

Ottawa Ski Club News



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APRIL 3, 1940





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Ottawa Ski Club News

VOL. 20—No. 6

APRIL 3rd, 1940
SEASON 1939-40

Published by the
Ottawa Ski Club

Conditions still improving.—The fear that the rather meagre pile of snow that had slowly accumulated during the winter, would soon be worn through by the warm March winds and the warm March sun has proved unfounded. Far from squandering the little wealth that it found, March had added to it by some thirty inches, and more warm days will be required than April can usually muster to melt the new snow and the old one before May. Our bet is that we will be gathering wild flowers on skis this year. Again and merely for purposes of record, let it be noted here that since the last issue of the Ski News — in fact, since the first day of the winter — every succeeding week-end has been a little better than the preceding one, although every one agreed that “nothing could beat the last week-end”. Notice is hereby given that an additional fee of \$2 will be charged the members of the Ottawa Ski-Club for every week-end skiing after May 1st.

Spring skiing. — Easter snow, salty now, sugary snow, crunchy snow, corn snow, spring snow . . . by whatever name it is called, that delightful snow, half-baked by the March sun and associated with the tapping of the maples and the coming of the spring, is here again for your enjoyment, and it would be a shame to miss it. Sliding through sugary snow is quite a different sensation from schussing the deep powdery snow of January under 20 below, but it has a peculiar charm, all its own, and no ski season would be complete without it. One is no longer a slave of the trail; one can go anywhere through the bush over a firm though not icy surface allowing full control of the ski. Come out and get a sun burn over honey combed March snow!

The Easter Week-End.—Skiing conditions were marvelous during the long Easter week-end, but transportation facilities broke down badly on account of the

huge drifts of snow piled by a high north-west wind. Many who tried to go could not get there, and many of those who got there had to ski home leaving their motor car stranded along the highway. On Easter Monday, four buses left the terminal at 9 a.m. and made Old Chelsea about noon instead of the usual 9.30. It was only through good team work that they managed to get there at all, every bus pushing one another, and the rear one being pushed by the skiers. The snow plough was snowed in early in the game. A good time was enjoyed by all.

An apology and an explanation.—It does not take much to start an avalanche when conditions are ripe: the slightest commotion will send hundreds of thousands of tons of snow and rocks tearing down a slope on an errand of destruction; a shout or even a loudly spoken word will do it in the Alps; a whisper in the Hymalayas; the scratching of a pen has done it in the Gatineau Hills, and although this particular avalanche was made of protests, not of snow, it was almost as brutal as the real thing, and nearly swept away the Editor's desk. It was started by a mild criticism of the Ancien and Honourable Order of the Night Riders, who were accused of neglecting at least one trail of our system, the Merry-Go-Round, and of spending their nights in slothful slumber instead of improving the idle hour with a little machette and shovel work. Now this accusation about the Merry-Go-Round was based on a false report. This famous trail never was in better condition than this year, having been brushed off, re-cleaned after the ice storm, de-liced, de-bumped and re-marked. As to the accusation of sleeping at nights, no sane jury would entertain it because, after all, that is what the night is made for — that or playing cards. The Night Riders were not perhaps in the proper mood for seeing a joke when a joke was meant, having had

an overdose of hard work since the early fall. There had been more than the usual trouble over the trails; bridges washed out by the floods, general re-cleaning of the trails after the ice storm in December; an epidemic of bumps to be controlled, and all this in addition to the Sunday morning checking of hills and slopes in preparation for slalom and down hill races. The Riders felt that they were not getting due recognition for their efforts, hence this avalanche of protests from themselves and friends when the Editor put in his little joke about the Riders of the past "who never slept".

The amazing part of it is not that they should have slept but that they should have found time to sleep in the midst of all these tasks. Every member of the Club, including the Editor of the Ski News, is well aware of the splendid work done by the 1940 Night Riders who stand head and shoulders in this respect among all the "macheters" who ever rode the Gati-neau hills, by day or by night. Let them find here the everlasting thanks of the Ottawa Ski Club. Their names deserve to be recorded; they are given in alphabetical order: Bill Irving (captain), Buster Brown, Dan Coleman, Eric Cooper, John Fripp, Ian Fripp, Henry Gordon, Norse Hunt, Russel Lynton, Julian Mears, Wilf. Radford, Bud Smithers, Peter Snook, Bob Stewart, Craig West, Geo. Wood.

The Club is also greatly indebted to Joe Oliver and Pete O'Connor for much useful work in connection with the races, and to Howard Bagdaley who prepared and donated some sixty magnificent signs for the trails.

Casualties.—Wishes for a prompt recovery are extended to Lukin Robinson, of the "Dome Hill Ski Instruction Brigade" and one of the most accomplished skiers of the Ottawa Ski Club who had the misfortune of breaking his leg somewhere in the treacherous Laurentian hills, north of Montreal, and who is now laid up for repairs in the Civic Hospital in Ottawa — to John Pringle Taylor, the valiant chairman of the Racing Commit-

tee, who came off the worst of an encounter with a tree on Excelsior, and will need a couple weeks' rest to repair a damaged ligament — to Earl Fillman, Vice-President of the Norland Ski Club, who damaged his ankle at Fairy Lake.

A programme of work for the fall of 1940.—This includes the necessary improvements and repairs to our lodges in order to provide greater comfort to our members and facilitate the work of our caretakers, and the enlarging of our skiing grounds.

Buildings.—**Camp Fortune:** Building of a spacious wood-shed, providing for better water supply by piping water from reservoir in creek or by boring well on top of knoll (the first is certain, the second is not); building a fire-place in Tweedsmuir Hall (not indispensable, but nice to have); covering table tops with linoleum. Total estimated cost \$1,200. **Western Lodge:** Re-roofing, repainting and general repairs, \$200. **Pink Lake Lodge:** New stoves and repairs, \$150. **Slalom Hill:** Putting up small building, \$50. Total estimated cost, repairs and improvement to all building, \$1,600.

A suggestion has been made that the Club build additional sleeping cabins for fall and winter use, and our architect has been asked to submit a plan including three small units of four beds each, connected with a central living and dining room. Something may come out of this . . . if money can be found. If each unit could be rented, say at \$50 each, the scheme would be self-sustaining.

Sigurd's Jumping Hill.—The grade of this hill will have to be improved before the next championship meet. This is mostly rock blasting and rather expensive work. Providing a landing with a slope of 35-37 degrees, and moving the take-off back 100 feet or so, to allow for spectacular jumps of 225 feet or over, might cost as much as \$2,000 or possibly \$3,000. This however would be practically paid for by the proceeds of a good Canadian Championship meet — providing there is no

blizzard. The finished hill would be second to none in Eastern or Western Canada, and once graded it would not require any further expenditures for upkeep.

Enlarging skiing grounds.—Existing slopes around the knoll of Camp Fortune are getting overcrowded, and it is of the highest importance that new ones be provided and ski grounds extended. The makings are there, all around, only a few trees need be removed. There are splendid possibilities on our own property, between the Canyon and the Lane, around Bonnie Brae, and alongside the first part of the Western Trail, between the knoll of Fortune and Keogan's, where slopes could be opened up, extending as far as Lake Fortune. The length of the slide at the foot of Traveler's along the creek could be greatly extended by removing the few acres of alders there. To the East, along Switzerland, the magnificent hill of the Morning After, which is not far from the upper landing of the ski-tow, could be widened and lengthened by a few hundred yards as far as the creek or beyond, thus providing another slalom hill almost as good as Joe Morin's. The cost of all this work will be difficult to estimate, as a good deal of it could be done by volunteer labour, but it should be done, at once.

Anyone may help in the accomplishment of the above programme by purchasing a Treasury Note in the Ottawa Ski Club. Denominations: \$25, \$50, \$100. Yearly interest, 5 per cent. Redeemable in three years' time. The credit of the Ottawa Ski Club is as good as the Gatineau hills.

Colour schemes for marking trails.—

The use of paint of various colours on trees is the system generally followed for marking trails in the forests of Europe. There are red, green, blue or purple forest lanes, etc. Trees on both sides are marked with a bar of paint, refreshed every year. Combination of colours are also used, for instance two blue bars and a white one in the centre. This is the system followed in the celebrated forest of Fontainebleau in France, and also, according to Mr. Podolski, in the Carpathian forests in Poland, where it has proved highly satisfactory. Would this not be a better way than our system of tin disks or cardboard markers, which cost a good bit of money, fade out quickly and are not easily seen or read? A bar of a bright colour could be seen a long way, and could be brightened again at little expense every year. The Highland Trail might be blue, the Merry-Go-Round red, Little Switzerland yellow, etc. What say our trail makers?

A Championship Downhill Course.—

We have a number of very fair Downhill courses, but there is no denying the fact that none of them is really good enough for a Canadian Championship, although they have been used as such. What is needed is a slope about as steep as the side of a house, with plenty right angle turns and a few trees to act as bumpers; the trees are not really indispensable, but they might as well be included in the specifications because they will be there anyway. We believe that the ideal course could be found if a thorough search was made for it, not perhaps in the vicinity of Camp Fortune, where all possible slopes appear to have been surveyed, but in other parts of the mountain. There are likely places near Kingsmere, possibly from Kingsmount down to the lowest part of

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the road known as the Mountain Road, at the foot of Lariat's hill, where a drop of nearly a thousand feet could be obtained. There is a splendid drop also, long used as a log skidway, from the old camp known as Routley's camp down to Crilly's farm, also on the Mountain Road. There are also, further afield, in that wide stretch of territory extending from the old McClosky's farm, near the Western Lodge, to the Meach Lake Road, possibilities worth investigating. How about the Night Riders taking the lead in this search, now that competitions are over?

Farewell.—The contract with our advertising manager called for six issues of the Ottawa Ski Club News during the season of 1939-1940; this is the sixth and last, and although the Editor is willing, and the end of the ski season, even at this late date, appears to be just as far off as when the first issue came out, we must now take leave of our readers; our money is gone and the ink pot is dry. We hope that you have enjoyed reading this little magazine as much as we have writing it. May you all again be with us when the first snowflakes of 1940-41 brighten the knoll of Camp Fortune!

To all those who by their contributions have helped us in making these pages brighter, many thanks. We hope we may again have your co-operation next year.

Skiing at Banff.—No living person can fully describe the skiing potentialities of the Banff National Park; no person can estimate them. No person has tested even an infinitely small fraction of one per

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and Skis



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Limited

cent of them. All that can be said is that the Banff National Park is an area of more than three thousand, five hundred square miles of powder snow slopes, of which a few square miles are known and are used. Naturally there are slopes up which it is safe to climb almost to the nine or ten thousand foot altitude peak tops, while there are others on which at times and under certain conditions it is unsafe to put ski. Again, there are others — and we are now talking about virgin slopes — which are in the between-class, and can be used under the guidance of mountain ski guides versed in snowcraft. The why and wherefore of all this lies in the stories of the formation of the Rockies, the actions of certain winds, and the idiosyncracies of snow structure. Let it pass.—*The Ski Bulletin*, Boston.

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Swiss Ski Film

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Trials of the Trails

Reader, do you ever motor to the parking space on a sunny morning, your face beaming with happiness, and with the firm determination to get in a big day's skiing? Of course you do and like myself in your enthusiasm you sprint gaily over the golf course only halting at the first climb up to Excelsior. After a breather you continue to Little Switzerland and enjoy the runs until you come to Bon Ami. Now there you have something! Unlike the much advertized cleansing powder good old Bon Ami has scratched many a skier. However you start down and with the help of your good fairy and your ski poles you make it — perhaps. After a brief pause for anatomical inspection — I almost said station identification — you prepare for the Humdinger. What follows had better be left unwritten. After recovering your equilibrium and ski poles you proceed to Petticoat Lane and to Camp Fortune.

What matters if the beaming face is by now snow covered, or shiny with perspiration, for the sight of Dave's Chalet causes one to forget such matters quickly. By the way the person or persons responsible for the colour scheme are to be congratulated on their good taste and for their patriotism as shown by the colours red, white and blue — the latter issuing from the chimneys.

Now for lunch — after passing the critical eyes of the doorman. And what a

good meal can be obtained! The hour spend at Camp Fortune is one of the enjoyable experiences of the day. Here you met your friends and the relaxation is welcome.

But we intend to do a lot of skiing. So up and at it. Like an old car that has received an unexpected ration of gasoline we go up Bonny Brae. By the time the top is reached the legs are beginning to resent such treatment. However we have to keep up with the rest and take the Horse Race. Then to the Big and Little Dippers. Now I really believe these impish hills were originally known as the Big and Little Diapers, as many a skier has almost lost his pants there.

As we approach the Big Dipper I can hear him singing...

N'ya n'ya n'ya said the Big Dipper,
N'ya n'ya n'ya you can't ride me,
N'ya n'ya n'ya said the Big Dipper
Sloping merrily.

So...

I tightened my skis — and grasped
my poles,
Flew down the slope — landed in
the holes.
And ended up near a hollow tree,
While my pals at the top gaily laughed
at me.

After collecting all spare parts I could hear the Big Dipper derisively humming:

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N'ya n'ya n'ya said the Big Dipper,
N'ya n'ya n'ya you didn't ride me,
N'ya n'ya n'ya thumbed the Big Dipper,
Go sit on your skiis.

After watching the others descend I found myself bringing up the rear, although why the rear has to be brought up I do not know unless it is a part of skiing technique and of the body I frequently fail to keep in mind when going downhill.

By this time my enthusiasm has dropped in proportion to the feeling in my legs which still carry me on but complainingly. The Merry-go-round and Highland Trails add nothing to their strength and finally we come to the last long run. The more agile members of the party unhesitatingly take it wide open but I and my now wobbly legs take it more carefully saying to myself "Youth must have its (Highland) fling". What matters if in running the Highland Fling I was thrown and plumbed hitherto unknown depths of snow and finally emerged feeling, and probably looking like, a used tea-bag for had I not been, like the famous coffee, "Good to the last drop".

Reader was I tired after the day's outing? Yes, I was but I'll be there again next week-end. I'll be O.S.C'ing you.

H. O. W.

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When like some juggernaut or tram
Brakeless, not knowing how to tack
You find yourself about to ram
Some beauteous damsel in the back
Don't shout "Look out" or "fore" or
"damn"

The operative work is "track".

The well known Christiana turn
Is quite the simplest thing to learn —
"By simply bending at the knees
Just take the weight off both your ski-s
And swing them round as on a pivot —
On rising please replace the divot.

A "Sitzmark" well and truly done
Can cause a lot of simple fun
Sir Julius Winterbottom Bart
When struck upon the hinder part
By ski let loose by Betty Brown
Who higher up had tumbled down
Just placed his hand upon his heart
And murmured "Cupid! What a dart".

So may we wish you fun and games
With "Telemarks" and what's his names
And if when zooming from aloft
You crash; let's hope the snow is soft.

H. L. STEVENS, O.B.E.

"A Trip to Camp Fortune"

What a perfect day for our first ski of the season !

How eagerly we had looked forward to seeing Camp Fortune in her much-talked-of new attire of red and white, and to sampling the meals of the cafeteria which Dame Rumour had said were "par excellence" and at a price within the reach of even us in the low allowance group. One has to be in this group, of course, to experience the thrill the anticipation gave.

Arriving at our assembly point, we found the place crowded with a throng of boys and girls, all as excited as Betty and I, and all looking forward to a day of their favourite sport. We were not destined to a long wait, for hardly had the gossip started when someone (apparently on the look-out committee) announced, "The bus is here". Leaving our skis to the care of the driver, we scrambled aboard as though all wanted a window that they might view the wonderful Gatineau scenery. It was my good fortune to get stowed away into one of these observation posts where, scratching some frost from the pane, a clear view was obtained. The driver must have exceeded the speed limit for the scenery was passed so quickly that it scarcely had time to register, and in less than no time, so it seemed, we were rounding the curve at New Chelsea and the more eager and impatient ones began to search out their poles from the baggage shelf which was directly overhead. Believe it or not, Old Chelsea was reached with the bus right side up and there was about the same scramble to get out as there was to get in, for all seemed eager to hit the trail, but now, whether or not it was the bumping of the bus or the Gatineau air, the famous cafeteria we had heard about

seemed to be the goal ahead. Inquiring at the store as to the hours the bus left, and deciding to leave on the last one, we struck out for the camp.

The road was rather icy so, when we could, we cut across a field and had to almost break trail. "Look," said Betty, "we will have to crawl through a barbed wire fence." However, when we reached the obstacle two gallant youths held it up so we escaped without so much as a scratch. Before long we were on the Canyon. At this point in my story, I wish to extend my sincerest thanks and congratulations to the Night Riders for the splendid work done on the trails. The boys have given many weeks, and in fact months, of hard work in order to have the trails in such fine condition. The ski in was a merry one, and although I fell many times (I won't say how often), we landed safe and sound at the foot of the Canyon. The lodge on the hill top, nestling among the green trees, was certainly very picturesque.

When we entered the lodge several friends asked the same embarrassing question, "Did you fall?" As we were covered with snow it must have been quite evident that we did; so we admitted it.

The stoves were aglow and the whole building presented an atmosphere of friendliness and fun. The cafeteria offered a choice of appetizing dishes and for a while we couldn't quite make up our minds as to what to choose but at last

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we did and my ! but those hot dogs and steaming coffee were good. A few of our more industrious comrades were attempting to fry juicy steaks while the rest of us looked on and offered our unwelcome criticism about the way it should be done. After dinner we chatted at length (at least we girls did) and then decided to don our skis and try a few more hills.

Following the Little Switzerland until it branched, and choosing the trail to the right, we, much to our surprise, landed on the Slalom hill. While we stood debating whether to retrace our steps of to "crawl" down, we noticed a group of skiers awaiting our daring attempt. They waved their welcome and beckoned us to come ahead, so it was much to our chagrin that we prodded down the slope inch by inch. After testing our skiing ability on other trails, we decided that we should return to the camp for soon the last bus would be leaving. To return to Camp Fortune means to eat — and that we did.

Bidding "good-bye" to our friends and putting forth our best efforts, we arrived

Joseph Healy

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in Chelsea just in the nick of time, for the bus was starting. Our hope now is that with more experience we may be able, before the season is over, not only to enjoy the skiing at Camp Fortune, but also the beautiful trails from Kingsmere to Wrightville.

When we arrived home, it seemed the end of a perfect day, but somehow nature has provided that we must have the bitter with the sweet. The phone rang and it was Marny inviting me over for the evening, but the first ski of the season leaves me very tired and sore and it was with great regret that I explained to an understanding heart that I would have to go to bed — this I did and believe me I slept the clock round.

ELINOR WILSON,

QUERIES AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE DANCE

Why a closing dance ? — Because the one held last year was such fun that everybody wants another one.

If every one wants a dance, why limit it to 200 ? — Because the Jasper Room at the Chateau is the only room available and it won't hold more than one hundred couples comfortably.

Will you feed us ? — Yes, supper will be served at 12 midnight, and dancing will continue until 2 A.M.

Why penalize late ticket purchasers ? — Because we don't want to run the risk of having 500 clamouring for tickets when the dance opens. Get your tickets before 6 P.M. on Thursday April 18, at McGiffin's, Sparks St., and you will pay \$3.50 per couple; if you wait until the last day (April 19) you will be charged \$4.00, if there are any tickets left, which is not likely.

Positively no more than 200 single tickets (100 couples) will be sold. No ticket will be sold at the door if 200 have already been purchased at McGiffin's. You are warned, and if you are wise you will buy your tickets early.

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Ottawa Ski Club Supper Dance

Jasper Room, Chateau Laurier

Friday, April 19, 1940

At 9 P.M.



Tickets may be obtained at McGiffin's, 80 Sparks Street, for \$1.75 per person if purchased before 6 P.M. April 18th; and for \$2.00 if purchased on the day of the dance. Buy your tickets early and save fifty cents.

The dance will be positively limited to 200 persons.

(For further particulars see page 8)



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