

# MIDLAND SKI CLUB NEWS

THE MIDLANDS LEADING SNOWSPORTS CLUB

MAY 2006

## Gloucester Summer Race League *Guy Hornsby*

The first Gloucester Summer Race League is on Saturday 27th May (check the diary on the right for the other dates - ed). This year there will be a total of 15 teams racing - and, for the first time, we've entered three teams rather than our normal two. This reflects the growing number of people training regularly and keen to race and also reflects

### Help Needed!!

Hopefully everyone is aware that the Midland Ski Club is run on a purely voluntary basis, with everything being organised by members for the benefit of members.

However the committee can't organise everything and need your help! If there is something you think the club should be doing: get involved - we'll give you lots of support, but without the ideas and desire of members nothing is likely to happen.

We are organising more events over the summer period than we have done for some years, so please do support them. If they aren't what you want, then let us know what you do want!

There are some general roles we particularly need assistance now on:

**Publicity Officer:** To publicise MSC in the press.

**Advertising Bod:** To assist with selling advertising space in the MSC Brochure and generally liaising with sponsors.

**Access Developer:** To update and maintain the MSC Membership Database.

**Merchandiser:** to be defined!

None of these roles demand a lot of time individually, but assistance with them would help greatly. If you can help, please get in touch with Jeff Elmore on 07958 967709

the fact that each team will this year comprise 10 racers instead of twelve. The age groups remain the same: U10, U13, U18, U30, U40, U50 and O50

Teams come from as far afield as Devon to Wales to the Midlands. The GSRL provides a great introduction to racing for inexperienced competitors whilst at the same time gives experienced racers a competitive environment in which to perform. The onus, however, is on fun and team spirit - which we have in abundance!

In the morning each racer has two runs down a special slalom course with the fastest time in each age category scoring the maximum points - 20 for 1st, 19 for 2nd, 18 for third, etc. In the afternoon, there are the dual slalom races where competitors go head to head against other competitors with similar times from the morning runs - 3 points to the winner, 1 point for second and nil points for not finishing or being disqualified.

The attraction for inexperienced racers is that you can practice on the course itself from 9.00 AM to 10.00 AM with the racing officially starting around 10.30 AM. The day finishes around 4.00 PM and we usually have a drink and then head off to a BBQ hosted by one of the MSC families. This year we will be charging a £4 fee for every racer to cover the cost of the extra team: the club already paying the cost of entering the other two teams.

The day is a great day out, whether you are an experienced racer, a first timer, or anything in between: some members come purely because it's such a great social occasion as well.

See you at Gloucester!

## Diary

### **Mondays @ 7pm**

Adult Coaching  
Alan Parkin 01902 751288

### **Tuesdays @ 6.30pm**

Instructor Training - Roger  
Crombleholme 01785 714073

### **Tuesdays @ 7.30pm**

Race Coaching - Roger  
Crombleholme 01785 714073

### **Fridays @ 6/6.30pm**

Junior Coaching  
Nigel Dawes 0121 445 2594

### **Fridays @ 8pm**

Adult Coaching -Roger  
Crombleholme 01785 714073

### **27-May-06**

Summer Race League, Gloucester  
Guy Hornsby 01564 779927

### **11-Jun-06**

WMSA Schools Race, Telford  
Denis Cadman 01782 617912

### **15-Jun-06**

MSC "On The Piste", Birmingham  
Rep  
Jeff Elmore 07958 967709

### **23-Jun-06**

Evening Walk, Hockley Heath  
Jeff Elmore 07958 967709

### **24-Jun-06**

Summer Race League, Gloucester  
Guy Hornsby 01564 779927

### **1 to 2-Jul-06**

Telemark Festival, Tamworth  
Matt Higginson, 01543-256762

### **1 to 8-Jul-06**

Summer Skiing, Tignes, France  
Maureen Crombleholme, 01785  
714073

### **9-Jul-06**

Pony Trekking, Cannock Chase  
Hilary Cox 0121 554 9745

### **13-Jul-06**

British Ski Club for the Disabled,  
Tamworth  
Hilary Cox 0121 554 9745

### **22-Jul-06**

Summer Race League, Gloucester  
Guy Hornsby 01564 779927

### **19-Aug-06**

Summer Race League, Gloucester  
Guy Hornsby 01564 779927

### **14-Sep-06**

British Ski Club for the Disabled,  
Tamworth  
Hilary Cox 0121 554 9745

## Skiing The Pyrenees

Alastair Baillie

Many thanks for the article by Luis Lopes in your April 2006 edition. Being of the select few who seem to venture to the French Pyrenees, I was pleased to read of others with the same enthusiasm as ourselves for this area of France.

Four members of Midland Ski Club including my wife Linda and I, together with five other friends ventured off in mid-January this year to the slopes of the Pyrenees-Orientales area (the Mediterranean side). The area is now well known to Linda and I, this being the fourth year we have returned to the area.

Similar to Luis, but not quite so adventurous in our travels, we split our time between five ski resorts, all within 20-30 minutes drive from our self-catering gite Font Romeu/Pyrenees 2000, Les Angles, Formigueres, Puvalador and St Pierre Del Forcats/Eyne. Each different in character and slopes to suit all standards, but all with the same friendly atmosphere, few queues, excellent food, and almost entirely used by the French and Spanish locals. Each resort has enough slopes to explore for at least one full day and several days worth in some instances, Les Angles and Font Romeu being the largest of the resorts. More resorts were available to us within the area but we just didn't have enough time!!

Blessed with glorious blue skies for most of the week, fresh snow started falling Wednesday night and the last two days on fresh powder with so few other skiers on the slopes was wonderful. By Saturday morning there had been 800mm of fresh snow shame we had to head for home!!

Not an area known for sophisticated après-ski there are local hot baths including one near to Saillagouse at Llo, bowling alley at Font Romeu and the various restaurants/bars in the local villages - Val D'Isere this is not. At February half-term there is also a Via Ferrata open at Llo for the more adventurous as a break from the skiing. If Clubbing and nightlife is the mainstay of your holiday, this is not the place for you. But, if you want excellent snow and ski conditions, plenty of space on the slopes, a relaxed pace of life and good wholesome food, we can thoroughly recommend it. Best in January and February, although we did have a fantastic week just before Christmas 2004 here.

Ian and Kim Hancock, who originate from Birmingham and themselves started learning at The Ackers, now live in this area and have property for rent in the heart of the skiing area at Saillagouse plug,plug...([www.pyrenees-gites.co.uk](http://www.pyrenees-gites.co.uk)). They are good friends and have been fantastic in sorting various practicalities and making prior arrangements with local ski shops.

Outside of the ski season, this is a fabulous walking area especially for April-June and September with lovely scenery and a good network of high level walking routes.

If you are looking for a ski holiday on a budget (average £400 each all up this year), or something a little different from the alps, we feel sure you will not be disappointed. With budget flights available to either Barcelona, Girona, Perpignan or Carcassonne, the area is well served by airports. You will need to arrange car hire and be willing to drive to the ski resorts from your base to make the most of the area. Car hire is generally slightly cheaper from Spain. Accommodation is very reasonably priced, and ski hire and ski passes are notably cheaper than the alps. Six day ski passes for the nine resorts in the local area were around 125 euros.

All in all, a great holiday on a budget and with fantastic company..... who could ask for more?!!

## Tamworth Telemark Festival

1st/2nd  
June



A weekend of Telemark Skiing: instruction (from complete novice), competitions, film shows, and most importantly an opportunity to have a great couple of days skiing with people who are passionate about free heel skiing

Learn this classic, elegant and increasingly exciting form of skiing:

check out [www.telemarktips.com](http://www.telemarktips.com).

Contact Matthew Higginson at [telemark-skiing@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:telemark-skiing@tiscali.co.uk) ASAP with your boot size, height (cm), amount of telemark skiing experience and a contact telephone number or email.

N.B. There will be a cost for this weekend to cover the hire of equipment and to pay for instructors etc. as soon as I have the exact price I will let you know.



## Scottish Skiing lives!!

Ian Gray

Most of you will have read the reports and seen the photographs in the club's excellent book "Going Downhill Fast", telling how one of the Midland Ski Club's key activities in the early years was skiing at weekends, at the Ski Centres in Scotland.

The fact that these organised weekend trips ceased over 10 years ago, combined with a long run of milder Winters in the UK generally, might lead you to think that Skiing in Scotland is finished, or at least in terminal decline.

I am pleased to report that despite the onset of global warming, and contrary to much that is said and believed on the subject, **there is still skiing in Scotland**. It is true that there has been a succession of winters when snow has been sparse, and the number of days in a season which have provided good skiing, has been a fraction of what it was in the "old days". The Ski Centres have somehow managed to stay in business. In fact, they have actually improved the facilities, with new lifts such as the Funicular railway at Cairngorm (replacing the infamous sideways facing chair) and a longer 2 seat chairlift from the car park at Glencoe (replacing the old single seat chair) .

The best news of all is that Spring 2006 has seen the some of the best snow in the Scottish ski resorts for many years. Diane and I skied at Glencoe on Easter Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April. In 40 years of fairly regular visits to Glencoe, I have rarely seen wider snow cover than we had at Easter. We put our skis on at the bottom of the Car Park Chair and skied off the chair straight to the Plateau tow - even I hadn't done that before !! The piste conditions were excellent with fresh Spring snow. The weather was mainly sunny with the odd squally snow shower, and visibility for the great views across Rannoch Moor was also good (well, most of the time!).

One thing that one learns from long experience of Scottish skiing is not to plan too far ahead! Nevertheless, on the hope that this year's good snow is the start of a run of good seasons for Scottish skiing (to follow the run of poor seasons), I suggest that members who would be interested keep an eye on snow reports next season and if favourable, we could try an informal revival of the Scottish trip.

PS Some things don't change - the café and toilet at the top are still awful the roaring fire and the pint at at The Drovers Inn are still superb.

## Davos: A Palace in the Snow Nigel Dawes

The Easter training week was a success once again. Nearly 40 club members went to Davos in the week running up to Easter, all of us for the first time, but I expect not the last. We left Friday after work, but due to the M25 doing a good impression of a car park had an extended wait in Dover. Still we reached Davos in time to enjoy dinner and find our rooms. The youth hostel is called "palace", and certainly forget all preconceptions of youth hostelling: it was spacious light airy and no one could use all the hot water in their en-suite.

On the first morning we all caught the funicular before catching the mountain railway to the top of the mountain. The tunnel network to the slopes can be enjoyed for a while - too long if you take the wrong turn! Five different groups went off in varying directions, and enjoyed surprisingly quiet pistes - on a Sunday, and only one hour from Zurich? Meeting up for lunch we even managed to sit together in the mountain restaurant.

Monday was overcast, but that helped keep the temperature down, and the precious white stuff intact, while we all got down to some serious (and not so serious) training. By Tuesday it started to snow and this continued right through the week - lots and lots of it, Piste bashers went out but the pistes were still deep in fresh snow, fun parks became extra fun parks as the snow was extremely deep with quite a few very snowy figures appearing out of unanticipated drifts. Black 13 became a very popular run (after finishing it!): a long run down a valley and back to the road to catch the bus back to the funicular, the bus was typically Swiss-precise to its timetable of course.

The run into neighbouring Klosters was just as long though with no moguls, but the stop sign really did need to be obeyed - as those who bounced off the orange barrier were able to confirm! This visit gave the option of a return to Davos by train or the "Prince Charles cable car" - he wasn't around, something about Harry passing out at Sandhurst, apparently.

Some were not sufficiently tired out by the skiing and managed to go swimming at the Davos leisure centre, luxuriating in a hot pool with hydro-massage while looking up at the snow flakes falling all around. A brave (or foolhardy? -Ed) few managed to add the snow angel experience as well - far too Nordic for my taste.

The sun did come eventually out and we were treated to some fantastic views, and the opportunity of some high mileage skiing, those who skied back into Davos found out why it is black, with occasional brown. For some reason a cemetery greets you at the end of the run.

7 days skiing must eventually come to an end but we all got in some serious skiing on the last day, before setting off for home on Saturday evening. One of the children said "the best MSC holiday ever, thoroughly enjoyed, learnt lots, 10/10". Plans are already being drawn up for next year, but this was a hard act to follow. Now it must time for the racing season to start.....

## Freestyle Competitions, Training, & Squads

Within the next two months there are three freestyle competitions. The first is the Sheffield Freeze on May 27th & 28th. This is followed by the Kendal Moguls & Big Air on June 10th, and then after this the Yorkshire Championships on June 24th at Xscape, Castleford. Full details and on-line entry for all of them are now available at <http://www.freestylesnowsports.co.uk>

Congratulations go to these people who have recently been selected for the England Freestyle Team. You can view the team members at <http://www.freestylesnowsports.co.uk/british/fsteam.html>

The dates of the Orange AIM summer series have now been released, again details on the above web site, also at <http://www.aimseries.com>

Finally, if anyone you want to take part in the Summer training in Tignes, do let Martin Carr know soon by emailing [martin.carr@freestylesnowsports.co.uk](mailto:martin.carr@freestylesnowsports.co.uk).

## Warwickshire Stroll Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 7pm

Come for a Midsummer Evening stroll through the Warwickshire countryside. Meet at The Wharf pub on the A3400 in Hockley Heath at 6.45pm. The Wharf is just opposite the Jaguar garage and opposite the B4439 turning to Lapworth (OS map 139 grid ref 153726). The walk is about 4 miles starting and finishing at the pub, and will follow the banks of the Stratford-Upon-Avon canal for some of the way and crossing fields and meadows on the return. It should take around 2 hours to complete.

Please let me know beforehand if you are intending to come along so that I have an idea of numbers. Look forward to seeing you there! Jeff Elmore 07958 967709 [jeffski@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:jeffski@blueyonder.co.uk)

## Riding on Cannock Chase Sunday 9th July

Reading *Downhill Fast* reminded many members of the trips we used to do to the Black Mountains for a day horse riding. These used to be very popular so we've arranged some riding in the Midlands own version of the Black Mountains: Cannock Chase.

Meet at the Cannock Chase Trekking Centre off the A34 north of Cannock at 2pm on Sunday 9th July, and we'll ride from about 2.30 until 4.30. Riders from Novice to experienced riders are welcome and you are guaranteed riding which is almost totally off road. The cost is £32, plus £1 for hire of a helmet if you don't have one.

Using the form at the end of the newsletter, please book by 4th June so we can confirm numbers with the center.

## Ski Show Dates

With only a few weeks until the days start getting shorter again, it's time to make a note in your diaries of the UK ski shows this Autumn. Daily Mail show - Olympia 18th - 22nd October; Northern Show - G-Mex 28th - 29th October; British show - NEC 3rd - 5th November (much later than in previous years)

## Many Many Thanks

Two long-time stalwarts of the MSC left the committee at the recent AGM: Ann Williamson, who has been Club Secretary for over ten years, is moving to Devon, and Malcolm Gratton, who has been on the committee for over 30 years, has finally decided to call it a day.

Many many thanks to both for their contributions over the years - we're already missing you!

## New Discount

10% off with Mountain Paradise - holidays to the High Tatra mountains of Slovakia.

<http://www.mountainparadise.co.uk>

Full details of all members' discounts can be found on the new updated MSC website at

<http://www.midlandski.org.uk>

## Cancelled!

Martin Bell regrets to inform us that his Summer Race Camp for 2006 has had to be cancelled because of the closure of Wycombe Summit after their fire in November 2005. Martin has looked at alternate venues but has not been able to put anything together for this year. He has been running Summer Camps since 1988. He hopes to run the camp again next year and will keep us posted.

# Annual General Meeting Summary

The MSC Annual General Meeting was held on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2006. The Committee has decided that we should publish a brief overview of the meeting highlighting the salient points for those members who could not attend on the night.

Any member who would like more information, copies of the 2005 AGM minutes or the financial reports should contact the Chairman or Secretary.

## Chairman's report

The Chair thanked the Committee for all their hard work over the year.

Club organised holidays had been generally successful although numbers had been down and this had caused some issues financially. It was noted that there is now more choice and competition for ski holidays in general. Skiers now have more options, and there is a tendency for "last minute" decisions on trips which conflicts with the way group bookings work. Tour operators are also demanding deposits and balances earlier these days. The club will be looking at spreading the risk and burden for holiday organisers by using a risk/planning sheet and will be reviewing the way we organise trips.

The club had attracted 137 entries for the Birmingham Schools Race, which had turned out to be a very successful day. Thanks to all who made the event possible. This event has greatly enhanced the image and profile of the MSC and has already attracted new members.

The MSC will be hosting one of a series of West Midlands Ski Association (WMSA) Fun Races in the autumn, along with the Telford and Stoke Ski Clubs.

The Gloucester Summer Race League (GSRL) goes from strength to strength. Last year saw two MSC teams entered: the A team was placed 3<sup>rd</sup> as in the previous year; the B team was placed 11<sup>th</sup> proving to be a good introduction for youngsters. In 2006 MSC will now have three teams entered at the GSRL, so it is proposed that racers will be charged £4 per head per race to help fund all three teams.

The MSC now has 12 racers registered with Snowsport England, and 5 of these race at Grand Prix level. 10 skiers trained with the WMSA squad and 1 competed at inter-regional level.

More people are now skiing on Tuesdays and Fridays. Thanks went to parents and supporters of the GSRL teams and to the coaches and instructors for all their work on behalf of the MSC. Mondays Club night at The Ackers is still going well.

Looking to the future, more coaches are needed to support the growth of the Club. The club needs to publicise the opportunities for coaches and instructors within MSC.

The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year: The dinner had been a superb and highly successful event. There had also been a memorabilia evening with old films, ski gear, books, etc. The Chairman thanked the 40th Committee for all the hard work they had put in, especially on the book "Going Downhill Fast!"

Other very popular and successful events were the evening with Martin Bell, "Searching for Yogi and Boo-boo" and the Christmas party / Achievement awards event. Holding fewer, high quality events had proved to be a good formula and it is intended to do the same for 2006-07.

*The future:* Where is the club going?

- Trying to grow the club,
- Working more with Snowsport England possible implications from the modernisation plans.

- Stands at Ski Show get to a wider audience skiers and companies. Aim to repeat this in 2006
- MSC was hoping to get sponsorship in the shape of race bibs.
- More self-funding or contributing events
- Improve internal systems budgets, event planning, marketing, publicity

Operationally the committee is looking to improve the way the club works. Event planning will play a key part in this. MSC needs a PR person and was looking for someone in the club to take this forward. The club needs to reach as wide an audience as possible.

The general modernisation of Snow Sport GB involves Snowsport England. SSE receives no support from Sport England and this could affect MSC's access to funding.

## Treasurer's Report

Balance sheet shows a net reduction in the value of the club. A large part of this is due to the activities associated with the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and costs of lost deposits on holidays. In addition there has been expenditure on assets such as the start ramp at The Ackers

With the plans to increase activity, it is necessary to build up the reserves and cash flow resources. A lot of events are not self financing. The Committee will be looking at how to tackle this and will be preparing an operating budget to help manage costs better.

## Membership Secretary Report

MSC membership currently stands at around 500 individual members.

Between October and March we gained 73 new members, but lost 102

It was noted that there is a steady churn of members who join for a short time and then fail to renew. It is difficult to pinpoint the reasons for membership loss; sometimes it is people leaving the area, youngsters growing up and leaving for university, or other interests taking over from skiing.

The Snowsports industry has noted a growth in people taking up skiing, but people are more independent nowadays and are less likely to join a club. People used to enjoy being part of a club, but newer members may not feel the need. Younger people seem to join the Club for racing.

Members of MSC have a diverse range of interests and a wide demographic profile. The Club does need to attract more members.

## Election of officers

Jeff Elmore was re-elected as Chairman.

Diana Horth was elected Secretary following Ann Williamson retiring from the post after 11 years.

Bryan Arnott was re-elected as Treasurer.

Alan Parkin agreed to remain Club President.

Malcolm Gratton has decided to stand down from the Committee after 36 years service. The Chairman proposed a vote of thanks to Malcolm and Ann for all the hard work and contributions that they had made on behalf of the MSC over the years.

Jill Seaman has kindly agreed to act as Child Protection Officer for the Club. This post is now a requirement of affiliation to Snowsport England.

## Special Items

Membership subscriptions will be increased slightly for 2006-07 following a proposal and vote at the AGM.

The rise will be £2 adults, £1 children and students, £3 families, plus the individual increase. MSC subscriptions have remained very low for many years

## AGM Summary (cont.)

and have not increased in line with the costs of running the Club and the increased costs of holidays (and therefore the deposits we need to lodge for them).

Over a period of many years, the Club's reserves gradually built up due to having an income from a large membership base which exceeded the expenditure. In more recent times, the income from membership subscriptions has slowly reduced due to a reduction in the number of members and the subscriptions being kept at a very low level. Whilst this was very good for the members, in that they have benefited from excellent value for money from their membership, this has slowly reduced the reserves that the Club has. With the increased activity that the MSC now undertakes, these reserves have been gradually eroded.

SSE affiliation fees have risen 5-6% each year and it was expected that MSC fees to SSE would be around £1400 in December 2006 depending on insurance costs for SSE.

Members get exceptional value for money with their membership when compared with other clubs and organisations, e.g. free coaching, discounts, holidays and training weeks at discounted rates (where the standard of coaching is very high and excellent value for money). There are also opportunities to join in with other holidays, train as an instructor, and members get free newsletters and a yearbook. Members also benefit from transceivers being available to hire, a video and DVD library and insurance.

## Birmingham & South Midlands Schools Race

The Birmingham & South Midlands Schools race was held on Sunday 2nd April at the Ackers. Over 130 children from schools from as far afield as Kidderminster, Staffordshire, Leicestershire, Hagley and Coventry were involved in the race which saw competitors completing two runs of the course with their best time counting.

This is the first time that MSC have organised such a race and feedback from the participants, sponsors and the English Schools Ski

Association was all very positive. Many many thanks to all those involved in organising and running the race.



### Individual Winners

#### Girls:

U8 Emily Rushton  
U10 Elisabeth Thomas  
U12 Olivia Waller  
U14 Francesca Pioli  
U16 Emily Dawes  
U19 Sarah Dawes  
SPL Kathryn Lumley  
Overall: Emily Dawes

#### Boys:

U8 Matthew Waller  
U10 Nicholas Phelps  
U12 Adam Lee  
U14 Christopher May  
U16 Alex Ponsonby  
U19 James Hornsby

### Team Results

#### Under 8

1<sup>st</sup> Balsall Common  
2<sup>nd</sup> Balsall Common

#### Under 10

1<sup>st</sup> Balsall Common  
2<sup>nd</sup> Balsall Common  
3<sup>rd</sup> Balsall Common

#### Under 12

1<sup>st</sup> Heart of England  
2<sup>nd</sup> Balsall Common  
3<sup>rd</sup> Greswold  
4<sup>th</sup> Banners Gate Jnr  
5<sup>th</sup> Oldswinford Primary  
6<sup>th</sup> Greswold  
7<sup>th</sup> Education Otherwise

#### Under 14

1<sup>st</sup> Arden  
2<sup>nd</sup> Heart of England  
3<sup>rd</sup> Holy Trinity  
4<sup>th</sup> Haybridge High

#### Under 16

1<sup>st</sup> Arden  
2<sup>nd</sup> Heart of England  
3<sup>rd</sup> Solihull  
4<sup>th</sup> Holy Trinity  
5<sup>th</sup> Hillcrest  
6<sup>th</sup> Kingsbury

#### Under 19

1<sup>st</sup> Solihull  
2<sup>nd</sup> Waseley Hills

**Overall** Solihull U19

## Roller Ski Course - Co Durham

A new event in the roller skiing calendar this year, the roller ski training weekend in beautiful County Durham will allow you to experience one of the best roller ski circuits in Britain not once but TWICE (with the second event coming up in September).

For this course, our chief coach is surely Britain's best ever cross-country and biathlon skier Mike Dixon. Under his meticulous guidance, you will improve your skiing technique (classic and skating), gain confidence for skiing, pick up loads of helpful training tips, and just have a fantastic time. The course is open to anyone, whether you are beginner, intermediate or expert; whether you are a tourer, a racer, a downhiller or whether you just want to try cross-country skiing.

You may decide to put all your newly-learned skills to the test in a race on Sunday morning, which is the British Roller Ski Series race 3 and will be over 15 km (10 laps) mass start classic style, beginning at 10:30 am. Roller skis must have rubber barrel wheels (neoprene/polyethylene wheels are not allowed) and ratchets. There will also be a shorter race for juniors and others, depending on demand.

On Saturday evening, we will dine together, during which you will hear many stories about the exploits of British skiers and, if you're very lucky, Mike may even give us a presentation or show the video analysis of your day's performance.

**Interested?** You should be by now, so the details are as follows: Where: Hetton Lyons Country Park, Hetton-le-Hole, off the A690 between Durham and Sunderland. The Country Park is reached by leaving the A1 at Junction 62, heading northeast on the A690. After a few miles, turn right towards Hetton-le-Hole, and the park is signposted from the centre of Hetton-le-Hole (beneath the wind turbines).

**When:** Saturday 8th July (start at 10:00 am) - Sunday 9th July (ending around 4:00).

**Price:** if booked more than one week in advance and including race entry: £60 for the weekend or £35 for one day (excluding meals and accommodation). Otherwise £80 or £40 respectively on the day. Entry fee for the race only is £10. Equipment hire is available.

**Accommodation:** A new hotel this year, the Travel Inn Hotel, at the junction between the A19 and A1231 west of Sunderland. From this junction, go 100 m east towards Sunderland and the hotel is on the left, Wessington Way. The cost is £25 per night based on two people sharing, available Friday and Saturday (plus £5 or £7.50 per day for breakfast).

Even better, why not take part in all three SSE/BMCCSA events this summer: Hetton Lyons, Durham, July (this course); Hayes, London, 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> August; and Hetton Lyons, Durham, 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> September. All of these will have the same Head Coach, Mike Dixon, so continuous technical improvement is guaranteed, and all three are part of the British Roller Ski Series: 15 km pursuit in August and 20 km free technique in September. By entering all events now, you can save a STAGGERING £30!

Further details: contact Adam Pinney, 01582 602995; [aapinney@tinyworld.co.uk](mailto:aapinney@tinyworld.co.uk).

## Ski Club Of Great Britain Summer Ball

Where: The Royal Lancaster Hotel, Lancaster Terrace, London W2 2TY

When: Friday 7th July

What time: 7pm 'til late

Dress Code: Black Tie

Tickets: £90 before 28th May or £900 for a table of 10

Get ready for the coolest night this summer...

Dress to impress, wine and dine, and bop 'til you drop at this year's SCGB summer ball. The evening kicks off with a drinks reception, followed by a three-course dinner (includes a half bottle of wine per person). The Raging Horns - an awesome 14-piece soul, funk, pop and disco band



- will provide the sounds, the bucking bronco and casino are back, plus there's few other tricks we'll keep secret for now. Also - win fabulous prizes in our annual charity draw including flights, ski and board equipment and luxury ski holidays.

Book online at

<https://www.skiclub.co.uk/skiclub/eskishop/summerball/default.asp> or call Maggie on 0208 410 2016 to book. Here is a preview of the event: <http://www.skiclub.co.uk/skiclub/news/item.asp?intCategoryID=1&intItemID=3597>

## MSC "On the Piste"

The MSC will be visiting the Rep to see "On The Piste" a comedy play, featuring real skiing sequences, on Thursday 15th June. We've negotiated a special price of £16.95 for the top seats in the house, but this is dependent on getting a minimum of 20 people. **Please book by Friday 2nd June** using the form on the last page of this newsletter. The performance starts at 7.30. Meet in the bar from 6.30.

This promises to be a great evening of entertainment, and if they require

any stand-ins for the action scenes, then they will have the right people in the audience - book your tickets today!

The show includes actual skiing scenes, so it will be

interesting to see what size of slope they have created on stage! For those of you with curious minds... Many of the cast had to learn to ski for the play, to see how they got on, go to this weblink where you can see the cast in action at Swadlincote (on the new surface!!): [http://www.birmingham-rep.co.uk/genpage/On\\_The\\_Piste\\_cast\\_go\\_skiing.asp](http://www.birmingham-rep.co.uk/genpage/On_The_Piste_cast_go_skiing.asp)

More details at <http://www.birmingham-rep.co.uk>



## Photo of the Month



Andrew Moreton took this photo of three of the MSC members who he skied with most of the time. at Hinterglem on the club holiday in March. He was impressed with what they were all skiing- especially when he found out that their combined age is around 220 years!

## BSCD

Apologies if any helpers didn't get the message cancelling the scheduled British Ski Club for the Disabled session at Tamworth planned for 11th May. This has been reorganised for the 25th May, and will then revert to the normal 2nd Thursday of every second month, i.e. the next session is 13th July.

If anyone can assist on these sessions, held at Tamworth in the afternoons, please get in touch with Hilary Cox on 0121 554 9745

## West Midlands Schools Race

**Who are we?** WMSA - the West Midlands Ski Association - is the Regional body of Snowsport England, our sport's governing body. WMSA includes: Birmingham, Hereford, Shropshire, Staffordshire, West Midlands, Warwickshire & Worcestershire. We aim to promote skiing for all, and we provide training for the Region's squad, leading to team selection for national competitions.

**The WMSA Schools Race 2006** is a popular annual event, which attracted over 115 entrants in 2005. Our aim is to encourage young skiers to represent their school and try skiing as a competitive sport, as well as a holiday, school trip or recreational activity. It is a step on the ladder to higher levels for those who want to.

**Who can enter?** Anyone who lives in, or attends a school in, the WMSA region. Skiers from adjacent regions are also welcome as individuals or school teams, but will not be eligible for the overall male/female/team prizes. We do not require any previous competition experience, but must insist, **for reasons of safety**, that all competitors can use the lift and ski in control from the top of the slope.

**Team or Individual?** We wish to encourage team entries, as this means those new to ski racing will be able to join their more able fellow pupils. We also recognise that schools may not be able to find enough competitors to form teams at all age groups. Teams are categorised by the age of their oldest member, thus enabling even the smallest of schools to enter a team. *Team competitors are automatically entered in the individual event FREE. An individual's time will be used in both the team and individual events - there is no need to ski twice.*

**Prizes:** There are prizes for both the team and individual events in all age groups. The team winners receive a variety of shields and cups, which are held by the school until the following year. Team members also receive a small trophy to complement the team's prize. There are also male/female/team overall prizes for West Midlands region competitors only.

**How to enter:** please complete and return an entry form **by Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2006**. Entry forms are available on the MSC website.

## MSC Brochure

It's the time of year that we're starting to think about the MSC Brochure.

We're looking for contributions in the way of articles and photos which show some aspect of the MSC, or which would be of interest to current and potential members.

We're also looking for advertisers to help us cover the cost of the brochure.

If you can help with either, please phone Rob Weeks on 01926 470656 or email [news@midlandski.org.uk](mailto:news@midlandski.org.uk)

# Six Midlands Skiers and the CSIA in Andorra

*Congratulations to Mike Woodcock and Sarah Walsh who went to Andorra for instructors courses with the CSIA (Canadian Ski Instructors Alliance). Mike gained his level 1, whilst Sarah also gained level 2. Sarah reports:*

On 25<sup>th</sup> March a dozen skiers left England: destination Soldeu Andorra to take Canadian Ski Instructors Alliance Level 1 and Level 2 courses. After a 4½ hour transfer from Barcelona, we finally arrived in Soldeu at 9pm and enjoyed a relaxing evening in the Sport Hotel before moving into self-catered apartments the following day. Before the course started on Monday morning we had Sunday to familiarise ourselves with the resort. It also gave us a chance to get all those 'caught an edge' moments out of the way (which most of us took advantage of!). Everyone decided to have an early night in preparation for the early start on Monday morning only to be woken up at around 3am by a group of Irish lads on a stag week who decided to drag all their ski equipment up the stone staircase after an evening drinking - which didn't at all go down well with us!!

So, tired and irritable, we set off

for day one of the Level 1 course which turned out to be a fantastic day of skiing in lovely sunshine. The afternoon was not so good as we had lectures to go to - never a good idea when you've had no sleep and have had to ski hard all day. We were suddenly brought back down to earth with a bang when the trainers informed us all that our homework(!!!) was to prepare a presentation for the following morning and that we would need to be in the classroom by 8.30am which meant Mike didn't even have time to eat his 'concrete porridge'. So generally, very little time was spent in the bar and more time spent remembering those school days and preparing lesson plans!

By day 4 things had gone from bad to worse as we had now suffered 4 nights of no sleep and lots of hard work .... Nevertheless we found light relief in watching our Irish friends negotiate their way down a slope with their boots undone, no gloves or jackets, poles wedged firmly under their arms and no idea how to stay on their feet!!

Despite all this the week was still a successful one in that most people obtained CSIA Level 1. Mike

Woodcock was especially pleased and is rumour to be considering changing his name by Deed Poll to 'Mike CSIA'! At the end of the week we were invited to the ski school talent night which involved guys dressed as girls, instructors who thought entertainment was to dribble food and other nasty things over each other and a whole host of other 'talents'.

Week 2 in Andorra started off much quieter after the departure of our Irish friends. We met up with the rest of the Level 2 group whose ages ranged from 17 to 75 (so you're never too old!) and despite another group of people taken their turn trying to ruin our sleep patterns, those who went on to take the CSIA Level 2 successfully passed this also. At the end of a very exhausting two weeks we were invited to a local hotel to enjoy food and drinks with the very friendly Canadian Instructors and the local ski school which was a great end to both our time in Andorra and the 2006 ski season.

Hopefully next year everyone will be up for taking Level 2 or Level 3 and we'll be back enjoy another great trip.

## MSC "ON THE PISTE" - THURSDAY 15th JUNE

To: Mr J Elmore, 99 Water Orton Lane, Minworth, Sutton Coldfield. B76 9BD Tel: 07958 967709

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please book me \_\_\_ tickets for "On the Piste" at the Birmingham Rep on Thursday 15th June.

I enclose a cheque made payable to Midland Ski Club for £\_\_\_\_\_ being full payment of £16.95 per person.

## PONY TREKKING - CANNOCK CHASE - SUNDAY 9th JULY

To: Ms H Cox, 85 World's End Road, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham. B20 2NS Tel: 0121 554 9745

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please book me \_\_\_ places for the Pony Trekking at Cannock Chase on Sunday 9th July. I enclose a cheque made payable to Midland Ski Club for £\_\_\_\_\_ being £20 deposit per person, and undertake to pay the balance of £12 per person on the day.

To help the centre allocate suitable horses, please give approximate weights of participants here: