

Issue 55  
Summer '22



# TRACKS



The Newsletter for Midland Ski Club Members

MIDLAND SKI  
CLUB

**All you need to know  
about dry slope racing**

**Club Holiday  
Read about their  
Off piste adventures**

**MSC racers of all ages looking  
strong in new club competition**

**New Feature - Midland ski dogs - see page 6**

# Welcome to Tracks from the Editor

Contact: [news@midlandski.uk](mailto:news@midlandski.uk)



We were pleased to see lots of club members taking advantage of the late spring snowfall to snatch some last-minute skiing across Europe. The dry slope racing season got underway in Pembrey in April with club members enjoying a weekend by the seaside, and in May the popular Gloucester Summer Race League kicked off its first race meet of the season.

Club members have been out in force this year, many easily spotted by their eye-catching Midland Ski Club clothing. Don't forget, club clothing is intended for all members, not just youngsters or racers, so follow the link and update your wardrobe with some high-quality club branded clothing.

Follow this link: <https://2and2print.co.uk/midland-ski-club/>

Julie Jones - Editor of MSC Tracks

## Midland Ski Club Annual General Meeting

Interested in hearing more about what the club gets up to? Interested in becoming involved? All members are invited to our AGM in early September. Further details will be sent to all members over the summer.

## Chill Factor Race Training Session

On Sunday 15 May, 26 intrepid children and adults made their way up to Manchester for our first indoor training session of 2022. With a fantastic mix of racers from U10s through to Masters, new racers through to one of our Dry Slope Ambassadors, everyone enjoyed a great evening of training with coaches Roger, Joe and David.

Our next indoor training session is on Sunday 24 July at Chill Factor in Manchester. Cost per person £65. Contact Di Fennell if you're interested in attending. But don't delay, places are filling up fast!



# British Alpine Championships Tignes-Easter 2022

Les Jones



It was great to see a return to the Alpine British Championships in Tignes this year after they were cancelled in both 2020 and 2021. The event ran in two main blocks, with the FIS GB Alpine Championships running from 27th March to 3rd April, and for the younger age categories up to U16 the British Children's Championships from 4th to 7th April.

From our club, we had a couple of racers competing in the National Championships (NC) and National Junior Championships (NJC) at FIS level, with Jack continuing his great racing performance across the Slalom and Giant Slalom (GS) disciplines, with a commendable 26th in the NJC Slalom event, and Hannah competing for the first time and doing great to earn her first FIS points in Slalom and GS.

We also had three younger skiers competing at U12, U14 and U16 levels in the Children's Champs. Tommy competed across U12 Slalom, GS and a Combination event, earning some great finishes that he was really pleased with in his first season on snow. George (U16) and Robert (U14) competed in Slalom, GS and Super-G, with both pushing hard and competing well. They were both carrying niggling injuries and competed through their respective pain barriers to gain good results, with George coming home in his instantly recognisable catsuit to massive cheers and applause after his final Slalom run.

Due to the deteriorating weather conditions the race programme was compressed during the week, and the final day of racing took place during heavy snow fall. Nearly half a metre of snow fell in the last 24 hours in resort - great for snowball fights and making snowmen, not so great for racing.

Once again, we are very proud of all the Midland skiers that put themselves out there to compete, not only on the artificial surfaces in the UK, but across the snow events in the Alps and beyond - Thank you! Go MSC!



## Summer Fun at Swadlincote!

Our popular Swadlincote summer day camps will be returning on:  
Wed 27th, Thu 28th July, Thu 4 Aug, Tue 16th Wed 17th,  
Thu 18th, Tue 23rd, Wed 24th, Thu 25th Aug  
These camps offer a mixture of fitness, skill development and race performance, with lunch included, and are a bargain at £65 per day.

Follow the link to book your place now!

<https://eola.co/w/1107/activities/summer-ski-camps-at-swadlincote>



## New coaching from Farr and wide

Midland Ski Club has long been recognised by skiers for the quality of our race coaching, and we continue to attract new members because of it. And as amazing as our coaches are, there's always room for a fresh pair of eyes to contribute to making our racers even better.

In May, we were delighted to welcome Uniq coach Ash Breese to lead a session with our most experienced racers. It was a fast-paced session that kept members on their toes and was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

In June, Olly Farr from Ski Racing Supplies ran some sessions for us, challenging our racers with some technical drills, tricky courses, as well as his dry Yorkshire humour. Thanks to both for taking the time to work with the club and we hope to see you back again soon!



## MSC Winter Race League

A very well done to all those skiers who took home trophies in our Winter Race League Series.

Category	Female Winner	Male Winner
Under 8	Bea Swabey-Collison	Thomas Evans
Under 10	Hattie Taylor	Isaac Herd
Under 12	Sacha Tolley	Edward Lloyd
Under 14	Marnie Taylor	Tom Gilyead
Under 16	Scarlett Milner	Rowan Waller
Under 20	Hannah Phillips	Charlie Deem
Open	Joely Side	Adam Lee

Special mention to Hattie, Sacha and Charlie who also won their age category league titles last time they were awarded, in 2020.

# Peer in the snow it's going going gone!



We are delighted that so many families have booked to come along to our trip to Peer in Belgium in October half term, 24 to 28 October 2022. Whilst our main hotel is now fully booked, there are still rooms in other hotels so please let Di know as soon as possible if you're interested in joining us.

Compared to the cost of trips to Peer with the ski racing academies, our trip is fantastic value for money and, on top of that, you get to be coached by

the amazing team from MSC that you know and love! Some of the adults coming along have booked to train alongside their children, whilst others no doubt will be joining us on a few trips out to explore what the surrounding area has to offer.

Prices include accommodation and all meals, slope passes and coaching from MSC coaches. We will arrive (skiers arrange their own transport) on Monday 24 October ready for an afternoon training session and leave on Friday 28 October after lunch.

Please contact Di as soon as possible with your details and she will provide further information including cost. Peer is a very popular venue and Di needs to confirm our booking as soon as possible, so don't delay!



Come along to our stand at the National Snow Show on 15-16 October 2022 at the NEC in Birmingham. It's a great opportunity to catch up with club members, buy a few goodies, as well as listening to some of the fantastic speakers including Anna Turney, Keme Nzerem, Chemmy Alcott, Eddie 'The Eagle' Edwards, Mollie Hughes and Tim Warwood.

If you're able to spare a couple of hours to help us on the stand, Jeff would love to hear from you! Contact him via [news@midlandski.uk](mailto:news@midlandski.uk)

## "THE MOUNTAINS ARE OURS"



THE NATIONAL  
**SNOW  
SHOW**  
23 - 24 October 2021  
NEC Birmingham

# New Feature

## Midland Ski Dogs



Welcome to our new feature where we will be introducing some of the canine friends who come along to watch us ski.

Our first poster girl is four year old Lady Taylor, who is a regular at races and training sessions, and can often be found sneaking a quick snooze in the car. She loves coming to skiing because there are plenty of laps to sit on and lots of friends to give her a fuss.

If you would like your pooch to be featured in the next newsletter, please send in a photo and a few details to [news@midlandski.uk](mailto:news@midlandski.uk).



## English Schools Ski Association Squad

Club members were represented in force at ESSkia camps in Europe this spring, alongside coaches Roger and Joe. Congratulations on all those selected for the squad!

*Here's a report by Emily C on the U14 Trip to Geilo:*

This year I was overjoyed to be selected to go to Norway with Esskia, it was an exhilarating experience and I would definitely go again!

We arrived at the airport at five o'clock in the morning, we got given hoodies and coats but we had pre-ordered the sizes so it was a decently quick process. The only problem that occurred during this trip was when we went to check our bags in, the airline was very unorganised causing it to take us ages. It took so long that we missed our flight! Due to this our coaches had to rebook a flight that had enough spaces for all of us. Seeing as our flight was now in the afternoon, we had the rest of the day to eat food, relax and shop at the airport. We eventually got on our flight and once we reached the other side, we collected our bags and hopped on a coach.

Once on the coach, we ate then slept due to the fact it was one o'clock in the morning. Arriving at the hotel at three wasn't really the plan but at least we got there in the end!

The rest of the trip went remarkably well. We didn't just ski! We went to town and did some shopping, we did some swimming in the evenings after skiing and went in the sauna, we even had a karaoke night! Obviously the girls beat the boys.

This experience was marvellous and I loved it, I hope I get re-selected next year!



ESSkia Norway March 2022: Roger, Finn, Reece, Emily & Georgia

# Introduction to Dry Slope Racing

## So, you fancy giving dry slope racing a go?

Here's André's introductory guide to get you started!

Dry slope racing in the UK is predominantly a summer sport with events ranging from club fun races to national championships held on the various slopes across England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

At Midland Ski Club (MSC) we supplement this with our own Winter Race League which acts as a great entry point for skiers before they embark on their first summer's season of racing.

So, for those thinking of taking to the slopes, embarking on their first season of racing this summer, what next?

### Race Types

*Gloucester Summer Race League (Under 10 to Over 40)* – this established fun race series takes place at Gloucester Ski & Snowboard Centre with one race per month from May to September. It has always been a popular race with developing MSC racers both young and old. The format and personnel running the event are currently under review although it's usually hosted on a Saturday or Sunday with timed and head-to-head racing running from 9am to 4pm. There is usually a team element to the series with points from MSC racers being added towards a club team competition. Online entry portal [www.skireresults.co.uk/events](http://www.skireresults.co.uk/events).

*Stoke Fun Race Series (Under 6 to Under 99)* – another fun race series run by Stoke Scorpions at Festival Park Ski Centre in Stoke. This year's series has one race per month from April to July. It is an individual race series with both timed and head-to-head racing. Online entries only at [www.stokeskicentre.com/funrace2022](http://www.stokeskicentre.com/funrace2022).

*CN (Club National) Races (Under 10 to Over 30)* – a national series of races, with seed points, available for U14 and older with numerous events run by ski clubs across the country often combining two races in a weekend (Saturday and Sunday) at the same slope, or slopes close to each other. One of our home slopes, Swadlincote, is host to three of these races this season, while Gloucester is also host to two races, that could all be done as day trips from most Midlands locations. Other events further afield would typically require an overnight stay and are suggested for more experienced racers. The MSC-hosted CN race on 2nd July and our partner event (run by Telford Ski Club) on 3rd July are an ideal entry point into this series for developing racers who want to test out these events before embarking on a fuller program in future seasons.

Beyond the CNs, there are the GBR Series and Championships (Under 10 to Over 30) – GBRs are 5 national level races with more challenging courses to test out the top seeded racers in each age category; with the Championships run by the Home Nation Governing Body (HNGB). Given the increased difficulty, these are not normally recommended in a first season of racing unless skiers are particularly keen from the offset. CONTINUED OVERLEAF



## Midland Club National - *Much more than just a race!*

As noted in André's article, our annual Club National race is being held at Swadlincote on Saturday 2nd July. This is our opportunity, once a year, to show the rest of the country what a great club we are, as well as hopefully raising plenty of money for our coffers.

It would be great to see ALL members there to support the club, help recruit new members, support the team organising the event, and above all else cheer on our racers many of whom will be racing in their first club national. See you there!!

If you would like to help on the day please email [Di-lesleyh@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:Di-lesleyh@blueyonder.co.uk)



## Which Races to Enter

Here is a list of the upcoming races that are recommended for first season racers. For keen racers, and those happy to travel further there are others that might be suitable, all listed on <https://gbski.com/calendar.php?calendar=ART> Have a chat with parents and coaches if you're interested in any others to find out more and get some help on what to expect.

Date	Description	Category	Venue
11-Jun-22	Stoke Fun Race Series - Race 3	Fun Race	Stoke
25-Jun-22	Gloucester Summer Race League round 2	Fun Race	Gloucester
02-Jul-22	Midland Club National	CN	Swadlincote
03-Jul-22	Telford Club National	CN	Swadlincote
16-Jul-22	Gloucester Summer Race League round 3	Fun Race	Gloucester
16-Jul-22	Stoke Fun Race Series - Race 4	Fun Race	Stoke
06-Aug-22	Central England Snowsports Assoc CN	CN	Swadlincote
13-Aug-22	Gloucester Summer Race League round 4	Fun Race	Gloucester
24-Sep-22	Gloucester Summer Race League round 5	Fun Race	Gloucester
16-Oct-22	Gloucester Summer Race League round 6	Fun Race	Gloucester

## How to Enter

All races can be entered individually online and are most likely to have MSC skier and coach representation.

Fun Races don't require registration with national governing bodies and are done via the slope or club website.

For Club Nationals, racers are normally registered with one of the national governing bodies (England, Wales, Scotland or Ireland) to get the racer a unique number for their gbski competitor profile – 1st year is sometimes free. It's not mandatory, and you can enter as a day racer, but it is recommended.

Most CN online entries are done at <https://entries.snowsportengland.org.uk/> - again please ask other parents of racers for help to get you registered. The full calendar of races with links to each event's invitation document (to give you more information about the race and specific entry instructions) can be found at <https://gbski.com/calendar.php>

# Your club needs YOU!



We can't run our races without support from our skiers and their families, but we understand that volunteering to be a course official can be daunting. There are various roles involved in running a race, from handing out and collecting bibs, acting as a gate judge on the slope, to marshalling the racers at the top and bottom of the slope. If you are interested in getting involved and would like to understand more, please speak to Di, Dave or one of our race managers and they will happily explain what is involved and arrange for you to shadow one of our experienced volunteers at a race.



# Birmingham and Midlands Schools Race-2022



by André Tchakhotine

Sunday 27th March being Mothers' Day meant most mothers enjoyed a lie in and breakfast in bed followed by Sunday lunch out with all the trimmings and no mess at home. For the ski mums across the region it was a far more action packed day supporting their children at the Birmingham and Midlands Schools Race run by MSC's team of volunteers.

After a 3-year absence due to Covid it was great to see the event resume with 55 skiers representing 14 schools. In the spirit of inclusiveness, the race was open to individual entries to complement the team competitions, allowing 11 children to take part despite not having enough skiers in their schools to fill a team. With many of these individual racers taking home medals from the event it is hoped that they will generate some interest to fill a team next year. The five schools (Solihull School and 4 of the Warwick Foundation schools) that were able to enter teams did so with all age ranges covered from U10 to U19 and most of those in both boys and girls categories. Finally, in order to give the individual racers a taste of team racing, we drew them at random into three "MSC" teams of mixed age and gender.

Onto the racing itself; we had a range of abilities from GBR podium racers, recently blooded Club National participants and youngsters having their first ever taste of ski racing on the day. There were some closely fought individual results; the U12 girls and U14 boys in particular with both categories' top two spots separated by just 0.3s. In the team event the fastest team overall was one of the MSC teams loaded with strong club racers. Notable performance also goes to the Solihull School U14 boys who topped the timings for all school teams beating U19 and U16 teams in doing so. Solihull School's U12 girls fought off a closely matched Warwick Prep team to take top spot in their category. There was success for Warwick Foundation



(their 7 teams showing that the MSC collaboration is reaping dividends) as the Warwick Junior School team U12s won the boys' stubbies category and Kings High's U16 girls won the girls' gates competition.

Many thanks from me to all the volunteers who made the racing possible, a pleasure working with you all for my first race management in 15 years. Plenty of parents grabbed a clipboard to gate judge under the watchful eye of Les Jones. Thanks also to Julie Jones for taking on the starter role at short notice, David Beech for herding the kids onto line at the top, Emma Farrington for commentating as well as Brandon Fennell and Dave Lee for their usual double act on all things timing and data and Di's support with bibs and registration then keeping things on the right path throughout. Last but certainly not least mention is to Joe Feiven, he set an excellent course on the day that was challenging enough to keep the experienced racers interested yet simple enough for every racer to finish at least one run.

Full results will be made available in the results archive on the website. In the meantime below are a snapshot of the individual podiums and team results. We hope to build on this year's success next year so look out for early notice of entries once we set a date and start nagging your PE teachers to help you raise a team!

## Individual Podiums

U8 Boys		
Rank	Name	School
1	Edward Padmore	Randlay Primary School
2		
3		

U10 Boys		
Rank	Name	School
1	William Padmore	Randlay Primary School
2	Léonard Le Goareguer	Fluckleigh School Solihull
3	Frank Slater	Warwick Junior School

U12 Boys		
Rank	Name	School
1	Edward Lloyd	Lawley Primary
2	Veer Naga	Solihull School
3	Joshue Currie	Solihull School

U14 Boys		
Rank	Name	School
1	Archibald Tchakhotine	Solihull School
2	Josh Davies	Warwick School
3	Arjan Naga	Solihull School

U16 Boys		
Rank	Name	School
1	Tom Gilyead	Warwick School
2	Seb Cockburn-Miller	Warwick School
3	Daniel Gilyead	Warwick School

U18 Boys		
Rank	Name	School
1	Charlie Deem	Haybridge High School & 6th Form
2	Fin Cooper	Warwick School
3		

## Trophies Awarded

Champion School		
Rank	School	Points
1	Solihull School	9
2	Warwick School	3
=	Kings High	3
=	Warwick Junior Schoc	3
=	Warwick Prep	3

U8 Girls		
Rank	Name	School
1		
2		
3		

U10 Girls		
Rank	Name	School
1	Zoe Davis	Newport Junior School
2	Darcy Yarnold	Warwick Prep
3	Loretta Cooper	Warwick Prep

U12 Girls		
Rank	Name	School
1	Chloe Holland	Aqueduct Primary
2	Sacha Tolley	St John CofE Primary
3	Delphine Tchakhotine	Solihull School

U14 Girls		
Rank	Name	School
1	Emily Holland	Haberdashers Abraham Darby
2	Kitty Carter	Kings High
3	Alya Cynar	Kings High

U16 Girls		
Rank	Name	School
1	Isabella Osborne	Kings High
2		
3		

U18 Girls		
Rank	Name	School
1		
2		
3		

Best U12 Team			
Rank	School	Team	Time
1	Warwick Junior School	U12 Boys	42.10
2	Solihull School	U12 Girls	45.45
3	Warwick Prep	U12 Girls	46.83

## Team Results

Girls Stubbies				
Rank	School	Team	Time	Points
1	Solihull School	U12 Girls	45.45	3
2	Warwick Prep	U12 Girls	46.83	2
3	Warwick Prep	U10 Girls	51.56	1

Boys Stubbies				
Rank	School	Team	Time	Points
1	Warwick Junior Schoc	U12 Boys	42.10	3

Girls Gates				
Rank	School	Team	Time	Points
1	Kings High	U16 Girls	42.85	3
2	Solihull School	U14 Girls A	44.62	2
3	Solihull School	U14 Girls B	54.78	1

Boys Gates				
Rank	School	Team	Time	Points
1	Solihull School	U14 Boys A	37.07	3
2	Warwick School	U16 Boys	39.52	2
3	Warwick School	U14 Boys	41.31	1
4	Warwick School	U19 Boys	43.41	-
5	Solihull School	U14 Boys B	43.95	-

Mixed			
Rank	School	Team	Time
1	MSC	B	32.40
2	MSC	A	37.30
3	MSC	C	41.81

# Warwick Schools Ski Racing

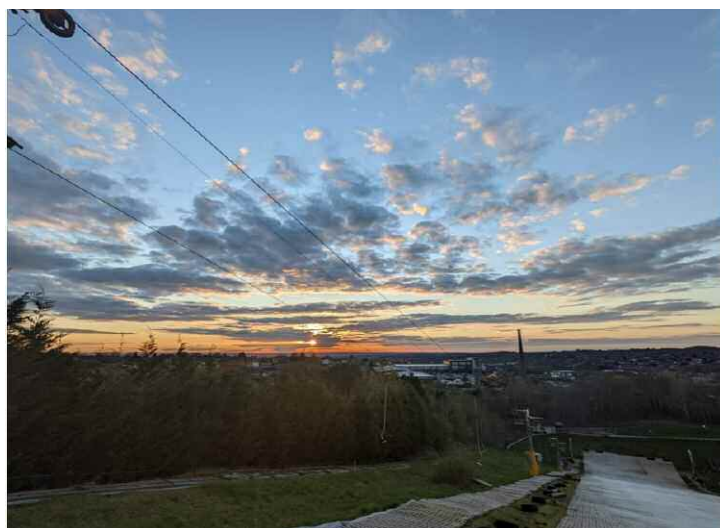
After an Easter break to recharge, the Warwick Schools were back training at Swadlincote on Sunday May 1st under the watchful eyes of our excellent coaches Emma and Brian from Midland Ski Club.

It was a great day with 15 skiers attending and lots of improvement among those participating. The morning consisted of technical work to improve each skiers' base level and then after some individual training runs, the afternoon was mostly spent competing in head-to-head and team Dual Slaloms. This really bought out the competitive side of our skiers with some really close races resulting. It was great fun and enjoyed by the parents too!

Thanks to all the committed skiers who attend these sessions, the dedicated parents for transporting & cheering the skiers on, and as always, the coaches for their hard work and endless energy.

Also of note was Hugh's excellent result at the GBR summer race series event in Llandudno.

We also held a 'taster' session at Swadlincote on Sunday 22nd May for some new younger skiers who showed an interest in joining the Warwick Schools Ski racing programme. This was followed by our next regular session at Swadlincote on May 29th and looking ahead, we are now working towards to the ESSKIA pre qualifiers in September.



# Launch of new Hundred Club

A message from the Chairs, Di Fennell & David Beech

Midland Ski Club is constantly looking for ways to enable the club, its members, and local communities to benefit from fund raising. We have decided to launch our own Midland 'One Hundred Club', giving members chance to win £250 as well as supporting the club and our nominated charities.

## How will this work?

Members will be able to buy one (or more) tickets numbered between 1 and 100, at a cost of £5 each per draw. In the first week of each month, we will hold a draw, in public, at one of our training sessions or social gatherings. The jackpot prize will go to the owner of the ticket of whichever number is pulled out of the draw each month.

The first member to enter would be able to choose from all hundred numbers, the second person the remaining numbers, and so on. A full list of who's purchased which numbers will be published before each draw.

Tickets are to be paid for by the last Friday of each month, ready for the draw the following week. The only commitment we ask is that members pay for two months at a time. After that, if they don't want to take part anymore, they can release their number(s) for someone else to buy.

## How much could members win?

The member whose number is picked from the draw each month will win the jackpot of £250. We also guarantee that each month, £50 of the proceeds will be donated to a charity chosen by the club. The remaining £200 of ticket sales each month will be retained by the club as fundraising towards repairs, social events, equipment etc.

All participants must be 18 years of age or over, but there is no restriction on the number of tickets you can buy each month. If you are interested in taking part, please contact Di Fennell at [lesleyh@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:lesleyh@blueyonder.co.uk)

Many thanks for your support - Di and Dave



Monthly 100 Club Winner

PAY

One lucky MSC Member

Date: Every Month

THE SUM OF

Two hundred and fifty pounds

£250

12-43-18

58642392

For and on behalf of Midland Ski Club

# The Club Holiday

## Tignes 26 Feb-5 March

By Catherine Frankenburg

After having had to defer our skiing in Les Arcs in 2021, Diana looked for something that wouldn't cost too much more in 2022, and she found what looked like a good deal with Crystal in Tignes Le Lac. As usual we had people with a wide range of ski experiences on the holiday, and our group mingled as ever and joined with different people to ski on different days, according to routes planned, levels of energy, or planned lunch venues! We also tried something new with a number of us booking up for Off Piste 'Legends' (ie tailored to those no longer in their 20s or 30s but who still very much want to develop) courses, with Snowworks.

The great bits - It was fantastic to be back skiing on snow again. The weather was perfect - sunny with blue skies all week, but happily, not warm enough to affect the snow at all. Despite Tignes and Val D'Isere having had no new significant snowfall since Christmas time, both resorts had looked after their slopes well, so the skiing was good everywhere for the week. We were very much welcomed in Tignes. The good exchange rate meant that we could all enjoy the mountain views and ambiance at lunch and for drinks. Despite the Covid restrictions still being in force in France at the time, we were only asked very occasionally to show covid passes - and this was sometimes when sitting outside!

The Off Piste courses were at 2 levels - those wanting an Introduction to Off Piste were in a group (together with a couple of non-club skiers to make up numbers) for 5 half days

skiing developing their skills and confidence in off piste areas around the 2 resorts. Those more experienced in Off Piste skiing signed up for 5 whole days to cover off piste routes around the resorts and both groups skied some fresh snow in the week and skied slopes that challenged them as the Snowworks instructors knew the area and found the best off-piste available.

There were a couple of not so good things which affected us - staff shortages created havoc for Birmingham and Bristol airports, long before the media reported problems; our flights were delayed for us to get to the planes. One person's luggage failed to arrive, so although he was assured several times it would arrive, he had to borrow all ski kit for the whole week. When he returned back, his luggage had just gone out to Chambery, a week late!

Also, although Hotel Tignes 2100, looked stylish and it was close to the main ski lifts in Tignes Le Lac, there were problems - the rooms were tiny; the corner ensembles were only partitioned from the small bedroom space by glass on the 2 sides, with a curtain covering one wall only and most of the shower doors didn't shut properly, so water flowed into the bedrooms. Plus, the lounge had exceptionally low hanging stag horn chandeliers, which despite being plastic caused several head injuries (luckily only minor!) both in the mornings when getting ski boots on to get out, and after après drinks after the day's skiing. The hotel dining room was too small for all the guests, so



dinner times had to be booked at breakfast, and this sadly cramped our usual happy styles of all mingling at each meal to socialise.

Diana, as always, worked extremely hard to try to sort problems with Crystal, especially departure details for us all, but luckily hotel staff helped her and us out. After all our problems returning from Ischgl on our last Club holiday at the start of the pandemic, we were pleased that this year we did all get home (some eventually) with no Covid crises seriously impacting our departures this time.

So many thanks to Diana for all her work, and we are now looking forward to next year's Club holiday to Obergurgl.

# Off Piste in Tignes

By Brian Arnott

For many of our party this was the first proper introduction to off piste skiing.

We were blessed with glorious weather throughout the week.

Our instructor Mike was tasked with pushing our comfort zones without terrorising our levels of confidence, a difficult task as you can imagine, but one he more than achieved.

Starting with an initiation run from the side of the Creuz run we progressed during the week to traversing into various cols around the Tignes area to finish the week feeling far more confident and wanting more of the same type of skiing.

Many thanks to all of our party Gillian, Derek, Dan, and Paul from MSC also Shuk and Alex for an excellent week and team effort, and of course Andy who left us standing on the first day and progressed to a higher level.



# A “legend’s” Tale

By Rolly Winzer

After no skiing for 2 years, was it wise to enrol on a Snowworks off-piste backcountry course? Four days in and I didn’t think so even though this was a “legends” course, tailored for the more senior skier. However, on the 5th day, creatures of the sea and sky notwithstanding, a semblance of my ski legs returned. With wall-to-wall sunshine, plenty of snow despite nothing fresh for some weeks and glorious settings, it didn’t seem unwise at all.

So how did it work? Members on various courses gathered in the designated place and each group was allocated a Snowworks instructor. It was emphasised that anyone becoming uncomfortable in their group could easily move to another. I joined 4 non MSC skiers and our instructor Sam, a mere youth of less than half my age but hugely experienced. All being like-minded, we got on well though it was interesting to see how group dynamics developed. Snowworks had recommended skis of no less than 99mm width underfoot. As it happened, with the mixed snow conditions this wasn’t strictly necessary but having hired as recommended, I did take time to adapt to the planks on my feet.

Initially, much of the first day was on-piste with more forays off-piste in the afternoon after the obligatory “find the transponder” safety exercise. Heading home we traversed into the Chardonnet Couloir to enjoy patches of soft, untracked snow. Traversing was to be a feature of accessing the head of back country valleys, the tracks we followed being mostly well grooved. Avalanche risk was low.

The highlight of the following morning was La Grande Motte with stunning views, including Mont Blanc on the horizon. Our first steep, bumpy off-piste slope was some

preparation for the afternoon’s route down the Valon de la Sachette behind the Aiguille Percee. Three groups met up to cross the tricky approach traverse in safety. Andy had some very expletive comments to make as we waited, watching the 2 other groups go down ahead of us. Once we got going ourselves, trying to deploy the techniques Sam had been explaining, it was exhilarating.

The following morning we “warmed up” on the Fasse, in fine condition until the bottom where I and my planks were most ungainly but managed. From the top of the lift system above Le Fornet we traversed into the Pays Desert, following another group for a wonderful, undulating valley run. After lunch, Les Grands Vallons and some good snow hosted our efforts, one of mine on my back! A super day though.

More on Thursday with a valley run from the top of the Cugnai lift above Val D’Isere down to Le Manchet in the morning. In the afternoon, we skied off the Grande Motte again down the Genepy run into the Leisse valley.

Our last morning was taken up with tackling bumps down the Col des Ves above Val Claret. We joined another group for lunch before our last foray down the Petit Chardonnet in the afternoon. All our groups gathered again for a farewell drink with our instructors and to hand kit back.

I found it a challenging week but one I was pleased to have done. Greater challenges of a different nature were tackled by Diana by getting us to Tignes at all. As late as the final evening’s dinner, early morning departure details still had to be sorted. Many thanks to her and also to Catherine, for her liaison with Snowworks to organise the courses.

# Ode to the Club Holiday

Iain MacDonald

Being in full-time work with a young family it's difficult to get away alone very often but when I do, I really enjoy it. Imagine as a parent of a young family wanting to travel alone. It's not a world first.

What makes a place, well it's the people and it's very hard to say how wonderful the people are who tend to go on the club holiday. I cannot emphasise how welcoming and interesting they all are. It can be hard to get to know new groups, I appreciate that, but it only comes with time, and I can guarantee that most people would be delighted to meet the type of person who goes on the club holiday. There is not one bad egg and if it is well then, it is probably me anyway.

I still feel like a new boy as I am a lot less experienced than most of the skiers here. These are not problems. I have learnt an awful lot and made some rather wonderful friends and acquaintances on the club holidays over the last 10 years, and it is by far my favourite week of my entire year (I can only write this because I know that my family will not read this newsletter).

Let me give you an example: this year for the first time I met a retired art teacher let's call him John Doe. He was carrying a sketchbook with him and was sketching over lunch. Then a little tiny miniature sketchbook no bigger than a first-class stamp fell out. This had been made and given to him by his toddler granddaughter. His job was to fill it with sketches which he did. All the while providing us with some fantastic conversation over lunch on a number of occasions. These ranged from art, philosophy, economics, politics, how to live one's life so that when it finally comes to a close one is sure that one has lived well and has the minimum of regrets. Those types of conversations rarely happen and if you are interested in them then they are fabulous to have.



If you are less interested in conversation, there is still much varied conviviality over dinner and over a few beers or glasses of wine. All of which is very entertaining and good-humoured. The reason why is because there was a truly interesting mixture of people from all backgrounds and all with experience of life who I am very privileged to call my friends.

Skiiing is also very important, and I have to say that over the years my skiiing has improved immeasurably from quite a shaky start. I have never once been made to feel inadequate. On some occasions we've had some great lessons together and these have really benefited my skiiing to the extent that I could not imagine when I started that I could ski as well I do now. I have turned from somebody who likes to spend a lot of the day in a nice restaurant high upon the slopes into someone who would prefer to remain on the slopes much of the time. I can finally cover distance on my skis. Making this progress is important and I have to say life enhancing. Although I am very grateful when we do stop for a morning hot chocolate or lunch.

As I said it's a mixture. But it's one of the finest mixtures I have ever been privileged to meet. I can only suggest that if you are thinking of going then you should give it a go. You would be unlikely to be disappointed. It's a sort of open secret society but where you can also learn an awful lot about skiiing.

# GBR Club Series

By Julie Jones



This year Snowsport England, Scotland and Wales have launched a new Club Competition at the GBR indoor and outdoor races.

As in the individual series, there will be separate club competitions for indoor and outdoor events. Each round of the club competition will award points for the top five places in each age group across all races taking place during the day, with points 'weighted' to take account of the number of finishers in each category.

## GBR outdoor 1 – Llandudno 30 April 2022

With 19 members of the club racing, supported by coach John, we had a great opportunity to start the club competition off as we mean to go on. With an amazing first place overall for Jack F and second place overall for Amber F, we amassed 80 points, putting us joint second with Ski Rossendale (SRR), only 20 points behind the leaders Ravens Tigers (RTR).

## GBR outdoor 2 – Llandudno 1 May 2022

Buoyed on by the previous day's success, our racers had another fantastic day with Amber taking first place overall. This put Amber joint first overall in the Womens series ranking. We earned another 80 points, the same as the previous day, but unfortunately both RTR and SRR earned the same as Race 1 too, so we ended the weekend joint second on 160 points, with RTR in the lead with 200 points. To put this into context, there were 24 clubs competing over these first two days so to be second overall is an amazing achievement and testament to everyone's hard work. Many thanks to coaches Joe and John for invaluable race support.

Individual outdoor series standings at the end of the first weekend included:

- Amber F joint first overall in Womens and first in U16s
- Sacha T fourth in U14s
- Claudette P first in Masters
- Joss B second in Masters
- Jack F fourth overall in Mens and third in U21s
- Charlie D second in U18s
- George B fourth in U16s
- Huw H second in U10s



CONTINUED OVERLEAF

# GBR Club Series

Continued



## GBR indoor 1 – Chill Factore 7 May 2022

So, having proved we're a force to be reckoned with on dry, how could our racers perform in the fridge? With 14 skiers registered to race in Manchester, from U12 up to Masters, hopes were high. Coaches Roger and John were on hand to offer invaluable race support. Our U16 racers and Masters women stole the show, with George B winning U16 and taking third Mens overall, Amber F winning U16 and taking fourth Womens overall, Claudette P first in Masters and Joss B third in Masters. This is Claudette's third GBR win in a row, simply amazing! Congratulations also to Josh C on a well-deserved second in U12s boys.

This means that at the end of day 1 the club was first in the overall indoor club competition with 100 points, 20 ahead of Hemel in second place with 80, which is no mean feat against clubs that specialise in indoor racing!

## GBR indoor 2 – Chill Factore 8 May 2022

A mere 11 hours later and we were back for day 2 in the Manchester fridge.

George B had an even better day, taking first in U16 and second overall in Mens; as did Amber F, taking first in U16 and moving up to second overall in Womens. Claudette P was on fire again taking first in Masters – will she ever be beaten!?! Over on stubbies, Josh C skied well again to take second in U12s boys, a fantastic achievement in a strong category.

So, at the end of the first two indoor GBR races, we were in the faultless position of having scored 200 points overall, ahead of Hemel with 160 and BSA with 116.

Individual indoor series standings at the end of the weekend included:

- Amber F second overall in Womens and first in U16s
- Claudette P first in Masters
- Joss B fourth in Masters
- George B second overall in Mens and first in U16s
- Josh C second in U12s

## GBR indoor 3 – Braehead – 18 June 2022 & GBR indoor 4 – Braehead – 19 June 2022

At the time of going to press the 3rd round was being held in Glasgow - for details of this and the conclusion of the GBR series listed below see the next issue of Tracks.

## The next races in the GBR calendar are:

- GBR indoor 5 – Chill Factore – 16 July 2022
- GBR outdoor 3 – Pendle – 30 July 2022
- GBR outdoor 4 – Rossendale – 31 July 2022
- GBR outdoor 5 – Hillend – 3 September 2022

If you've never raced a GBR before and want to know more, please talk to your coaches. And if you fancy representing the club and helping us improve our fantastic club standings even further, head along to [gbski.com](http://gbski.com) and register for a race. See you there!!



# social scene

## more than just a ski club

### MSC AUTUMN WALKING BREAK IN SNOWDONIA - 25-28TH SEPTEMBER 2022

Would anyone like to join us on a wonderful mountain walking holiday in glorious Snowdonia. We are staying at the Tyn-y-coed hotel, in Capel Curig, Betws-y-coed. Walks will be organised each day and, depending on numbers, there may be options for different distances/ levels of walks.

Accommodation is in double/ twin bedded rooms at a cost of £150 per person for the 3 night break including breakfast. A packed lunch is available at a cost of £7.50 subject to ordering the night before. If you are interested in joining us and having a great few days in spectacular scenery in good company, please fill in the application form below.

To: Jean Brayshay, 47 Mere Road, Stourbridge, West Midlands. DY8 3AY or email direct to [jean.brayshay@gmail.com](mailto:jean.brayshay@gmail.com) confirming your full payment has been made as per details below.

Please reserve  places on the Autumn Walking Break in Betws-y-coed 25-28th September 2022. Transfer to MIDLAND SKI CLUB. Sort Code 08-92-99. Account 65362479 or enclose a cheque payable to Midland Ski Club as a NON REFUNDABLE payment of £150 per person.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address. \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

# A Bodenham Walk

By Rolly Winzer

Six other skiers made it over to my neck of the woods on the Staffs/Worcs border near Bodenham Arboretum on a warm, humid Monday under thundery clouds. It was good to see Gill and Steve Pickard, Graham and Yvonne Gossage, Fiona Duncan and Paul Smith all raring to go.

We set off at 11 at a gentle pace on a figure of 8 route taking us along paths lush with spring vegetation and the last of the bluebells. On rising ground near Horselyhills Farm, we passed the ancient Bodenham stone circle, erected all of a month previously by people unknown. Off the arboretum access track, we had to ferret out a stile onto a hillside with fine views to Kinver Edge and the Rowley and Clent hills beyond.

On another rising path towards Shatterford, it was sad to pass the body of a muntjac deer. We turned at the top of the "8" to start the descent towards the arboretum where we met up with Pete and Jill Seaman, en route for a cycling trip, for a splendid alfresco lunch. The much vaunted carvery wasn't on until Wednesday but most had hot pork rolls followed by ice cream, not a bad alternative.

After a good hour, the walkers departed on the final stretch, part through the arboretum, through a drift of wild garlic and along a bluebell edged path to Little Hobro. Nearing the cars, the threatened rain finally caught up with us as we sheltered under trees to don cagoules and umbrellas. The rain did ease but came again as we reached the cars shortly after 3, so making for hasty farewells. A gentle 6 miles or so but with great views, company and food. Just a pity the planned pub was closed. Thanks to Graham and Yvonne for their photo.





Following the tragic death of Team GB athlete Ellie Soutter on her 18th birthday, her family has committed to continue fundraising in her memory. We support upcoming young winter sports athletes, both financially and mentally, to help them fulfil their potential and achieve their dreams.

Please help us to help our young winter sports athletes

Supporting talented young winter sports athletes through funding initiatives and coaching them through the pressures of professional competition.

We have created different corporate funding packages for all budgets, offering promotional opportunities to businesses. You can make a real difference to a talented young winter sports athlete

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE**

[www.theelliesoutter.foundation](http://www.theelliesoutter.foundation)

TO MAKE A DONATION VISIT:  
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[media@theelliesoutter.foundation](mailto:media@theelliesoutter.foundation)

If you have any news stories or photos to contribute, please send them to [news@midlandski.uk](mailto:news@midlandski.uk)