



Welcome message



Nils Dagestad

ITA President

Chairman Norwegian Trotting Association

It's a great pleasure and honor for me to welcome you all – delegates, observers and accompanying persons – to the 21th World Trotting Conference here in Oslo. Norway is a small nation, with about 4,5 million inhabitants, and for our trotting-organization this big event is a huge challenge. This is the second time we are hosting this conference, since we also had the pleasure of being hosts for the World Trotting Conference in 1975.

Our intention for this conference is to give you all an impression of the trotting situation here in Norway and in Scandinavia. Further on we have put on the program issues of international, common interest. In short that means the new market situation in Europe, animal welfare and sport/breeding.

I hope that this visit to Norway will give you all an opportunity to learn a bit more about our country and our culture. We are especially happy to welcome you to join us in the celebration of our national day – the 17th of May. For us this day is unique, and hopefully you all will feel the special atmosphere and the traditions of our celebration.

Norwegian trotting is – for the time being – in a very positive and promising situation. Our economy is solid and the relations with the national political system are working out well. Our breed is rather small, and therefore it's very hard to create a Norwegian star of top world class. And creating a star is of great importance to get real interest in the national media.

As you all know the World Driving Championship is also going on here in Norway these days. We have picked out five of our tracks from different parts of our country to give our trotting fans the possibility to meet some of the best drivers in the world. At the same time we of course hope to show the participants in the championship some more of our beautiful country.

In 2007 at the World Trotting Conference in Christchurch, New Zealand, the conference decided to name the winner's trophy: The Ulf Thoresen Trophy. We are very happy and honored for this. Our world star driver Ulf Thoresen, who – among many other big victories – was four times winner of the World Driving Championship.

Hopefully this conference will strengthen and develop closer ties between the participating nations in the development of our great sport. On behalf of the board – and all Norwegian trotting fans – I wish you all heartily welcome to Norway to the 21th World Trotting Conference!