



A History of the Volkssport Club at West Point

When Volkssporting began at West Point circa 1972, it was not organized as part of an official club. There were Traditional Events as the sport was introduced to West Point. One active duty soldier was the organizer of the events, aided by military police, post engineers, and other volunteers. Nancy and Farrell Patrick, long time club officers, were part of those early times. Initial events were at Buffalo Soldier field. They had big tents, beer, and brats. As Volkssporting at West Point grew over the years, the need for an official club became apparent.

The "Volkssport Club of West Point" was founded in 1987 by Colonels George Paul and Thomas Tesch. They were dentists at Saunders Dental Clinic at West Point.

In the fall of 1986, Lieutenant General David Palmer, Superintendent, was contacted about the formation of a Volkssport club. Although he said he could not approve of the club, he had interest in making it happen. His support convinced the Directorate of Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) to approve the club after the appropriate paperwork (such as constitution and bylaws) was created. Colonels Paul and Tesch each seeded (subsequently reimbursed) \$2000 from their personal funds to establish the club's original treasury. The club was officially incorporated by the NY Secretary of State on 30 June 1988.

Colonel Tesch and Tammy Hongor, a hygienist at the dental clinic, established the routes and directions for all events until 1990. Colonel Paul was reassigned in 1988 and Colonel Tesch served as first club president until his reassignment in the summer of 1990.

The club began participating in Traditional Events at the annual Hudson Valley River Ramble on 17 September 2005 with 13 walkers in the City of Poughkeepsie. We received a Proclamation from Mayor Nancy J. Cozean noting that day as "Volkssport Club Day" in the City of Poughkeepsie. As of 2023, we have continued to participate in the Ramble every year since.

In early 2013, the club was required to change its name to "Volkssport Club **at** West Point" (from "...of...") to avoid confusion as to the official nature of the club (i.e., the club is not an official US Army entity even though it is an official 'Private Organization' of the US Army).

The club celebrated its 25th Anniversary with a three day walking/event weekend 4-6 October 2013, attracting ninety-five individual participants. It was filled with four walking events and an award banquet. A speaker provided education on the lost redoubts of West Point. Additionally, tours of Fort Putnam were also provided over that weekend.