

# Ottawa Ski Club News

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## THE SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Sixth Annual Tournament of the Canadian Ski Association has now passed into history. Captains and kings have departed and nothing remains but the memory of two glorious days spent on the slopes of Rockcliffe and on the heights of Camp Fortune, when the supremacy of the ski was again asserted before a vast concourse of spectators by some of the foremost ski riders in the land, gathered from all parts of the continent.

While fully conscious of the many shortcomings in the manner in which these championships were carried out, yet we feel that the good features vastly outnumber the bad, and that, thanks to our efforts, as a Club, the City of Ottawa has taken a further step toward that prominence which it deserves as a centre of winter sports.

To all those who have helped, in any capacity, the warmest thanks of the Club are extended—to Sigurd Lockeberg, who displayed such untiring energy, to Captain T. J. Morin and Eric Roy who, under heartbreaking conditions of ever falling snow, blazed the long course for the race in the mountains, to the forty odd trail breakers who preceded the competitors on the morning of the 28th and who may take all the credit for the fact that "there never was a course so well blazed and so well tracked in any race," to the ladies under Miss Muriel Whalley who had perhaps the hardest task of all, that of selling the tickets, to the ladies under Hazel Reid who ministered to the needs of the competitors—to all, many, many thanks.

Our most sincere congratulations are extended to **Norman Berger**, of the Montreal Ski Club, for the third time Champion of Canada, to our **Douglas Powers** who did the amazing thing of securing second place among so many World's champions, to **J. Couture** of the Nansen Ski Club, who made the longest standing jump of the day (135 feet), to **Johan Satre** of the Swedish Ski Club, New York, who showed us that our ski-ing, as compared to real ski-ing, is little better than a snail's pace, to **Ken Fosbery**, now of the Toronto Ski Club, who came first among the Canadian born, to our **Louis Grimes**, who again won the City Championships.

## LET US LEARN TO SKI

The question of proficiency in ski-ing is again coming to the fore. Most of us have taken up the sport for pleasure only, leaving its finer points to the professionals or to those who "want to make a show" but we soon find out that our pleasure is so mixed with pain, or with "suffering and indignities", as John Trailmasher puts it in the following letter, that we are beginning to wonder whether it would not be better after all to try to learn something about the control of skis before starting on a long hike over a perilous course.

W. R. Stevenson, in an article published in the issue of Feb., 17th, puts his finger on the spot when he says that "we all want immediately to take one long step up the scale of proficiency so as not to be delayed in getting our full measure of fun." In other words, we have been trying to run before we could walk. The basic principles of the craft are almost entirely ignored. How many can check their speed on a swift trail? How many can stop dead by a jump turn or a Christiania in front of an obstacle? How many know how to prepare for a change of speed, and avoid its consequences. Some of us do learn in time, but at what cost!

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John Trailmasher may be right when he says that we are devoting too much space to the beauties of the trail and not enough to the practical aspect of ski-ing. We need tuition; we need instructors. There is no doubt that we would all derive far more pleasure from our ski-ing if we were better skiers. We will have to encourage and recognize skill, just as much, if not more so, than we have encouraged speed and nerve. We will have to open ski-ing classes, under competent instructors. And most of us, if not all of us, will benefit by such classes.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I am a very bad ski-er; in fact I doubt very much whether I have yet earned the right to call myself a ski-er at all. However, I possess the necessary material equipment for taking part in the noble sport that has brought so much pleasure and pain to our citizens. This equipment I wear on all available opportunities, and while standing still on the level I believe I can wear it without absolutely disgracing myself or the patron saint (or devil) of ski-ing. Please do not infer that I cannot manage to get about on skis at all; more often the problem is to stop myself—for instance, after starting on a perilous career down one of the more unspeakable parts of George's Trail. Strange though it may seem, I enjoy long trips through the bush, provided I have time to loaf along in a leisurely manner, but there are too many moments when I am acutely conscious of the fact that while I have sufficient stamina to sustain the severity stresses, strains, distress, sorrow, suffering, sacrifice, self-abasement, slaughter and slavery of the Skandinavian snow-sport styled Ski-ing, I am nevertheless, sadly deficient in, if not totally devoid of, Style. In one sense I have a good deal of style, in the sense that my particular variety renders its possessor much more conspicuous than the style that is properly so called. But mine, unfortunately, is of the kind that is viewed with scorn and derision by the accomplished ski-er. The fact is, I just muddle along and, though I manage to get quite a lot of pleasure from the sport, I can readily imagine that I could get even more enjoyment and less fatigue if I were more familiar with the finer points of the art of ski-ing.

If one wishes to improve one's dancing or skating or tennis or sewing or cookery there are facilities available to make this possible. But with ski-ing things seem to be rather different. It appears to be assumed that all human beings are born with a latent natural faculty for being able to navigate with style and grace any of the contours of the earth's surface, no matter how craggy or precipitous. For obvious reasons there are no educational facilities for teaching dogs to swim or cats to catch mice, but the reason for the apparent absence of tutors in the art of ski-ing is not at all clear. There are, I believe, a number of learned books which explain the mechanical and ballistics of ski-ing in a highly scientific and mathematical manner, but the ordinary rank and file of ski-ing fraternity find it practically impossible to make the prescribed calculations with sufficient rapidity when negotiating a hair-pin turn on some thickly wood trail. Long before the problem had been solved the ski-er trained on these text-books would be shedding his limbs on the neighboring trees and boulders. Besides, in order to follow this kind of training it would probably be necessary to carry slide-rules and tables of logarithms, and sliding is the rule of ski-ing already, though it is not always easy to find a table—a Camp Fortune table, that is.

Some weeks ago, in the Club News, you expressed sorrow (or anger) that so few members go in for ski-jumping, and I seem to recall that you urged that greater numbers should take up this branch of the sport. Now it seems to me that it would be sheer suicide for the majority of ski-ers to attempt jumping, but anyhow, nobody will attempt it who does not possess that particular brand of recklessness which makes him (or her) absolutely immune from any fear of being washed to pieces. No amount of pleading, commanding, cajoling, scorning, threatening or bullying will make a ski-er attempt jumping unless he (or she) feels an inwards urge to do so. Average ski-ers would see their club sink to the utmost depths, and become a nonentity or a laughing stock in the ski-ing world—an organization at which the jumping fraternity might point the finger of scorn—

before they would fling themselves from the top of a ski-jumping tower. But this does not mean that the average or novice ski-er has no ambition. He or she may have much ambition, though not of the vaulting kind that knows nothing of prudence or discretion. If only for purely selfish motives, we bad or indifferent ski-ers wish to improve our style. Nobody who, through incompetence, has ploughed his way through every kind of indignity and suffering from Camp Fortune to Wrightville needs to be told that his progress along the trail would be more speedy and pleasant if his style were improved. But how is one to get this improvement? The ordinary beginner (so far as I know) can only learn by plodding patiently through a long period of hardship and thereby gradually attain an unenviable balance and crude style all his own. Occasionally he catches a fleeting glimpse of an expert executing a neat Telemark or Christiania or kick turn and wishes he could do like wise, but the performance is over too suddenly for him to see exactly how it is done. To learn ski-ing from such occasional observations is like trying to learn Chinese by listening through the keyhole of Ping Pong's Laundry or the waiter translating our order in Mah Jong's Café.

"The evil that men do lives after them,

"The good is oft interred with their bones."

In the same way a good ski-er takes a difficult trail and no one is any the wiser, but when I attempt the same trail the evil that I do lives after me in the form of a ruined trail to bring blasphemous comments from those who follow me. Therefore, anything that the club can do to assist the novice to attain greater proficiency will be for the good of the club as a whole.

This long-winded letter would be quite inexcusable if I had nothing more to say than the platitudes which has gone before, so might I suggest that the club might do much to help the beginner by:—

- (1) Staging exhibitions at some point where the novice might have a good opportunity of seeing more frequently the various standard turns done by experts;
- (2) Arranging some kind of facilities to enable beginners to get individual instruction;
- (3) Making your excellent News even more admirable by devoting a more considerable space to instructing articles on the art of ski-ing itself (which is mysterious to the uninitiated) as distinguished from ecstatic ravings about the beauties of the trail (which are self-evident and need no advertisement);
- (4) Preparing and publishing a moderate priced handbook explaining the standard turns and containing general information on what to wear and what things carry on the trail, points to look for when purchasing equipment, hints on repairing breakages on the trail. Possibly there is such a book already published, but would it not be possible to have our own club handbook, which might also contain a list of the members. Only paid-up members would have their names inserted and, if publication took place early in the season, you might be spared what I am sure is an unpleasant task for you, namely the writing of pleading and reviling notices that are necessary to extract the annual fees from some of us before the season is almost over. The handbook might also give much information that may seem too elementary for the expert to consider but which would be welcomed by many beginners as well as by a few who have ski-ed for some years and still seem to be as ignorant as ever of the finer points of the art, such a one being.

JOHN TRAILSMASHER.

**Coming Events.**—Thursday, March 4th, usual night hike to the High Lea Club House. See if you can turn out this time. We have not seen much of you there this winter. Our hostesses will be Mrs. Leslie Davis and Mrs. Sydney Davis.

**On Saturday March 6th,** weather permitting, a ski jumping competition for School and Collegiate boys, juniors and intermediates, will be held on the Rockliffe tower. Competitors must report to S. R. Lockeberg at hill at 1.30 p.m. sharp. Prizes for each class will be donated by Siguard Lockeberg and by the Club.

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**The Intercollegiate race** for the Southam Trophy will be held this coming Saturday, March 6th. Start from and return to Dome Hill Lodge at Ironsides. Report at Dome Hill at 1.30 p.m.

**The Ladies' race** for the Club Championship will be held at Camp Fortune this coming Sunday (March 7th). Competitors please take special bus to Old Chelsea, leaving at 8.45 a.m. A sleigh will be in readiness at Old Chelsea to take competitors to Camp Fortune. First prize donated by Mr. S. Holden.

**Results** of the race for the Championship of Canada, held at Camp Fortune on Feb. 28, 1926—1st, J. Satre, New York, 2 hrs., 12 min., 30 sec.; 2nd, O. Satre, New York, 2, 16, 29; 3rd, B. Reid, Berlin Mills, 2, 28, 04; 4th, Rolph Monsen, Battleboro, 2, 31, 34; 5th, Ken Fosberry, Toronto, 2, 33, 41; 6th, L. Grimes, Ottawa, 2, 39, 41; 7th, A. Olsen, Montreal, 2, 42, 16; 8th, L. Moore, Cliffside, 2, 44, 51; 9th, L. Audette, Ottawa, 2, 49, 59; 10th, B. Grayson-Bell, Ottawa, 2, 51, 04; 11th, J. Bourgault, Ottawa, 2, 57, 34; 12th, F. Amyot, Ottawa, 2, 58, 58; 13th, G. Hamilton, Cliffside, 2 59, 28; 14th, A. Gordon, Ottawa, 3, 04, 32; 15th O. Overgaard, Berlin Mills, 3, 06, 52; 16th, O. Ellis, Cliffside, 3, 08, 08; 17th, J. Amyot, Ottawa, 3, 10, 01; 18th, F. Ellis, Ottawa, 3, 12, 24; 19th, J. Blain, Ottawa, 3, 16, 19; 20th S. Bruce Cliffside, 3, 24, 44; 21st, R. Roberge, Quebec, 3, 25, 59.

L. Grimes, being first of the Ottawa boys, wins the City Championship.

**Results** of the Ski Jumping Competition for the Championship of Canada, Rockliffe, Saturday, Oct. 27.—

Norman Berger, Montreal; S. Powers, Ottawas; K. Moen, Three Rivers; A. Olsen, Montreal; E. Hogan, Montreal; T. Langemyr, New York; Nels Nelson, Revelstoke; E. Larsen, Three Rivers; P. Knowlton, Montreal; J. Couture, Berlin Mills; W. Hammerstrom, New York; O. Overgaard, Berlin Mills; H. Bagguley, Ottawa; C. Clark, Ottawas; A. Vincent, McGill; R. Monsen, Battleboro; "Bing" Anderson, Berlin Mills; L. Côte, Montreal; W. Poitras, Ottawas; E. Poirier, McGill; A. Tiffin, McGill; C. Denis, Ottawas; A. Fillman, Ottawa; R. Vincent, Cliffside; T. Peat, Cliffside; E. Lapointe, Quebec; P. Gingras, Loyola.

J. Couture made the longest standing jump of the day (135 feet). R. Monsen, the longest falling one (140 feet).

**A bit long but . . .**—It was a long, very long course, but knowing the conditions under which it was made, we do not feel like censuring the trail makers. It had been measured on the map, and did not show there more than eleven short miles. The course was divided into sections, each being in charge of a separate party, and it was agreed that as soon as the sections had been joined up and ready, a strong party would go over the whole course to measure it and then one or more sections might be dropped out if necessary. Unfortunately the heavy snow storm of Thursday practically destroyed all the work that had been done. There was no opportunity to go over the whole course before the race and the map measurements had to be accepted. Who made those maps, anyway?

**"The competition** was held under the auspices of the Ottawa Ski Club, off their new hill at Rockcliffe Park which is an ideal spot for such sport. The hill furnished much more spectacular jumping than any of the other hills in Canada have ever done and gave the forty entrants a severe test in their ability."—(*The Montreal Gazette*).

**Keep off the Canyon Trail.** Clumsy skiers who are always breaking skis, ribs, arms or noses on the "mad descent" from the "top of the world" in the Canyon trail to Camp Fortune, why not leave that perilous descent alone and go by some other way? Here is a much easier and more enjoyable route:—After climbing the heights of Kingsmere, switch off to the left at the first shack you come to. Take the ridge road which is only a few feet from the shack. Follow the ridge road as far as Camp Fortune Junction, and shoot down the easy and glorious slopes of Camp Fortune Lane. There you are, and not a fall on the way, not a tree damaged, no terrifying moments and not a part of your anatomy injured. Do not take chances. It is not worth it.

**Tid-bits**—A family of skiers who are regular visitors to Camp Fortune have found a very ingenious way of solving the lunch question: They drive a cow up the trail, milk her, then kill her for beef. If any body's cows are missing in the flats, let them send a bill.—O. Overgaard of the Nansen Ski Club, having missed the bus and his breakfast on Sunday morning took the train up to Kirk's Ferry, ski-ed to Camp Fortune, arrived just as his name was being called for the race, and without a bite to eat or a rest hopped in and made the course in three hours. This just shows you what clean living and an empty stomach can do.—"No, I have not got my badge, my brother is using it to-day, but I have my ticket," said a "jeune ingénue" to the checker at Camp Fortune. Now, can you beat that for artlessness?

**Ski-Exchange.**—Found, on Sunday, one tuque, between Chelsea and Camp Fortune, (R. 1106).—Lost, Last Thursday, on Aylmer Road, when returning from High Lea, a pair of skis, (Q. 3000—L. 327)—Lost at High Lea on Saturday a pair of men's overshoes.—For Sale, pair of Ladies' Ski Boots, size 5½, for \$2.50, Q. 6747.—Found at Pink Lake, a vanity case, Q. 6747.—Left at Camp Fortune, a lady's fawn pullover sweater (R. 2227).

**A new route to Pink Lake**—Here is a new route to Pink Lake which we are told takes in some of the best hills in the country. See if you can find it and tell us what you think of it. Get off the bus at the railway crossing below Chelsea, go back toward city about three hundred yards, turn to right into private farmer's lane as far as a deep gully. From bridge at the bottom of the gulley take lane to the left, climb to the top, near houses, strike south-west through fields, going about ¾ of a mile. You now come to a bush enclosed by a wire fence. In this bush, just a few feet from the fence, pick up an old trail leading to Mine Road. Cross the Mine Road, go through bars (gateway) and continue on with trail until you arrive at East Side of Pink Lake. From there on find the easiest way to the lodge. Efforts will be made to have this trail tracked before this week-end.

**Lost**, a white gold watch. Our friend Bob Reid of Berlin Mills, lost this very valuable watch at Camp Fortune Lodge or on the racing trail. Finder please phone the Editor (Q. 3000 L. 730.)

**Ski-jumping under difficulties.**—Our friend C. R. M. Webbe, now living in exile in Windsor, Ont., writes as follows about a ski-jumping meet held at Rochester, Mich. by the Detroit Ski Club and of which he was an eye witness:

"I was much surprised to find such a high class of jumpers at a meet in this part of the country, and though the day was the worst possible from a standpoint of ski-ing, the exhibition was well worth watching. I was sorry to note the absence of O. S. C. men on the list, and had it not been for the fear of disgracing the club I'd have borrowed a pair of skis and tried it myself. However I compromised, and rooted for Berger. The jump is a fairly good one, but there was a total absence of snow, except on the jump and landing, where it was hauled and packed on straw. The take-off had to be extended ten feet before the competition could begin, as the jumpers were unable to make the landing. The crowd were all fairly new to ski-ing, and got quite a thrill out of the event, even though the jumps were small (the longest was 80 feet). They gave the jumpers lots of encouragement, and got quite a kick out of a simple skid-stop, or good recovery. Snow was too precious to use in making a place big enough to turn in at the end of the run, and most of the jumpers did the spread-tail to stop from running onto the straw.

**Exchanges**—"The worst and best moments in ski-ing are often separated only by seconds. You are standing at the top of some fierce slope which you have vowed to take straight. You look at the line, and observe with sick disgust that the change of gradient is abrupt at the bottom, and that the slight bump half-way down will probably send you into the air. A kind friend says: 'I shouldn't take that straight,' and your enemy remarks: 'Oh, it's safe enough. Jones took it straight yesterday.'

"And then suddenly, before you quite realise what has happened, you are off. The wind rises into a tempest and sucks the breath out of your body. A lonely fir swings past like a telegraph pole seen from an express train. Your knees are as wax, and your stomach appears to have been left behind at the top. You fight against the tendency of your skis to run apart—the inevitable sequel to undiluted funk—by locking your knees and turning your skis on to their inside edges.

"And now comes the supreme crisis—the run-out where the gradient suddenly changes. You throw your weight forward, and mutter, 'Hold it, hold it.' You clench your teeth, and make strange noises as the shock drives up through your legs. Your skis quiver with the strain . . . and you realise to your intense astonishment that you have not fallen.

"The pace relaxes. The hurricane dies away. You are drunk with the wine of speed, and you marvel at the faint heart which so nearly refused the challenge. You glory in the sense of control which you have recaptured over your skis, no longer untamed demons hurrying you through space, but the most docile of slaves. You are playing with gravity. You are master of the snow. You can make it yield like water or resist like steel. Suddenly you decide to stop. A rapid telemark, the snow sprays upwards, and the 'slabberie snow broth,' to quote an old Elizabethan, 'has melted about your heels.'

"A laugh floats upwards, and you much enjoy telling your enemy that his diagnosis was correct, and that he can safely venture to take it straight. And, if he falls, your triumph is complete."

—From "The Mountains of Youth" by Arnold Lunn.



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Edition No. 10

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