

USPE Anthem

In 1978 the Linz Police Sports Association in Austria was entrusted with organising the 7th European Track and Field Police Championships. Fritz Hass, the head of the organising committee, got in touch with the musical director of the Linz police orchestra, Alois Ploberger, and proposed moving away from the usual run-of-the-mill festive music and fanfares by composing a separate USPE hymn. Alois Ploberger, who had studied at the Bruckner Musical Academy in Linz to become a musician, considered this idea as highly interesting and started working straight away. He thought about composing a hymn that could also be played by a small wind ensemble, for example on the occasion of medals ceremonies. On the other hand, his composition was to give the impression of a real European hymn for the USPE during an opening ceremony, where it would be played by a large wind orchestra. While engaging in his composition work, Alois Ploberger made sure not to use any musical themes known to him. He wanted to create something completely new, and at the première during the opening ceremony of the EPC Track and Field on 8 September 1978, this new hymn was very well received. Afterwards, the new hymn was put in the archives of the Linz police orchestra, without being published or printed. The composer recalled that in the 90s, his music was one more time requested for a USPE championship in Belgium or the Netherlands, but after that, he had a feeling that his hymn had fallen into oblivion.

Then, on the occasion of the 2002 USPE Congress in Düsseldorf, the Secretary General asked the State Police Orchestra of the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia to rearrange and perform the USPE hymn. All delegates attending this Congress still well remember this impressive performance. Alois Ploberger was overjoyed, when his German colleague Josef Hastreiter informed him of the new arrangement and after receiving the corresponding CD, because now, apart from a live recording by the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation (ORF), there was a studio recording and a print arrangement, too.

In August 2004, at the opening of the 5th European Cycling Police Championship in Windischgarsten, Austria, the now 70-year-old Alois Ploberger once again conducted the rearranged hymn which he had created 26 years before. Of course he took great pleasure in doing so and was particularly proud of the fact that after the performance, he was awarded the USPE medal of honour by the President and the Secretary General.