media coverage, etc.) as men, and today they compete in the same distances as men in international competitions, including long endurance racing, such as the 50 km and Vasaloppet (90 km). Mixed competitions are also becoming increasingly prevalent. Therefore, examining skiing, and in particular, the international work done by networks of women to promote gender equality within the sport, may provide insight into how such work can be undertaken within a male-dominated organisation. How did female sport leaders navigate the male-dominated context of international sport governance and further an agenda of gender equality within the sport of skiing?

Women have historically been underrepresented in sports in general, and in sport leadership in particular. Women athletes have been excluded or discriminated against in many of the major sports, including football and endurance sports. Even in sports that are in line with established norms about femininity, such as artistic gymnastics, women athletes have struggled to be recognised for their seriousness and performance (Hedenborg 2023). To challenge discrimination and inequalities in sports, women athletes have used different

coping strategies. In the first half of the twentieth century, one much-used strategy was to emphasise women's particularity and differences compared to male athletes (Olofsson 1989). However, when the second wave of women's football arose in the 1970s, the main strategy was instead to underline similarities and demand equality (Hjelm and Olofsson 2003; Svensson and Oppenheim 2018). Our article will show how in XC skiing, both of these strategies were practised in parallel by different women leaders during the mid-twentieth century.

If we look at sport leadership, the challenges have been even more severe. The leadership in international sport organisations have a long history of male dominance. Gender equality in sport leadership is far-off, despite efforts to change the situation (e.g. Hartmann-Tews and Pfister 2003; Hovden 2010; Laine 1998; Piggott 2019; Strittmatter and Skirstad, 2017). In a survey conducted in 2023, women held only 26.9% of executive positions in the 31 largest international sport federations. Only three women were chairs of such organisations at the time: in golf (Annika Sörenstam), table tennis (Petra Sörling, recently re-elected to the dismay of male competitors) and triathlon (Marisol Casado) (Sport Integrity Global Alliance (SIGA)) (2023). Although the International Olympic Committee (IOC) recently elected its first female president, Kirsty Coventry of Zimbabwe, international sport organisations have a long way to go in terms of gender equality.

Earlier research shows that there are multiple challenges for women sport leaders, for example, stereotyping of leaders, issues of discrimination, and gendered organisational cultures, including in the Nordics (Burton 2015; Hovden 2010; Laine 1998). For example, in Swedish winter sports, male dominance in leadership positions remains an issue. When Swedish XC skier and entrepreneur Maria Rydqvist summarised her 13-year career on the national team, she indicated that she had only experienced male coaches and sport leaders (Rydqvist 2016, 107–108).

Many studies have been conducted on international sport organisations and their leadership. Male networks of international sport organisations as well as individual male sport leaders have also been analysed by several researchers both from a national perspective and with more transnational ambitions (Vonnard 2020). Only in recent years have books on World Athletics (Krieger 2021) and women in European sport governance (Cervin and Nicolas 2019) emerged. There are also many studies depicting how women have navigated difficult situations in male-gendered sports as athletes (e.g. Hjelm and Olofsson 2003; Svensson and Oppenheim 2018) and as coaches (Knoppers et al. 2022). There are also examples of women who have assumed roles that challenged established norms (Yttergren and Bolling 2022; Hedenborg 2023). However, there is still a lack of studies on female sport leaders and their strategies in international sport organisations.

Gender research in other male-dominated organisations have pointed to the importance of recognising the broad networks and intense work that lay behind organisational change in terms of equality. This includes examining the formal barriers (laws, regulations, childcare infrastructure, etc.) as well as the informal barriers (perceived gender roles, informal career processes, information flow, etc.). In addition, hidden resistance to reaching equal gender rights that these female networks faced and had to counter are also addressed. Such barriers have been studied in other male-dominated organisations and professions, such as the engineering profession (Grzelec 2024; Nordvall 2023) and in politics (Hultman, Kall, and Anshelm 2021; Niskanen 2007). Research has shown that often informal barriers can be as difficult, if not more difficult, to overcome as formal barriers. Further, it has shown that

forming strong networks of support has been one successful strategy for women (Wahl et al. 2018; Wahl and Holgersson 2021). Which challenges did Löwdin and her colleagues face as advocates for gender equality and recognition of rights (Andersen and Loland 2017)? And which strategies did they use to overcome these challenges?

Sport, as many other cultural expressions, has often worked as a conservative force, setting boundaries pertaining to nationality, class and gender, for example. However, sport also harbours the possibility of being a transformative force, challenging boundaries of bodies and social realities. Both these processes depend on significant and conscious work on the part of the actors. Barker-Ruchti, Grahn and Lindgren have proposed that to understand such processes, we need to move away from only looking at gender inequalities and disadvantages. Rather, we should study concrete examples of 'how gender is being challenged and performed on a micro-level' (Barker-Ruchti, Grahn, and Lindgren 2016, 616). This is what we aim to do in this project by looking at how Inga Löwdin and her international network, through conscious efforts, expanded the boundaries of what was possible for women within XC skiing.

Our main data is derived from the personal archives gathered by Inga Löwdin herself, and she will therefore be the focus of this article and our main network connection. Her archives include a wide range of correspondence with female sports leaders in other countries, as well as minutes, notes and communication from FIS and the Swedish Ski Association. We will use this material to outline her network, as well as study the barriers and strategies described by both the women and Löwdin. By juxtaposing the personal correspondence with the official notes and letters sent to the FIS and the SSA as well as minutes from meetings where decisions were made, we aim to uncover the different layers of barriers the women faced as well as their efforts to overcome them.

Inga Löwdin – insider and outsider

Inga Löwdin was born in 1917, in the university town of Uppsala, Sweden. Her father and three of her brothers were active in sports, especially skiing. From the age of six, she participated in different sport activities, and although she tried several sports, she was most successful in XC skiing and orienteering, winning several Swedish championship medals during the 1940s and 1950s. Her experiences as an athlete were impressive in their own right; nevertheless, she would make her biggest contribution as a sport leader. After completing her academic education, Löwdin worked as a teacher and as headmaster in different schools in Uppsala. Later, she also took courses at the Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences in Stockholm, a leading research environment for sport physiology during the second half of the twentieth century.

In parallel, she began a career within national and international sport leadership. Löwdin was active as a leader in the Swedish Ski Association from 1946 to 1973. She served as member or chair of different committees, and she was team leader for the Swedish women's XC ski team from 1949 to 1970. In addition to her work in XC skiing, in 1951, Löwdin became the first woman elected as part of the Swedish Sport Confederation's board of directors, a position she used, among other things, to initiate a women's sport committee in this organisation inspired by her experiences from the international scene (Olofsson 1988, 67). Internationally she was active in FIS from 1949 where she became an honorary

member in 1990, and the International Orienteering Federation where she was Secretary General from the First Congress in 1961 until 1975.

Her academic background, in particular from the Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences, was typical for Swedish leaders in sport during the twentieth century, including in sports where the socio-economic backgrounds of the athletes were often more rural, blue-collar and with less education. While Swedish male skiers had always primarily been recruited from working class rural areas, female skiers more often came from university towns like Löwdin's hometown Uppsala. This illustrates the changing socioeconomic structure of XC skiing. Historically, the inclusion of women has played out differently depending on the sociocultural history of each sport. Upper/middle-class sports (such as equestrianism and golf) have had their challenges but have in general been more open for women athletes at an earlier stage. Working-class sports such as football have been more difficult for women to gain access to. XC skiing is interesting in the sense that it has been strongly connected to rural working-class men while being more linked to middle-class students on the women's side. While Löwdin's gender made her an outsider in many spaces where she conducted her work, her background and academic education aligned with other sports leaders in Sweden at the time and gave her the privilege of access to the networks needed to carry out her work. She was not an outsider as an athlete in women's XC skiing, but she would go on to experience the role of an outsider as a coach and as a sport leader on the international scene.

'Propaganda' and science: women's XC skiing in Sweden

Early attempts to make women's XC skiing a part of official international competitions began after WWII. At that time, it was popular in countries like Sweden, Finland, Poland, and Russia, where women had competed since the late 1800s. However, in the Alpine countries (France, Austria, Switzerland, France) that became powerful in the International Skiing Federation (FIS) after WWII, women's activities were focused on Alpine skiing, which was seen as more suitable for women.

In the Nordic countries after WWII, women's XC skiing competitions were held on regional and national levels in Sweden and Finland, and these countries became central for raising the issue of international competitions. At this time, not only the leadership of FIS, but also that of the national skiing associations in Finland and Sweden were all male. Thus, although initiatives to promote women's international competition came from national women's groups, they had to rely on the support of male allies speaking for them in both international and national arenas.

The Swedish Ski Association (SSA) organised the first women's skiing camp in Rämshyttan in January 1946, and this became a starting point for deeper engagement in women's skiing. Aside from engaging in physical activity, the participating women were asked to voice their suggestions for promoting women's XC skiing, which resulted in a list of suggestions and demands circulated to the SSA board. Some of the most important points on this list were that the SSA needed to create instructional materials and intervene directly with districts and regions, encouraging them to engage in 'propaganda' activities and arrange more races for women, including 20 km, relay and team competitions. In addition, the participants complained that women's racetracks were too flat, pointing out that they were fully capable of hillier and more strenuous pathways. Finally, they suggested the creation of an SSA Ladies' Committee for XC skiing, to take responsibility for promoting women's competitive skiing.¹

Over time, the SSA adopted most of these suggestions and formed the 'Ladies' Committee' in 1947. Sven Nissing, a member of the SSA executive group, was appointed chair of this committee, and his first action was to write Inga Löwdin asking her to join and suggest a second female member.² The second member became Löwdin's colleague from both skiing and orienteering, Maud Wirstrand. The committee set to work with the suggestions brought forward by the women skiers, in particular issues of 'propaganda' for the sport.

The creation of this committee ensured that Löwdin and Wirstrand had a direct line into the SSA board, however, they were never present at board meetings. Instead, Nissing, the male chair, reported back to the SSA board from the Ladies' Committee meetings. Meanwhile, Löwdin wrote papers, letters and motions, which Nissing read aloud to the SSA board, literally becoming her voice in the male-dominated rooms.³

Inga Löwdin became a driving force of the committee, corresponding with all Swedish skiing clubs, encouraging them to nominate women's representatives to the committee. She sent an enquiry to these representatives every year, which asked questions regarding the number of races, number of older and younger participants, whether women's participation was increasing or decreasing, and which types of 'propaganda' activities they were undertaking. They also reported on the difficulties they faced, and the kinds of help they would need from the Swedish Ski Association.⁴ These reports allowed the Ladies' Committee to map women's skiing and identify problem areas. Some examples of what was asked for included more travel support for competitions, (most travel funding went to men), better tracks (not just a shorter part of the male tracks) and printed training programmes to distribute to the clubs.⁵

The main problem was the lack of races for women. There was little use to train hard if one could only compete two to three times per winter. To remedy this, Löwdin studied the winter programmes identifying the regions where ski races were held for men but not for women. She then prompted the Swedish Ski Association to contact the regional organisations to encourage the organisation to offer more women's competitions.⁶

Courses like the one in Rämshyttan continued to be arranged every year. During these courses, different skiing skills were honed, but the programme also aimed to enhance cohesion and unity among the women. Singing was a central activity, and participants were asked to bring instruments as well as ping pong rackets to be able to organise entertaining group activities.⁷ In letters over the years, several of the women thanked Löwdin for the camps, saying how much they appreciated the high spirit and strong camaraderie.

In general, the SSA board went along with the suggestions of the Ladies' Committee. However, some reluctance can also be traced. For example, the Ladies' Committee wanted to instate women's coaching courses early on, but, perhaps realising that it would be a lost cause, decided to postpone such a course until at least 'another year of propaganda work is done'.⁸ Instead, they suggested that women might join the male skiing instructor courses as observers only, but even this was met with scepticism from the SSA board. The issue was submitted for investigation but was later refused.⁹ This provides another indication of the difficulties promoting women as sport leaders and coaches, roles which historically have been less common and more controversial than participation as athletes (Day, Krieger, and Oldfield 2024). Gender-related barriers still affect women coaches today (LaVoi and Dutove 2012).

During the early 1940s, the performance of human bodies during physical work and exercise had become a focus for science, and in particular for physiology. While many

studies originated from military research or more general work physiology, athletes soon became an interesting group for scientists to study. This interest was mutual, as an increasing number of sport leaders and coaches saw the potential for scientific training methods (Svensson 2016). New scientific methods for training, which focused on enhancing athlete's performance through diet and training methods, also attracted the interest of the SSA and at the Rämshyttan camp. One of the invited guest lecturers was a Swedish pioneer of physiology, Professor Hohwü-Christensen, from the Stadion Polyclinic and the Royal Central Institute of Gymnastics (now the Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences). He expressed an interest in scientific testing of male and female XC skiing, and, with the blessing of the SSA, such testing started during the SM competitions in 1946.¹⁰ A health survey was sent out to the athletes beforehand to complete prior to the races, and physical tests took place during racing days, as well as on specific testing days, for which the athletes were asked to remain in attendance.¹¹

Hohwü-Christensen was a proponent of women participating in sports in general but had been reluctant regarding their participation in tough endurance sport competitions (Larsson 2013, 338–340; Löwdin 1994, 52). Löwdin was also well aware of similar resistance towards women's competitive skiing, both in Sweden and abroad, where actors argued that it would be detrimental to women's health (Löwdin 1994, 47). Physiology was at this point enjoying an increasingly strong authoritative position, which can be exemplified by the fact that the board of the SSA decided to postpone decisions on instating more and longer races for women until the scientific inquiry was finalised.¹² When Hohwü-Christensen announced the inquiry results, he proclaimed that they could not give a definite answer to the issue of the suitability of women for competitive XC skiing; however, since racing 'clearly meant a very strong physical exertion', he and his colleagues wanted to do additional testing before giving the final result. It was his opinion that the SSA should continue to postpone decisions regarding new races for women.¹³

In response, Löwdin sent a three-page evisceration of Hohwü-Christensen's work, arguing so well against his results based on her experience and that of her fellow skiers, that he admitted that she was correct on several points. In the letter, Löwdin pointed out that over 100 Swedish women ran 20 km every year to receive ski badges, and these women were, for the most part, 'rather untrained women'. If they did not experience any health issues, then surely trained and monitored skiers would not either. Her background in university education and teaching also allowed her to put forth a strong and well formulated critique of the mere idea that science, particularly at this early stage, could ever find a final answer to the question of women's 'suitability' for skiing as a group. She questioned both what 'suitability' and 'woman' meant in this particular case, arguing that here were larger differences between women, than between the trained 'sports-girls' and the male sex, in this regard. Women participated in skiing because they enjoyed it, and Löwdin pointed out that this was the same for men. However, while men had the right to decide to participate in an activity they enjoyed, women were denied this right and treated as children. She ended with three proposals: 1) Let women's skiing grow organically from the wishes of the women themselves; 2) Let professional physiologists, if they so wish, continue to check the form of skiers, but do not allow them to hinder races; and 3) Completely scrap the issue of 'women's suitability for skiing'. She wrote that while she did not mind further inquiries, when she became a member of the Ladies' Committee, she 'thought that our task would be to work to spread the sport of skiing among women[...] and not to spend time on fruitless

discussions of this sort. I took for granted that the Ski Association was working under the assumption that skiing was as suitable for women as for men, since a ladies committee was set up.¹⁴ Nissing later wrote to her that her letter probably gave the 'gentlemen ski leaders of the 'unfair sex'¹⁵ some serious food for thought', and although he had told 'his comrades' what the Ladies' Committee thought, now 'they have also heard it from the women's ski leader's mouth'.¹⁶

Despite this, the Ladies' Committee understood that scientific proof was important for their argument abroad and nationally, and supported continued testing to enrol medical scientific support for women's participation in competitive skiing, since its opponents 'regularly invoke medical science'.¹⁷ The SSA board also supported continued testing, arguing, perhaps after contemplating Löwdin's letter, that since the arguments from 'some countries' skiing associations posing that XC skiing was detrimental to women's health were 'contrary to Swedish experience', scientific inquiry was a priority and the SSA presupposed that all race participants make themselves available for testing.¹⁸

Allyship and resistance: testing the waters abroad

While the work to promote women's skiing was gearing up in Sweden, there were still no international networks for women's XC skiing and no international competitions. Previously at the 1946 camp in Rämshyttan, the participants had asked for more international, and in particular, Nordic exchange. The SSA's executive group had taken this prompt to heart, and brought the issue of international and Nordic women's XC skiing competitions to the first post-war Nordic ski conference in Stockholm in June 1946.¹⁹ At the meeting, Sven Nissing reported on the activities in Sweden, including the Rämshyttan camp, the scientific work, and the first trials on women's 20 km races which had taken place in Skellefteå.²⁰ He then relayed the wishes of the Swedish women skiers for increased Nordic and international exchange through competition. The Norwegian representative was thoroughly against this, pointing out that competing in XC skiing was currently not allowed by the Norwegian Skiing Association, only in Alpine skiing. However, the Finnish representative reported a rather large interest in women's skiing in Finland, and while Nordic competition exchange had not been discussed, he thought there was interest from the Finnish side.²¹ At that time, Nissing had also been in touch with the Swiss and Czech skiing associations who had shown some interest in supporting women's competitions, and thus, a small international network of male allies that supported women's skiing was forming.²²

When the SSA Ladies' Committee was formed, one of the board's missions was international networking.²³ For Löwdin, this was not just a matter of promoting women's skiing. In a letter to the secretary of the Swedish Ski Association, Carl Nordenson, Löwdin wrote that international networking and contacts were crucial, for the sport as well as for the individual. 'It shows a wider view of problems and gathers people in a common *peaceful* [Ingas own accent] interest'. She further added, 'Every small try to spread knowledge about our national sport and create interest for our country may have importance in the future'.²⁴ However, while collaboration and exchange were developed with Finland during the years 1947 and 1948, not much changed on the issue of international competitions.

This would change during 1948. At the 1948 Nordic ski conference, it was Finland's turn to bring up women's XC skiing, proposing that the Nordic countries should encourage FIS to introduce women's races (5–20 km) into the FIS competition programme.²⁵ The Finnish

representative, Mr Hohenthal, pointed out that while women's XC skiing had been practised in Finland for 20 years, internationally there was only Sweden with whom to compete. He considered it completely unreasonable that women should not be able to compete in the Nordic disciplines and added that for Alpine competitions there were six gold medals awarded, but only five were given in the Nordic disciplines. Thus, if there was one more competition, this would balance the amounts of medals between Alpine and Nordic skiing.²⁶ This argument is not irrelevant and is quite common in different sports contexts, when trying to introduce new races. Strategically, since Sweden and Finland currently had the only women capable of competing for the gold medals, it was in the Finnish and Swedish interest to argue for a women's race in order to increase their medal 'harvest' from international competitions.

Sigge Bergman, representing Sweden, added that if Finland had not brought this up, Sweden would have. He then read aloud excerpts from a text written by Löwdin, on the issue of proposing international competitions for women, and followed up by saying that he supported this suggestion fully, since he could not find any reason why women's XC skiing should not be acknowledged. Sigge Bergman was at this time the secretary general of the Swedish Skiing Association, and a personal friend of Inga Löwdin. As we will see, he stands out as an important male ally and an early adopter of the idea that competitions for women should be introduced to the FIS programme. He also, on numerous occasions, nominated Löwdin for different positions in FIS (Löwdin 1994, 53–54).

Interestingly, the Norwegian representative, Mr Shirmer, reported that while the Norwegian XC skiing committee had very strongly advised against women's competition, the Norwegian Ski Association had still decided to try 7 km for women, thus opening an international pathway. He added that they agreed on the unbalanced medal situation, which suggests that this is one reason that the Norwegian Skiing Association changed its mind in opposition to its own XC skiing committee. Norway thus agreed to support Finland and Sweden in their proposal, and a decision was made to suggest the inclusion of women's races (although 5–10 km, not 5–20 km) in the FIS international programme at the upcoming FIS board meeting in Holland. Sigge Bergman also suggested that Löwdin's letter be translated and shared at the board meeting as the basis of their proposal.²⁷ At that meeting, a decision was taken to include women 10 km in the international competition program, but the issue of participation in WC and the Olympics was moved forward. The FIS board asked that either the Finnish or the Swedish Skiing Association organise a model international competition for women during 1949, so that FIS representatives could attend and study the racing form. The SSA executive group decided to accept the mission to arrange such a competition at the Swedish Championships in Sollefteå in February 1949.²⁸

Performing and networking: creating a female international network

In the aftermath of the board meeting in Holland, Swedish and Finnish skiers were invited to attend two test competitions for women in France and Switzerland in January 1949. The invitation resulted in a three-week public relations trip in the Alps to promote women's XC skiing. A Swedish and a Finnish group travelled together and competed in exhibition races. The Swedish group consisted of Inga Löwdin, Margit Åsberg-Albrectsson and Märta Norberg as well as Sigge Bergman as the male representative, which the SSA had thought desirable.²⁹ During this trip, Löwdin and her Nordic skiing colleagues were introduced to

their counterparts from the Alpine countries, several of whom would become friends and allies of Löwdin during the coming years. This included Elsa Roth from Switzerland, Germaine Desjardins from France, Kveta Lelkova from Czechoslovakia, and other leaders from Canada, England and Italy. Elsa Roth was a particularly important actor, since she was leading a technical committee preparing for the creation of a FIS 'Ladies' Committee' at the upcoming FIS congress in Oslo. Roth was an Alpine skier, which was symptomatic, since Alpine skiing was seen as more suitable for women than XC and had already been included in international competitions since before the war. In addition, she had a strong network in the skiing field, not the least due to being the aunt of Marc Hodler, who would be the FIS chair from 1951 to 1998.

At the competition in Grindelwald, Switzerland, the organisers had laid a very easy track in the valley with no uphill or downhill skiing, only turns, which Löwdin described as downhill skiing on flat ground. This was, according to Löwdin, due to the fact that the organisers had read an article in the journal *Sport* indicating that in the Nordic countries, skiing was preferred on flat ground, which Löwdin considered a misunderstanding. Löwdin and the Finnish leader protested, and together with 'some other Finnish skiers that were in the country [Switzerland] working as skiing instructors', they changed the track to a more challenging one, where the skiers could excel and managed to impress the crowd with their stamina and technique.³⁰

According to Löwdin, one of the biggest hurdles for XC skiing in central Europe was the difficult mountainous nature, as well as the skiing equipment. Per her description, the women used something similar to downhill skis, produced locally, which were heavy and cumbersome. The men had by this time started importing materials from the Nordic countries, but even for them it was difficult to access good skis. During Löwdin's trip to Switzerland, she even traded her skis to 'one of France's best male skiers',³¹ and the other women also gave away some of their equipment.³² When she returned home, she used her contacts with Swedish ski and wax producers to ask them to send promotional equipment to her female ski colleagues in Switzerland, France and Italy.

During the trip, Löwdin and the group were interviewed in the newspapers and on the radio in France and Germany, and she held lectures and presentations in both countries. The public relations trip was a success and Löwdin impressed not only with her skiing but also with her ability to discuss women's participation in English, French, German and Italian (Tollstoy 1999). She commented later that the press was often interested in things that the athletes themselves considered completely beside the point, such as aesthetic considerations of the races, and how the women looked afterwards, as well as their slender build (they expected the women to be of more muscular build).³³ The exhausted and dishevelled look that XC skiers sported after a long race had for some time been one of the main reasons why the sport was considered 'unfeminine'. One strategy to counter this was to look feminine outside of the tracks, thus employing what can be called 'strategic femininity' (Margadant 2000). In a letter discussing the custom-made outfits for the women skiers, Löwdin wrote '[d]o you think the outfit could have a slightly modern cut, for example with pleats? Isn't it best to look 'feminine' in central Europe?'³⁴

The positive response from ski trainers, the public, media and even medical doctors who were on site during the trip and spoke to Löwdin and the group became an important stepping stone for initiating women's skiing, which was in itself great promotion for the sport. However, and perhaps even more importantly, directly after this trip, the

correspondence between Löwdin and in particular Germaine Desjardin, Kveta Lelkova and Elsa Roth took off, and they immediately started discussing skiing exchanges, promotion materials and how to best forward their issues to FIS. Elsa Roth, who was not very well versed in XC skiing, proclaimed to be impressed by the skiers and said that she would support the proposal regarding women's participation in the Olympic games and World Championships that the Finnish Ski Association planned for the FIS congress of 1949 in Oslo. This was important, since Roth's position and network meant she would play an important role at the upcoming congress in defending the interests of women skiers.

Only one month after the trip to Switzerland, as promised, the SSA invited representatives from FIS to attend the Swedish Championships in Sollefteå in February 1949, to showcase the women's competitions. Elsa Roth and Hans Feldmann from Switzerland attended. In Löwdin's first letter after the competition, she told Roth that while Feldmann had seemed impressed by the women, he still would not let go of his fundamental opposition to women's sports. In addition, she had heard from Sigge Bergman that Feldman had felt insulted 'in his masculine honor' by 'too much propaganda for women's rights' from Löwdin's side. Löwdin apologised profusely in her letter, writing that she had only been joking and did not mean anything by it. She added that she, of course, did not mean to question his authority or knowledge of ski racing, which she knew to be great. She respected his attitude, although as a woman, she 'cannot understand it', and she had hoped to have him as a good friend. She asked Elsa to show him her letter and explain to him that he should not take her jokes seriously, commenting, 'I may have overstepped my mark, but I hope that you will help me to make up for it'.³⁵

Roth wrote back saying how much she appreciated her warm welcome in Sollefteå, while assuring Löwdin that she should not worry about Mr Feldmann. Roth described him as someone with whom you can 'have a good time and be open and honest, but who will suddenly fixate on an issue and defend a point of view with all his strength. Then he becomes very sensitive and takes everything personally. Unfortunately, he will not change his attitude towards women's rights, and he will always remain an opponent of women's sports'. However, in Sollefteå, Roth had spoken to Bergman who had assured her that Feldmann would be in the minority at the FIS congress in Oslo in regard to women's XC skiing. She added that she was convinced he would not fight the proposal; rather, he would merely make his views known. However, she stated that she would still speak to him about Löwdin's letter.³⁶

This incident shows how Löwdin and Roth navigate their insider and outsider positions. While being insiders in the group to some extent, through their close contacts with the men in power, they still had to navigate and stroke male egos, forging friendships with those who did not accept their place in the sport and viewed them as outsiders. It also shows how they formed connections with male allies to forward their interests. Bergman was going to chair the FIS XC skiing committee voting on the women's competitions. Here in Sollefteå, he conspired with Roth, and they also correspond later.³⁷ At the congress in Oslo, he would initiate direct negotiations with Elsa Roth and the FIS Ladies' Committee.

Introducing women's XC skiing in the Olympics

As planned, the Finnish XC skiing committee delivered a formal proposal to the FIS congress in May 1949 in Oslo to include 10km for women in the programme of the World Championships and the Olympics. Sigge Bergman would lead the decisive meetings of the

XC skiing committee, and in the group he would have to deal with both Mr Römhke from the Norwegian XC skiing committee, who opposed women's skiing at the Nordic meeting in 1946, and Feldmann, whose view on women's sports in general and XC skiing in particular Bergman knew well.

In addition, while the aim was to get women's competitions on the World Championships (WC) programme, the next ones were planned to be held in Lake Placid, New York in 1950. Since it was very expensive to send skiers there, it was unlikely that even Finland and Sweden would prioritise sending women skiers. Therefore, if the proposal were approved, the first women's competitions risked being a fiasco, with no competitors from the best nations, or perhaps hardly any competitors at all. This would not look good for the promotion of women's skiing. To tackle this problem, Löwdin came up with the pragmatic idea that a women's WC could be arranged in parallel in Europe, and Sweden could offer to arrange it. Bergman thought this was a great idea and pitched it to the chair of the Finnish Skiing Association who helped refine the proposal, and the SSA decided to support the suggestion at the Oslo meeting.³⁸ Here again, Löwdin worked behind the scenes, proposing solutions that were brought forward by her male allies. This episode also shows the close collaboration between the Finnish and the Swedish XC skiing committees on the issue, to meet the opposition of representatives from, for example, Norway and Switzerland. The Finnish delegation to the FIS congress travelled to Stockholm days before to conduct preparatory meetings with the Swedish group before travelling to Oslo together.³⁹

In Oslo, the meetings of the XC skiing committee took place over three days. On the first meeting day, Bergman took it upon himself to discuss the issue of women's competitions with Elsa Roth, and invited her to the meeting on the second day for a formal discussion.⁴⁰ Roth started this discussion, referring to the women's competitions she had seen during the winter in Grindelwald and Sollefteå, pointing out that after seeing the women's performances, she thought that people should not 'have the right to refuse women their wish' to have XC skiing as part of the WC and Olympics. However, she also demanded that Sweden and Finland guarantee that they would send women to compete in the WC in Lake Placid, since these were the only countries with a high level of women's XC skiing. Römhke stated that in principle, he was not against organising national or international women's races, but he was still not in favour of introducing it at the WC and Olympics. Feldmann, as predicted by Roth, proclaimed that he was still personally against women's races and thought it too soon to start with the WC and Olympics.

Bergman then presented Löwdin's suggestion to organise the women's part of the WC in Europe instead of in Lake Placid, making it possible for teams to send more women skiers. According to the minutes, Bergman did not mention from whom the suggestion originated. This might have been a strategy for making his point to the group, i.e. presenting it as his own, or it might have been left out of the minutes. Bergman was supported by the Canadian representative, Mr Halsey, who pointed out that it would not help the sport if there were no women competing in Lake Placid. Feldmann, however, was not ready to abandon his views, and countered that it would be impossible to have a separate part held in Europe, to which Bergman responded, 'Of course it would be possible if everyone involved would just agree about it'. In the end, however, Bergman was not able to get this agreement; instead, he proposed what was to become the final decision, namely that women's races would be included in the Olympic games in 1952, and until then two large international races would be organised in preparation. The experience from these events would then

decide whether women's racing should be a part of WC and the Olympics in the future.⁴¹ Thus, Bergman had to abandon Löwdin's proposal of organising a WC for women in Europe in 1950, but he was later able to defend the Swedish position both on the issue of the age limit for participation (18) and the issue of race track profile, which would be based on the Swedish model.⁴² In correspondence after the meeting, Löwdin thanked Roth 'from the bottom of [her] heart for what [she] had done for our beloved XC skiing for women', and although Löwdin commented that a real WC in Europe would have been more 'festive', both agreed that from an economic and strategic point of view, this was the best solution.⁴³

These negotiations show that the women involved had to work on several levels in order to bring forward their opinions and proposals. In addition to building networks with women in similar positions in other countries, Inga Löwdin also worked with men on a structural level and developed close friendships with several of these men. Many of them also supported her work, and became spokespersons for her, often literally by reading her texts aloud and forwarding her proposals. In Switzerland, we can also see that Elsa Roth had a strong network. She came from a prominent family with many political contacts, including within FIS, so she could use her family status and connections to support her politics. This type of informal female leadership has been studied in contexts other than sport, for example, in religions where relational closeness to a leader has been a way to influence the direction of an organisation or group through *proximal authority* (Hedenborg White 2020). Elsa Roth's influence in FIS could be seen partly in this light, although she also had formal power.

Success and tensions: toward the Olympics and beyond

Depending on the standard of ladies' skiing at the Olympics and the trial competitions in Finland and Sweden, FIS would decide whether or not to include 10 km for ladies at the FIS World Championships as well. The Swedish Ski Association took it upon themselves to organise an international 10 km race at the Swedish ski games in Östersund in 1950, and the Finnish Ski Association did the same in 1951.⁴⁴

In connection to the races in Östersund, the SSA arranged the first 'international ladies course for instruction in XC skiing' at Vålådalen. Women skiers, instructors, and leaders from seven countries participated (Sweden, Denmark, Finland, France, Switzerland, Italy and Czechoslovakia), and the programme included both theoretical and practical instruction regarding, for example, training, ski-waxing and suitable tracks. This not only became an opportunity for promising skiers to meet, but also to circulate knowledge and encourage women instructors and team leaders. Materials circulated at the camp included Swedish materials translated into English, German and French, a pamphlet specifically on women's ski training commissioned by the Swedish Ladies' Committee, and a text on gymnastics for skiers. Inga Löwdin had also authored a text describing the history and general state of ladies' skiing in Sweden and internationally as a way to promote women's skiing.⁴⁵

At the congress in Oslo, the FIS Ladies' Committee had been created, led by Elsa Roth as chair, Finnish alpine- and XC skier Helka Ristoleinen as vice chair, and Inga Löwdin as one of its first members. The FIS Ladies' Committee became an instrument for knowledge exchange, as the country representatives sent reports on the state of women's skiing in the different women's committees to learn from each other, and organised inquiries about female participation in FIS races, boards and groups. The organisation of separate events, such as

competitions not formally included in the FIS calendar or training camps for women skiers, was another strategy used by the Ladies' Committee. Yearly separate international women's competitions were arranged in Grindelwald after the first exhibition races in 1949.⁴⁶ Sometimes these competitions were used to showcase women's races as a first stepping stone to then include new races into the mixed international championships and games.

This continuing work to showcase women's skiing up until the 1952 Oslo Olympics bore fruit, and after a successful execution of women's races in Oslo, 10 km races were included at the WC as well in 1954. However, Löwdin and her colleagues tirelessly continued working for the expansion of women's skiing competitions. Throughout the 1950s they argued for the addition of 5 km competitions at WC and the Olympics. Such a proposal was rejected at the 1957 FIS congress, despite 36 votes in favour and 20 against, because the necessary two-thirds majority could not be reached.⁴⁷ Löwdin and her colleagues in the FIS Ladies' Committee did not give up. In 1958, during the FIS World Championships in Lahtis, the present members of the FIS Ladies' Committee (Löwdin, Zoja Bolotova and Helka Ristolainen) called for the inclusion of a 5 km race for women. They also voiced some self-criticism, stating, 'The Ladies' Committee does not yet seem to have done everything that is possible to increase the number of ladies' Nordic events'. This could be interpreted as an implicit critique towards Elsa Roth. This work eventually succeeded, as the 5 km women's race was introduced from the 1962 FIS World Ski Championships.

At the same meeting in Lahtis, Inga Löwdin raised the issue of female representation on boards and committees across the world of XC skiing. In the meeting minutes, Löwdin 'suggested that an inquiry would be sent to the affiliated associations concerning the extent to which women take part in the activities within their organisation and whether there are women in the boards and committees of the associations'.⁴⁸ In parallel to her international work, Löwdin also argued for a quota of women to sit on the board of directors in the Swedish Sports Confederation in 1958 (Olofsson 1988, 68). She had experienced the effects of limited representation in both organisations and worked to find ways for more women to have a position of strength.

However, during the 1950s, there were also signs of tensions and frustration among the members of the Ladies' Committee. While Elsa Roth had been framed as progressive from a Swiss perspective, she sometimes appeared to frustrate her Nordic colleagues. Early on, while the Swedish skiers had asked for more difficult tracks, Roth was more concerned about the tracks being too dangerous for women, including in discussions about women's downhill racing. In a letter to Bergman, Roth wrote that she was very disappointed in the organisers of races at St Anton, who had allowed the women to pass over the same tracks as the men 'not leaving out the long and dangerous parts'.⁴⁹ In a letter to Inga Löwdin from Helka Ristolainen in October 1958, the possibility of a FIS-organised training camp was discussed. Ristolainen seemed somewhat disillusioned when she wrote, 'Maybe it dies, as do many other good things, because Elsa does not have an interest in things in general'.⁵⁰ When Löwdin replied a few days later, she expressed her hopes that if they both wrote to Elsa, 'she might get herself together and act!'.⁵¹ It is worth noting that the political situation for women's rights during the 1950s was quite different in Switzerland as compared to Finland and Sweden, considering, for example, that in Switzerland women were still not allowed to vote, while Finland had been the first European country to give women this right in 1906. Elsa Roth worked within different local gender politics than Ristolainen and Löwdin, which sometimes led to tensions, and perhaps different views on how to approach

the male-dominated FIS with suggestions and demands. For example, for Roth it was very important not to be connected to the suffragette movement, which was still a radical movement in Switzerland, since this would hinder her work (Widmer 2024). This was not an issue for Inga Löwdin who could easily joke about being called a ‘suffragette’ in a negative review of her book about the Switzerland trip.⁵² This historical example is still relevant today, as sport leaders (not least women) from Sweden in international federations struggle with political and cultural expectations and challenges (Lundquist and Ekholm 2025).

Conclusion

Inga Löwdin was one of the most influential persons in Swedish sport history, especially regarding women’s right to participate on equal terms. When she passed away in 2008 at age 91, she had competed on skis until she was 88 years old (Kristiansen 2008). She was a member of the FIS Ladies’ Committee from its inauguration in 1949 and was its chairperson from 1965 to 1990. She worked tirelessly at local, national and international levels to promote women’s sport, and in doing so, transgressed the gender boundaries of both skiing and sport organisations, working mostly on boards and committees where she was one of few (and often the only) women present (Barker-Ruchti, Grahn, and Lindgren 2016).

Although her status as an only woman in many of the spaces where she worked can mark her as an outsider, it is important to consider her social context as a part of her ability to enact change. She came from a family with education and financial advantages. Her academic background and language skills (she spoke seven languages fluently) formed the basis for her career in international sport organisations. In the time period analysed in this article, she relied on a strong network of male allies and held what can be called ‘proximal authority’ (Hedenborg White 2020). She might at this time, therefore, be considered an outsider on the inside.

It is clear, however, that the very concepts of insiders and outsiders must be understood through their gendered connotations. While men historically have been understood as just athletes, coaches and sport leaders, women assume all of these roles with their gender as an important prefix – women athletes, women coaches, women sport leaders (Tolvhed 2015). Lidström et al. addressing this issue, argue that there are two different types of bohemians - idealistic and rational. What unites them is a wish to do things differently from the majority and as the established norms suggest, and the challenges that come with their ‘interplay of defiance and resonance, marginality and centrality’ (Lidström et al. 2025). The other articles in this special issue focus on men as outsiders, often highlighting their bohemian characters, and capability to choose their own way in the face of a conservative sport. Examples of these kinds of men are speedskater Nils Svensson (formerly van der Poel) and XC skier Alvar Myhlback.

Our case stands out in at least three regards. First, Inga Löwdin’s outsider status is marked by her gender and her place in a patriarchal society, not by her actions (like others have been made outsiders in sport due to ethnicity (e.g. Lidström 2021). While anyone can hypothetically take on the role of an outsider through certain kinds of norm-breaking actions, many historically marginalised groups have not had the privilege to choose an outsider role; instead, it has been assigned to them by the power structures in place in a certain social and historical context. Löwdin, being assigned an outsider position rather than taking it on by choice, argues against this when she promotes women’s participation

in XC skiing on the same premises as men. This sets her apart from many of the other outsiders in this special issue, who, to some extent, choose 'outsidership' as a strategy, and for whom this may have positive consequences. Secondly, being seen as sloppy and non-conforming bohemians, it would not have been possible to align with the gender roles assigned to women in the 1940s, and it would likely not have been possible for women like Löwdin and Roth to enact change on the leadership level if they were viewed that way. Thirdly, while bohemian style individual outsiders have been able to enact change in how a particular sport is performed or trained for, they very rarely enact institutional change. In order to enact change in organisations, a measure of pragmatism and compromise, perhaps even conformity is instead needed, which can be considered the very opposite of a bohemian character.

Being a woman in a male-dominated network does not automatically allow for being a vehicle of change. As Anna Wahl has pointed out, there are several strategies women who are in a minority in an organisation can choose, and one of them is to become a part of the male norm, defending the status quo (Wahl et al. 2018). Another strategy, used by Löwdin and her colleagues, is forming strong female networks outside of the male-dominated boards and institutions, creating separatist spaces while collectively working for change. Wahl and Holgersson indicate that while separatist programmes, created to empower individual women in their careers, have been criticised for not leading to change while excluding men from gender work and putting responsibility on women, separatist programmes focusing on collective work to enact organisational change can lead to what they call 'collective empowerment', helping women tackle their frustration as well as pooling resources to enact change (Wahl and Holgersson 2021). While training individual women for competitions and winning medals was, of course, a central activity of XC skiing, it is clear that the Ladies' Committees and other separatist work done by Löwdin and her colleagues, despite some disagreements, was based on a common vision of improving women's possibility of engaging in skiing, as well as enacting institutional change in FIS.

The different views on how to best promote women's skiing can be connected to the outsider or insider discussion. As Eva Olofsson has pointed out, there have been and still are different strategies for promoting women's sport. They can either emphasise women's particularity and differences compared to male athletes, or underline their similarities and demand gender equality (Olofsson 1988). We see the positioning of women skiers as outsiders, different from their male colleagues and in need of various adaptations to ensure their health and safety, as a strategy avoided by Löwdin. Instead, she opted to articulate women skiers as insiders, a natural part of the sport which there were no rational reasons to keep out. This argument was also put forward by her male allies in Finland and Sweden. A similar strategy was used by the pioneers of Swedish women's football in the 1960s and 1970s (Svensson and Oppenheim 2018). Meanwhile, the more separatist emphasis on women being in need of specific adaptations was used as a strategy by Elsa Roth hinting at the fact that both women also adopted the strategies that they considered possible in their respective contexts. Although Löwdin met with some resistance, her structural support enabled her to forward an agenda, which was more aligned with what is often referred to as liberal feminism. In a sport context, both strategies (articulating differences or similarities) exist in parallel and are exercised by different actors in different contexts. In future research, delving into the different feminist contexts of these engaged women and

comparing their strategies would provide a fruitful lens into how women's liberation movements proceeded in different countries.

The recent election of Kirsty Coventry as the new president of the IOC is a sign that women can be elected for the most powerful positions in international sport organisations, while reactions to her election also signal that this is still highly unusual. Maybe Coventry can take note of the work of Inga Löwdin? Adding another layer - the gender dimension - further complicates things in sport. Would a woman bohemian even have had access to the meetings where the future of gender equality in XC skiing was decided? Inga Löwdin started out as an outsider on the inside but managed to navigate the difficult landscape of international sport governance, challenges that contemporary Swedish sport leaders also struggle with (Lundquist and Ekholm 2025). From that position, she drove the development of women's skiing in a more progressive direction by blending rationality and idealism. She was not a bohemian, but neither was she afraid to challenge the structures and injustices she identified as hindrances for the development of the sport she loved.

Notes

1. Minutes of the SSA executive group, 18 January 1946, Archives of the Swedish Ski Association, SE/RA/730603/A 1 a/7.
2. Letter from Sven Nissing to Inga Löwdin, 2 July 1947, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1947'.
3. See, e.g. minutes of the SSA board, 8-9 March 1948, Archives of the Swedish Ski Association, SE/RA/730603/A 1 a/8.
4. Letters to the ombud for women's skiing in the regions or the skiing sections from Inga Löwdin, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
5. Synthesis of the district reports from 1949 to the ladies skiing committee. Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
6. Letter to Maud and Sven Wirstam from Inga Löwdin, 10 November 1949, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
7. For example, at the ski camp in Sälen 1949, with the help of the SSA songbook as well as a specific song pamphlet called 'Hjärtats Nyckel'. Report from the Swedish Ski Associations Ladies' ski course in Sälen 9-16 January 1949. Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
8. Minutes of the Board of the SSA, 8-9 February 1948, Archives of the Swedish Ski Association, SE/RA/730603/A 1 a/8.
9. Minutes of the Board of the SSA, 8-9 February 1948, Archives of the Swedish Ski Association, SE/RA/730603/A 1 a/8; Letter from Sigge Bergman to the SSA Ladies' Committee, 16 December 1948, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1948'.
10. Minutes of the executive group of the SSA, 18 January 1946, Archives of the Swedish Ski Association, SE/RA/730603/A 1 a/7.
11. Survey to participants in the 20 km race for women in Mora 6 March 1949, attached to a letter from Ulf Eriksson 2 March 1949, Minutes from the executive group of the SSA, 8 January 1946, Archive of the Swedish Ski Association, Letter from Sigge Bergman to Inga Löwdin, 8 February 1949, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
12. Minutes of the Board of the SSA, 8-9 February 1948, Archives of the Swedish Ski Association, SE/RA/730603/A 1 a/8.

13. Letter from Howhü-Christensen to the SSA, 4 June 1948, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1948'.
14. Letter from Inga Löwdin to the SSA 8 June 1948, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1948'.
15. In Swedish 'det otäcka könet', a wordplay on the Swedish translation of 'the fairer sex', 'det täcka könet'.
16. Letter from Sven Nissing to Inga Löwdin, 17 August 1948, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1948'.
17. Letter from the SSA Ladies' Committee to women skiers, 29 October 1948, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1948'.
18. Letter from the SSA office in the name of Ulf Eriksson to the participants of the womens' cross-country race in Mora, 2 March 1949, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
19. Minutes from the constituting meeting of the SSA Ladies' Committee, 4 November 1947, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1947'.
20. Minutes of the executive group of the SSA, 1 February 1946, Minutes of the Board of the SSA, 8-9 February 1948, Archives of the Swedish Ski Association, SE/RA/730603/A 1 a/8.
21. Minutes from the 11th Nordic ski conference, Stockholm, 16 June 1946, Archive of the Swedish Ski Association, SE/RA/730603/F 2 a/1.
22. Minutes from the constituting meeting of the SSA Ladies' Committee, 4 November 1947, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1947'.
23. Minutes of the Board of the SSA, 8-9 February 1948, Minutes of the Board of the SSA, 8-9 February 1948, Archives of the Swedish Ski Association, SE/RA/730603/A 1 a/8.
24. Letter to Carl Nordenson from Inga Löwdin, 26 October 1949, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
25. Letter from Reino Nurminen of the Finnish skiing association to the Norwegian and Swedish ski associations, 30 April 1948. Archive of the Swedish Ski Association, SE/RA/730603/F 2 a/1.
26. Minutes from the 13th Nordic Ski Conference in Copenhagen, 12-13 June 1948. Archive of the Swedish Ski Association, SE/RA/730603/F 2 a/1.
27. Minutes from the 13th Nordic Ski Conference in Copenhagen, 12-13 June 1948. Archive of the Swedish Ski Association, SE/RA/730603/F 2 a/1.
28. Minutes of the SSA executive group, 7 September 1948, Archives of the Swedish Ski Association, SE/RA/730603/A 1 a/8.
29. Minutes of the SSA executive group, 4 January 1949, Archives of the Swedish Ski Association, SE/RA/730603/A 1 a/8.
30. Report from the women's cross-country skiing troupe to Switzerland and France, 7-30 Januari 1949. Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
31. Letter from Inga Löwdin to Disponent Thor Warborn, 23 February 1949. Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
32. Report from the women's cross-country skiing troupe to Switzerland and France, 7-30 January 1949. Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
33. Letter from Inga Löwdin to Mr Jones, Aftonbladet, 15 December, 1949, Inga Löwdin, personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
34. Letter from Inga Löwdin to Sigge Bergman, 15 December 1948, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1948'.
35. Letter from Inga Löwdin to Elsa Roth, 15 March 1949, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
36. Letter from Elsa Roth to Inga Löwdin, 24 March 1949, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
37. Letter from Elsa Roth to Sigge Bergman, 21 March 1949, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.

38. Minutes of the SSA executive group, 1 April 1949; Minutes of the SSA board, 23 April 1949. Archives of the Swedish Ski Association, SE/RA/730603/A 1 a/8.
39. Minutes of the SSA executive group, 19 April 1949, Archives of the Swedish Ski Association, SE/RA/730603/A 1 a/8.
40. Minutes from the FIS cross-country skiing committee meeting at the FIS Congress in Oslo, 10 May 1949, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
41. Minutes from the FIS cross-country skiing committee meeting at the FIS congress in Oslo, 11 May 1949, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
42. Minutes from the FIS cross-country skiing committee meeting at the FIS congress in Oslo, 13 May 1949, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
43. Letter from Inga Löwdin to Elsa Roth, 13 July 1949, Letter from Elsa Roth to Inga Löwdin, 19 August 1949, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
44. Letter from Sigge Bergman to Inga Löwdin, 31 October 1949, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
45. Letter from Inga Löwdin to Fru Ahlberg, 8 March 1950. Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1950'.
46. Letter from Elsa Roth to Inga Löwdin, 19 August 1949, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1949'.
47. Comments on the agenda at the meeting of the FIS cross-country Committee in Stockholm, Sweden, 2 June 1959, Inga Löwdin personal archives, Swedish National Archives, Arninge, Sweden. Binder 'Skidor 1958-59'.
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