

LADIES' SKI CLUB BULLETIN
OCTOBER, 1947



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THE LADIES' SKI CLUB BULLETIN

No. 17

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OCTOBER, 1947.

EDITORIAL

I LEFT England on January the 8th—early, on a bitterly cold morning (see illustration) with sleet and slush and snow, in an aeroplane hastily borrowed by Air Belge from somewhere, the proper one having decided that the weather was far too inclement even to leave Brussels.



"I keep telling you—this route doesn't go anywhere near the Alps!"

(With acknowledgments to "The Aeroplane.")

I clambered aboard with two pairs of ski (which cost the earth in excess luggage) and considerable misgivings, but once above the cloud the journey was without incident, and ten o'clock that night saw me entering the portals of the old Kronenhof after eight years of absence, to find everything practically as I had left it.

Same patron, same bartender, same cherubs seated on clouds on the ceiling, same nightporter turned concierge—and my old box full of ski-sox and fancy dresses awaiting me in the same room. Sure was nice to be back!

This was, for most of you, our first real ski-ing year since pre-war and many interesting things have happened in our Club. First we must extend our hearty thanks and appreciation to the S.D.S. for their kind and generous gesture in *putting up and training* our team of girls at Mürren during the first week in January, and in again extending this offer for next winter. We hope that the Racing Committee will be able to round up some new and promising material now that we have had a season in which to look around. This is a most vital affair if we are to take our place again in international ski-ing. Offers of free and reduced rates for accommodation and training for a specified number of trainees have been made from various centres, *i.e.*, the Oberland will take six to eight trainees from December 26th

to January 11th; Mürren, eight to ten from January 12th to 19th; Zermatt, eight to ten from January 19th to end of January; Chamonix, eight to ten from week preceding A.K. on March 7th. This is free. Andermatt has offered for twelve trainees at 5 francs a day from December 15th, and St. Cergue twenty in two groups at 5 francs a day up to December 28th or after January 20th. This will give a marvellous opportunity to any young enthusiasts who feel they would like to try and qualify for international racing.

We are glad to welcome the following new members to the Club: Mrs. Adams, Mme. Chable, Miss N. P. Collins, Miss P. Farquharson, Miss Patricia Fitzgerald and Miss Pamela Fitzgerald, Miss D. Forman, Mrs. W. Gunn, Mrs. Lane, the Hon. Mrs. Lawson, Mrs. J. Palmer-Tomkinson, Miss Peck, Miss P. Topham, the Hon. Mrs. Moyra Williams, Mrs. McCarthy, Mrs. C. S. Hudson, Mrs. Newall and Miss Wood. Mrs. Robertson, now Dr. J. S. Robertson of Toronto, has renewed her membership.

Members are asked to please notify the Secretary when they do important things such as getting married and having babies. It is very difficult for us to keep up to date on these items, unless we have first-hand information. To the following we would like to offer our congratulations, rather belated in some cases:—

Miss Appleyard, who is now Mrs. J. J. Wood, and has a son, Geoffrey, born November 29th, 1946.

Miss Nancy Watson, who is now Mrs. Neilson.

Mrs. Tulloch (Bunty Walker) on a daughter, born October 2nd, 1946.

Mrs. R. H. Field, on a daughter, March 5th, 1946.

Mrs. Robertson, of Mardens, who went to Canada before the war, is now Doctor Robertson, and we are printing a letter received from her this winter.

Congratulations to Isobel Roe, who has been awarded her International Colours, with date 1947. She was the only British skier to win a prize last season in an open international event. The Silver Racing Badge goes to Bunty Greenland, who won the British Championship. (She has already been awarded her International Colours.)

An interesting bit of news comes from Penny Gilligan, who toured Australia with the England cricket side. She says:—

“I met many keen skiers, many of whom had been to Switzerland, and they were all anxious to know the latest news from there, and are longing to return to the Alps. They had a wonderful season at Kosciusko the previous winter, with snow lasting until the late spring. The only snag is that there is only one hotel, and it is extremely difficult to get accommodation.

“Everyone in Australia is very concerned about the food situation over here, and genuinely wish that more could be done to help us. The Australian Women's Ski Club (New South Wales Branch) are sending food parcels to Britain, so these will be distributed through the L.S.C.

“I thoroughly enjoyed my trip to Australia, but was terribly disappointed to miss the season in Switzerland. . . .”

This season saw the beginning of ski-ing for the “rising generation” as supplied by the mothers of the L.S.C., so I have devoted a photographic page to them—*pour encourager les autres*. Ann Greenland, 1 year 11 months, holds the record for the youngest racer. Young Mopsy Spence (3½ years) finishing her season at Mürren for the A.K., was heard comparing waxes with a boy friend half-a-head taller than herself. She apparently became the pin-up girl for the G.I.'s. The Tomkinsons, Palmer and plain, figure largely and ought to produce an Olympic team of their own in the not far distant future.

The date of the Ladies' Ski Club Race has not yet been fixed, but we should be able to announce it at the Annual General (Cocktail) Meeting in November.

LETTER TO THE L.S.C.

28, VESTA DRIVE, TORONTO.

DEAR LADIES' SKI CLUB,

November 30th, 1946.

I want to thank you so much for sending me a copy of the BULLETIN. Considering that I have paid you no fees since the beginning of the war, I think it was most kind and generous of you.

You have no idea how much pleasure it gave me to see the paper again, and to read news of so many friends and places. It was like a breath from the most pleasant past. You, in England, have been through so much in these last years, that it amazes me to find that you still have the energy and enthusiasm that I remember so well as an integral part of the Club's policy and members. I was glad to know that a few of you had been able to revisit the snows, and relax a little from all your labours.

Living in Canada, ski-ing is much less difficult, and though we never see slopes like the long Swiss ones, there are not many week-ends between Christmas and Easter when we do not manage a few hours of fairly good ski-ing.

During the war, while in the Navy, I was stationed in Newfoundland, and though weather conditions were terrible, we managed to get some cross-country bush-whacking which kept our knees in training for better days. The boys were all so keen, that the R.C.N. kept ski, boots, poles, etc., in the sports office for free use by anyone wanting them, and, though they had a good supply, there were never enough to go round.

Will you please let me know what I owe you, and what the annual subscription is, as I should like to keep on my membership, even though I don't expect to be in Switzerland again.

Wishing you every success, and all good luck, and more and better ski-ing.

Very sincerely,
(DR.) J. S. ROBERTSON.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOVEMBER 27th, 1946

THE Annual General Meeting was held at 115, Cranmer Court, on November 27th, at 5.30 p.m., followed by cocktails.

The chair was taken by Mrs. Lindsay (President), and forty members were present.

The Minutes were read, confirmed and signed.

Apologies, followed by the President's report.

The President said she could not make a report as there had been no winter season proper the previous winter to report on, but she hoped everyone would have a very good season this winter, and asked everyone to look out for new members for the Club.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Vice-President: Mrs. W. R. Tomkinson was elected.

Hon. Secretary: Lady Blane re-elected.

Hon. Treasurer: Miss Collins re-elected.

Hon. Editor: Lady Chamier re-elected.

Committee: Mrs. W. Bracken, Mrs. G. D. Greenland, Miss H. Palmer-Tomkinson and Miss I. Roe.

The new Cup was shown, which the Club is presenting for the open event in connection with the L.S.C. Championship.

Miss Elliott proposed, and Miss B. Fripp seconded, that badges to new members should now cost 7s. 6d.; monograms, etc., should be raised in price.

Qualification for membership should be up to 2nd for this season.

Miss B. Fripp proposed that a message of greeting be sent to our "sinister father" after his operation; it was seconded by Mrs. Lindsay.

Miss Croxton was present as a guest of the Club.

CODE OF THE MOUNTAINS

The old rule of assisting an injured skier down the mountain, whether of one's own party or not, appears to have been forgotten. Let this never be said of any member of the L.S.C.

POST-WAR COMPLAINTS

Pre-war racers were under the impression that "blackouts" were an unmentionable garment issued to ratings in the W.R.N.S., however this season has proved them to be wrong, as it is a new and popular disease afflicting young racers.

SWISS-ANGLO-DUTCH TRAINING AT MÜRREN

JANUARY 6th to 18th

BY BIDDY ARMITAGE.

LAST season the S.D.S. very generously offered a fortnight's training to eight English and eight Dutch girls at Mürren. The idea was to give very practical help to two countries whose young people had had little or no chance of any ski-ing since 1939. They laid emphasis, quite rightly, on the fact that these girls need not be accomplished skiers, but on some indication of promise or suitability, they should be given the chance of the very best instruction and training, in the hope that some, if not all of them, should prove to be the racers of the future.

It was interesting to note the different ways in which the Dutch and English candidates were selected. The English girls were chosen chiefly on either the promise that they had shown before the war, or on the practice and experience they had gained at schools in Canada and the U.S.A. during the war. The Dutch selection was carried out in quite another way. Apparently very few young Dutch girls have done any ski-ing and I believe only one or two of those finally selected had skied before. Madame Van den Bergh (Baroness Gratia Schimmelpenninck van der Oye), one-time international ski-racer and Dutch champion, chose her candidates with great care, selecting them for physical fitness and suitability—choosing athletic "types." Many of the Dutch girls at Mürren were champions, or in the first class, at other sports, *i.e.*, rowing, swimming, tennis and gymnastics, all were young and magnificent specimens. They went first to Arosa and had a few weeks intensive ski-ing instruction there, and then came over to the Oberland to join us for training.

We all arrived at Mürren on January 7th, and we English stayed together at the Jungfrau—Soss Roe, Pip Harrison, Sheena and Vora Mackintosh, Penny Peck, Xanthe and Dione Ryder, Jean Drummond-Hay, Daphne Carroll and myself. That night Fraulein Helene Zingg, the President of the S.D.S., whose idea I believe the whole training scheme to have been, made a welcoming speech and introduced us to the Dutch Team, and to two young Swiss girls who were to be trained with us, and also explained the object of the plans for the fortnight.

The next morning we gathered on the nursery slopes and we were put through a little test and divided up into three groups. The first class was to be instructed by Fritz Staeger and the other two by Fraulein Lotti Hertig and Emile von Allmen.

It was a fascinating and strenuous fortnight. We worked hard for three hours every morning and about the same in the afternoon, which, as one was really concentrating and being taught the whole time, was fairly energetic. All our instructors were tirelessly painstaking and kind, and paid great attention to each individual. We were lost in admiration of the Dutch girls—most of them had only been on ski for a few weeks and had already reached an amazingly

high standard for first-year skiers. They all displayed tremendous courage, vitality and keenness and hurled themselves down anything, taking some appalling falls and coming up roaring with laughter. Most of us felt rather weedy and frail beside them!

Our days were divided between concentrated slope practice and instructional runs; on the whole the snow was good and we had several heavy falls of new snow.

One evening we had an excellent party when the Dutch Team invited us round to their hotel and entertained us with songs and games and Dutch dances. I remember thinking what a pity it was that we were all so unversatile and lacking in talent, when Sheena, Vora and Jean took the floor and put on the best and funniest turn of farmyard noises that I have ever heard. There was no language bar to complete understanding, and it had a great reception.

I think this opportunity of ski-ing together and getting to know girls of other countries so well gave us all enormous pleasure, and I would like the S.D.S. to know how much we appreciated it. The whole idea of the training was a typical example of Swiss practical generosity and kindness, and I hope in future seasons that Dutch and English ski-racers will be able to show how much they have learnt from their good Swiss friends.

OVERHEARD AT THE A.K.

Owing to thick fog and cloud, twigs of fir trees were strewn to mark the course. A spectator was heard (mis-)informing a friend that the purpose of the twigs was "to scrape the snow off the racers' ski."

THE SWISS LADIES' SKI CLUB

BY ROSAMOND HEPWORTH.

I PINNED the attractive red and white badge of the Schweizerischer Damen Skiklub on my sweater and felt pleased and proud of this new link with Switzerland.

While trying to prove myself a worthy *schweizer dame* with plenty of diagonal tension, I broke my Achilles tendon, and my first contact with the Club was a visit from their President, Helene Zingg. I was in hospital in Berne, and she came along with flowers and chocolates to cheer me up. By then I had received several copies of the monthly bulletin and was beginning to realise how widespread and well organised the Club was. I asked Helene a lot of questions and she told me how the Club began in Mürren, how, in 1929, they had asked for admission to the Swiss Ski Association, and how at the meeting an important member of the Committee declared in a loud voice "*Mit de Wyber wei mer nüt s'tue ba!*" ("With the female will I have nothing to do.") Our "sinister father" was more progressive, and he wrote a spirited defence of the racing *damen* in their first year book, saying that, although the newspapers had complained that the sight of exhausted women racers was unæsthetic and a small torture to the sensitive male, the opposite was equally true and had so far escaped comment. However, in the same year book a well-known Swiss publisher pleaded for a return to the halo hat "where no curl and kiss went astray," and it was not till long after Doreen and Durelle had put the British ladies in front that the Swiss *damen* began to show their form.

Once established, however, the S.D.S. has gone straight to the top. It is the only Swiss club, with the exception of the S.A.S., to draw its members from all over the country, and the efficiency of the organisation is astounding, above all when one realises that most of its officials have a full-time job apart from their Club work, and only two or three weeks' holiday a year. The Club organises a *Concours Internationale* which is held in Grindelwald, and was won this year by May Nilsson (Sweden) and Celina Seghi (Italy) who tied for first place, with Olivia Orsoni (Switzerland) next. A *Semaine de Descentes* took place at Zermatt, in charge of three of the Club's most experienced coaches, and there are courses for all types of skiers organised by the local branches (Basel, Berne, Luzern, Soloturn, Zürich and Lausanne). A week's training is given to promising skiers under the best *professeurs de ski*, and during this they choose the Swiss Ladies' Team and run the Club Championship, won this year by Maja Merz, of Menziken. This year also the same valuable training was kindly offered to ourselves and the Dutch. The *Semaine de Haute Montagne* was held in France for the first time, in charge of Raymond Lambert and Fritz Staeger, and included much high Alpine touring in the Mont Blanc Massif, sleeping at a different *cabane* each night.

In 1931 four members, in order to be able to coach the Club, passed the stiff examination for ski teachers, the *Patente Cantonale*,

which has to be renewed every year by attending the *Cours de Repetition*. Those four were Elsa Roth, Kini Maillart, Helene Zingg and Eugenie Rubi-Bertsch. Elsa was Secretary and then President of the Club and, according to Helene, "the one who always did all the work." There are now about ten S.D.S. with the *Patente Cantonale*, and about twenty *instructeurs de ski*, and they all have to qualify again every year or hand in their badges. The Club's care of its members is infinite. It reserves apartments for their use in the best-known resorts at reduced prices. The local branches have weekly reunions and organise gymnastics for out-of-season training, as well as many races of all sorts throughout the season. At the end of her report on the year the President calls on members to bring more youngsters into the Club (*des jeunes filles gaies et sportives*) without which no Club can keep its youth, and evidently they are coming along, for the little band of founders has grown to 550 members in under twenty years.

The night before I left Switzerland, the Secretary, Mary Weisbrod, and her husband very kindly met me in Zürich and took me to have dinner in their flat by the lake. It was a lovely evening in May and they had been sailing. Mary's other sports are flying and water ski-ing, and early the next morning as my plane left Drubendorf she was taking off too, into the very Swiss-looking blue with sunlit snow peaks in the distance. *Salut* S.D.S.!

THE BRITISH SKI CHAMPIONSHIP MEETING

1947

By DOREEN ELLIOTT.

THE British Ski Championships were held at Mürren in January on a day following a particularly heavy fall of powder snow. It was so deep that, even by taking the steepest line down the Schiltgrat, it was impossible to make any speed. Alternative tracks were hastily made down the course, but, so used were most of the competitors to ski-ing on the *piste* that they did not possess the technique of coping under such different conditions.

These race conditions were reminiscent of those under which all races were held in the golden age before the wholesale stamping of the snow took place. It was thus inevitable that the old guard, who considered that the true test of ski-ing included the ability to ski in every type and condition of snow, should shine on this occasion. They left beautiful single tracks in their wake and the telemark position won the day. Even so, such was the depth of the snow that they became completely snowed up and there was not a competitor who was not penalised in this way. Falls were heavy, and necessitated much digging and caused great exhaustion.

I was time-keeping at the finish and, fortunately, knew all the competitors by sight, for if I had had to depend on seeing their numbers I should have had a difficult time indeed.

I do not believe that any other nation, spoon-fed as racers are to-day, would have held a national championship in such deep snow, but our traditions are such that no event is cancelled unless conditions are positively dangerous or unfair, and neither of these considerations were applicable on this day.

It was snowing during the Straight Race and visibility was poor on part of the course. In my opinion the race was a true test of ski-ing and Miss I. Roe thoroughly deserved her victory, but it was unfortunate for her that she lost her chance of winning the Championship outright by making a bad second run in the Slalom.

Miss S. Mackintosh won the Slalom, thanks to one particularly brilliant run, but all-round steadiness told in the end and the Combined Event of the Championship was won by Mrs. Bunty Greenland. Miss B. Duthie was third in both races and demonstrated that technique and the use of her head stood her in good stead in spite of the fact that she had retired from serious racing nine years previously.

One last word: the women all accepted these exceptional conditions in the most sporting way and they all deserve high praise for not being discouraged in the circumstances.

INTERNATIONAL S.D.S.-RENNEN

Grindelwald, January 18th-19th, 1947

By E.R.C.

It was with much pleasure that I seized the excuse of a FIS Ladies' Committee at Grindelwald to leave my job at Pontresina and hie me over to the International S.D.S.-Rennen, which was taking place at the same time—thrilled with the idea of meeting all the old buddies and to have a look at the New Boiling in the racing pot. I took with me under my wing one of our newest members, Moyra Williams, who, having struggled heroically through her 2nd Class at St. Moritz and having shown every symptom of *preferring* to hurl herself downhill regardless, I thought might be equally amused if allowed to participate in an International race. A wire and a 'phone call to our good Swiss friends resulted in a post entry, and we set off at crack of dawn for the Oberland. I may say here that I did *not* expect it to be the very hot stuff and high-class performance that it was—I pictured a rather small and informal gathering. It turned out to be of FIS team standard as a try-out for the Olympics, and was organised and run in the very best possible manner. Every detail was thought out, and exhaustive communiqués, *startlistes* and *ranglistes*, were issued in a miraculously short time after the finish of events. I have never been kept so well informed at any race I have attended!

We arrived in Grindelwald at 6 o'clock that evening, after the usual exhausting journey, and were met by Kini Maillart with sheaves of notes in her hand, and distributed to an extremely comfortable small hotel, from which, to my regret, I was later whisked away, as FIS delegates, of which I was one, had to be segregated.

While Kini waited to take us on to a film, a perfectly enormous supper was served; we quickly mopped up the fish, mistaking it for a main course, only to be met with *fried chicken* for which we had left no room. We were dragged reluctantly away from a heavenly sweet to see the film of the last FIS at Engelberg in 1939. After the film, beer and sausages were served downstairs, and we were introduced to the visiting teams, *i.e.*, the New Boiling: France, Italy, Austria, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland and Holland—they were all there. The British Team was incomplete, Buntly Greenland and Sheena Mackintosh being down with 'flu, leaving Soss Roe and Biddy Armitage to compete, with Bernie Duthie and Peggy Sherer in the *anciennes skieuses'* classes for the *Reisen Slalom*.

Friday morning dawned bright and sunny; with suppressed excitement we clambered into the train for Scheidegg, where Helene Zingg, Kini Maillart, Mary Weisbrod and other notables of the S.D.S. were waiting to show us round. First up and down the Lauberhorn several times to loosen up, and then down Tchguggan to see the course—and most *carefully cherished* I may say—the entire way. (Did I look as that?) A hasty lunch and then up the new chair-lift to Firstbahn to come down the course for the Giant Slalom. I found this chair-lift a most thrilling affair, giving one the most marvellous view of the descent from Eismeer and the Grindelwald

Gletscher as one swings high up over the treetops. We were suitably impressed by the descent—in fact so much so that for the first time a vague doubt crept into my mind that perhaps this wasn't going to be quite the joyous lark I had been anticipating, and could one "rat" with decency even in the *anciennes skieuses'* class if one was *plus ancienne que les autres*. This finished me for the day, though some of the more hardy ones went and did it again. I had the excuse of a FIS Committee at 5.30 p.m.

Next day, alas! cloudy with *foehn*. Having been allotted our controls the night before (I speak for the non-comps.), we went up on the 10.50 and, much to our delight, found the sun trying hard to come out and conditions looking more promising. I did a Lauberhorn, lunched at the Bahnhof, and went off with Bernie to take up our posts, mine being Little Mac's Leap. The course was excellent, the sun having just done its stuff and softened up the hard bits a trifle. The style of these new racing teams was most impressive, and must have been very depressing to our girls who had had practically no opportunity of acquiring new technique. The comparison was really grim and gave us some idea of how far we will have to go if we wish to compete with effect in first-class national events.

Trude Beiser won for Austria in 4 min. 13 sec., with Celina Seghi second in 4 min. 15 sec. Two of the French Team, Bayette and Gignoux, the Captain, took third and fourth places with 4 min. 15.1 sec. and 4 min. 17 sec., respectively. May Nilsson, Sweden, was fifth in 4 min. 18.4 sec.

In the evening we were given a special dinner by the S.D.S. in the Gydis Bar, Hotel Schonegg, a macabre underground cellar job, tastefully decorated with skeletons with ball and chains, refectory tables and benches, stone walls, a good dancing floor and well-stocked bar. The memory of this dinner still overcomes me, when I contemplate my cold pressed beef in merry England.

The Slalom started at 9 o'clock on Sunday morning on the slopes near the Firstbahn at Gydisdorf. The day was cold and sunless, and the course hard and icy, especially in the last half which came through a gully. No very tricky bits—a pair of inclined flushes seemed the main difficulty. May Nilsson ran superbly, and her two runs of 44.4 and 44.3 sec. combined with her fifth place in the *Abfahrt* to give her first in the Combined. Olivia Ausoni was second in the Slalom with 44.9 and 46 sec. Trude Beiser, Austria, the fifth in Slalom with 46 and 46.6 sec., won second place in Combined, with Celina Seghi, Italy, third, her Slalom times being 46 and 46.5 sec.

For the first time a Giant Slalom was included in the racing programme and this took place in the afternoon, at 2.30, and proved a very popular event. The course was from below Bort, on Firstbahn, to Terrassenweg, with a difference in altitude of some 800 metres. Two categories, *Concurrentes actives* and *Anciennes skieuses*, took part. The course was very cleverly set; groups of flags in all the tricky bits with long spurts in between where time could be made up. Patches of bare ground and some ice in strategic positions proved the undoing of some of the *anciennes*. As I climbed back at one most

brutal bit I saw dimly the benign faces of Bernie and Peggy peering down at me from where they, too, had departed into the *ebewigkeit*. However, it was all great fun, and while Seghi and May Nilsson tied for first place with 2 min. 36 sec. in the *élite*, Sutter took 3 min. 28.3 sec. for the "younger old ones," and Helene Zingg 3 min. 52 sec. for the "old olds."

Prize-giving was at the Belvedere Hotel that evening. As we drifted in with the crowd through the swing doors I overheard one T.B.E. (American for Typically Bloody Englishman) to another: "My deah fellah, who *are* these people?" Second T.B.E.: "Haven't a clue, old chap. Must be a parade of gladiators."

Not the least impressive item in the evening's entertainment was the welcoming address to each of the visiting teams by Helene Zingg, President of the S.D.S. She addressed practically each one in their own language, bar the Czechs, who understood German anyway. Prize-giving was followed by dancing, and considerably later a few of the old *damen* found their way up to the Bahnhof Restaurant for a last round. Here we met the final gesture of hospitality by the Swiss, when we found it was on the house.

Departure next day had a most regretful tang—it had been such a good party and nothing could have exceeded the kindness, hospitality and efficiency of our S.D.S. friends.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF AN INTERNATIONAL DAMENRENNEN

BY MOYRA WILLIAMS.

It had all seemed so simple in prospect. From Celerina, in the Engadine, it had appeared such a good idea. You just entered for the race, you let your ski go, you sat there—and the next moment you were at the bottom, a heroine, the winner of an International Ladies' Race. That, at least, is the sort of picture that must have flashed into my mind at one moment; the sort of picture that prompted me after only ten days of very mediocre post-war ski-ing form to suggest that I should run at Grindelwald in the International Damenrennen arranged by the S.D.S. It was not till we were half way there in the train that the enormity of my folly really began to dawn on me.

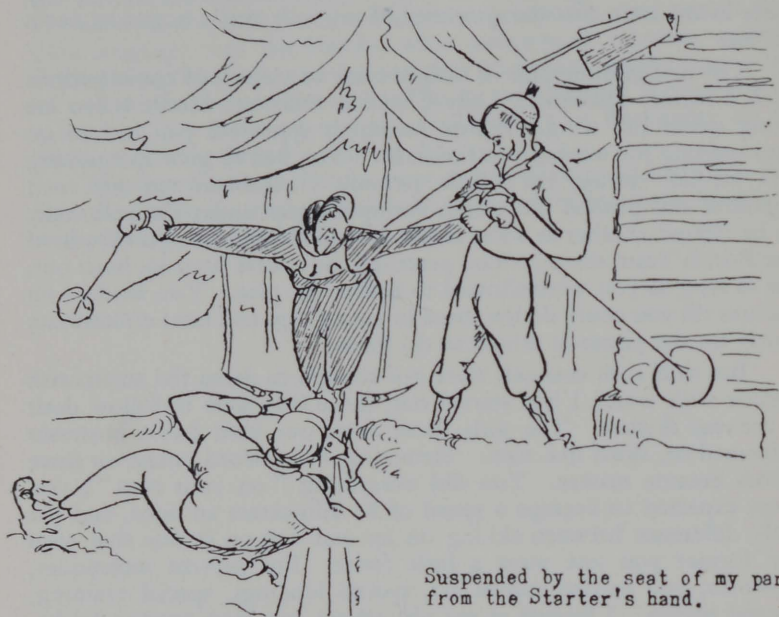
The first glimmerings of insight came as a result of conversations with a former champion, Lady Chamier, who had kindly taken me along under her wing. Before racing, it appeared, you had to go into training for weeks, if not months. You had to give up smoking and alcohol during the whole period. (I stubbed out my own cigarette and pushed the stump surreptitiously under the seat, only to be offered another as soon as we arrived at Grindelwald by one of the British Team there.) You practised the course hour in, hour out, for as long as you were allowed to before the race. You worked on slaloms till you could do the turns in your sleep, and need concentrate solely on the places at which to do them.

But as if such counsels were not enough to damp the amateurish ardour with which I had started out, those that were to follow dealt it the *coup de grace*. The girls these days, our kind Swiss hostesses informed us, skied like men. Stemming was a word unknown since Allais became master. You did everything "on your toes"; you were expected to average a speed of 80 kilometres an hour, and the only difference between ski-ing on ice and not on it was that with the former you just went a little faster. For present techniques, however, you needed special ski, special bindings, special training, special nerves. I looked at my old *alpinas*, my long touring sticks, my cracked boots, and blistered heels, the patch—already wearing thin—on my trousers seat, but with pig-headed determination I refused to look back at the absurdly small amount of ski-ing I had done in the past. In racing to-day, continued our hostess, there was no give, no looking back. Two girls had already broken arms or legs, two more were to follow. And then, as if to make sure that hope would never rise again, we were invited to an exhibition of films taken of the 1939 FIS and Olympic Games, where a slight tendency among the gentler sex to stem when entering the icy gulleys was laughed to scorn by the forty-eight toughened, weather-beaten young Amazons constituting the audience.

Yet any possibility of retreating from the *concourse* was firmly barred. Not only had I been entered, not only been given privileges

on 'buses and railways (and an excellent little box of wax, distributed by the makers free to all competitors), but the welcome accorded me by the only two members of the British Team still on their legs and able to face the starting gate, was beyond all belief gracious. It was so splendid of me, they pointed out, to have come; so excellent of me to think of racing. My apologies were drowned by their eulogies. It was so wonderful of me to have entered. Bitterly I contemplated the morrow, when the truth would be out, and the extent of my capabilities appear in their true light, shorn of the glamour of fantastic dreams and uplifting wishes.

So, like a bather, who, walking to the edge of the waves in order to test the temperature of the water before deciding whether to take



Suspended by the seat of my pants from the Starter's hand.

the plunge, finds himself suddenly swept up by a typhoon, so I, having taken the fatal steps to the brink, had no option but to swim. While competitors from other nations waxed their ski till the surfaces shone like mirrors, whisked themselves egg-nogs, imbibed energising capsules, and drank vitaminised fruit juices, my own knees grew weaker. My courage and self-confidence drained away into every patent tonic and every novel trick resorted to by others, until when at last, suspended by the seat of my pants from the starter's hands I found myself glaring down—not a gully, not a precipice, not a steep *schuss*, but a photographer's camera, it was not fear I felt nor even indignation; it was just a numb thankfulness that in 15 minutes it would all be over.

The example of the forty-eight competitors who had preceded me, sweeping down that first bumpy *schuss* at 70 m.p.h., punting, with their sticks, or bouncing on their ski in order to increase their speed, burned brilliantly. If they could do it, why not I? It looked so easy, and, like a parrot as I prepared to stumble after them, I found myself repeating over and over again stock phrases picked up from the ski-school slopes: "Keep your weight forward: weight on the lower ski. Bend the knees."

The starter released his hand. My feet shot from under me, my head spun and swam in the rush of ice-cold air that engulfed it; my eyes filled instantly with tears, blinked and closed, opening just in time to see two blue control flags loom up and vanish in the same instant. Some people shouted, one or two familiar landmarks appeared and disappeared as if by magic, and then, as the ground began to drop away more steeply, my already seemingly phenomenal speed increased. That it did not do so for long goes without saying. No sooner was I on my ski, one moment flashing past flags and corners, over bumps and ledges, than I was on my back or face the next, wondering dazedly how I had got there. Yet when the end did at last come, when the battle over and the *ziel* safely past it was possible to stand up and contemplate the course—the descent of Mac's Leap on one hip after the other, the old man who, slowly pulling his hay-sledge, had sailed so gracefully past me as I struggled to regain an elusive ski, the long climb back up one hill I had decided to take in order to collect a stick—my only regrets were that it was over so soon, over and impossible to repeat. The fact that I had taken just twice as long as anyone else and had fallen quite six times as often, did not seem to matter. The fact that, in spite of the example of forty-eight predecessors, I had failed to copy them, was simply a matter of bad luck. Next time, I felt completely confident, all would be well. I might not be a May Nilsson, I might never make a Celina Seghi or a Trude Beiser, but at least I had experienced some of the most thrilling, most tantalising and most intoxicating moments possible—and I had actually run in an International Damenrennen.

NACH GUTERSLOH

By DI LINDSAY.

YOE MACCARTHY and I left Mürren and the hospitality of the von Allmen sisters in the usual state of deepest gloom. A "seeing off" party at the Belmont helped considerably to alleviate that state. An excellent dinner at the Du Lac with Herr Hoffman and Peter's wife completed the cure (only temporarily) and we both felt in a better state to cope with the horrifying condition of affairs apparently awaiting us in England.

The journey was excellent, and the Customs kind, but it was appalling to arrive straight from mountains and sun to the gloom of a re-blacked-out London. I vaguely remember Yoe saying, rather dismally, "You needn't grumble, you'll be on your way again quite soon." She was right, as I found my sailing date for Germany had been finally fixed. Even the most nefarious plots Mr. Dalton could possibly hatch to anchor me firmly in one country would not work this time. None of this seventy-five pounds worth of nonsense, and I would be on a boat again, astonishingly enough, with the blessing of the Government.

I arrived at St. Pancras, on a particularly revolting day, *en route* for Gutersloh via Tilbury and Cuxhaven by troopship. Snow, and general gloom everywhere; time, 11.30 a.m., Wednesday. The organisation for transporting wives and children of all sizes and denominations was excellent. I was particularly impressed by a member of the W.V.S. sitting on an ice-cold platform, answering what appeared to be a never-ending stream of completely irrelevant questions and still keeping her sense of humour. Personally, I felt exactly like the new girl on the school train—clutching my grips and wondering what on earth I had let myself in for.

Friendly guardsmen took charge of me and I was led to the train and duly esconced. I watched the same guardsmen carrying rows of children, unwieldy parcels that had already come undone, and calming agitated mothers. On arrival at Tilbury we sat for some time in a vast and draughty hall, where we were given tea and sandwiches. I became slightly more absent-minded than usual, realising that I was one of a vast horde being organised, and that thinking for oneself had ceased to be necessary. Lettuce for lunch must have acted as a soporific, if you believe Beatrix Potter and Peter Rabbit, and I failed to listen to all the instructions blaring forth from the Tannoy. I came-to, to discover the vast hall was practically empty. Hastily gathering little grips together, I found myself looking nervously around for a prefect, and rushed madly to the boat. Arriving at the gangway I discovered I had failed to show my medical certificate, failed to give up my ration book, omitted to get my passport stamped, missed the Customs, and had not changed my sterling into B.A.F.S. Feeling like a congenital idiot and distinctly chastened, I retraced my footsteps, to find that inadvertently I had done the best possible thing—all the queues were gone and everything was finished in a few minutes.

The part of Germany to which one was bound was indicated by coloured "zones," with labels marked accordingly. Orange labels indicated Hamburg, Hanover, Berlin; blue labels, Minden; green, Osnabruck, Munster, Cologne, and so forth. I was green zone. Trains were known as green day train, green night train, blue train and white train. I was lucky and had a cabin, shared with three other women, complete with bathroom, which was impressive but unusable, owing to lack of water. Still more impressive was the fact that we were called in the morning with tea and buttered toast. The Tannoy roared instructions all day long, of which one was totally unable to understand a word. I decided to call it a day, behave like a congenital idiot, and let someone else come to the rescue if necessary. I overdid this one slightly, and was peacefully sleeping in my bunk when an agitated stewardess rushed in and said "Green Zones" had already had breakfast and were disembarking. Quite determined I was not going to miss a good breakfast of eggs fried on both sides at Government expense, I refused to be stampeded, and, after enjoying my breakfast, joined the end of the "Green Zone." We were late in arriving owing to fog, and Cuxhaven seemed a solid sea of ice.

Our next move was to the reception hall, where we had to identify our luggage. I would like to meet the man responsible for the following notice: "You will be led to the baggage which you should then identify, then move on. . . . You will pass also the ladies' cloak room, where you may wash and brush up. Next comes the 'Officers' Transit Mess' where there is a buffet and a small N.A.A.F.I. shop. Please pass all these 'diversions' as rapidly as you can. . . ." I by-passed all "diversions" and duly entrained, but we had a further diversion in our engine bursting its boiler and involving some delay until another was produced. During our progress from Cuxhaven to Gutersloh, in Westphalia, by way of Bremen, we stopped many times. I thought how well the children looked, who were there in legions waiting for chocolate to be thrown to them, but what an extremely bad colour the men and women were. Also the fantastic amount of limbless men.

Wives were being detained all along the line—there was a similarity between the tossing out of mail bags at some of our big stations and the B.A.O.R. wives. I eventually arrived at Gutersloh at 6.15 p.m. on Friday, to find Tommy waiting on the platform. "Movements" had kept him well informed with regard to delays.

At the moment I find it difficult to get used to a staff of five in a vast house. I thought as a breed they were extinct, and only to be found in ones and twos in very remote places.

It's a lot of fun while it lasts, but the strain of "keeping face," *i.e.*, leaving one's things about for A. N. Other to tidy, ringing bells, and remembering to use every form of issue cutlery instead of one knife and fork (English peacetime style), I find a bit of an effort!

THE PARIAH*

BY AGNES CHURER.

SHE left Victoria in a blaze of sunshine in a second-class compartment to which she had to walk so far along the platform that it occurred to her a refund of fare should be granted for part of the journey to Folkestone. The Kentish fields, deep in glistening snow, made her wonder if it were possible that there could be more in Switzerland. Before reaching Folkestone Harbour the train reversed itself and she again had to walk the whole length of it to reach the boat.

* * * * *
She had arrived. She was complete. Her wind-jacket and her trousers were correct. Her boots were good and her ski were the right size. She even had goggles of two different colours. There was no snow in the village but there was plenty above so she took the early train up. In the train people wearing S.C.G.B. badges chatted with her in a very friendly way so she thought she would have no lack of companions for the descent. This was a good thing because she knew she must not be seen ski-ing alone, there were too many notices in the hotel forbidding visitors to do so.

At the top many other charming people spoke to her; she noticed that they were wearing all sorts of badges with stars and goats and rabbits and mountain peaks on them. She felt encouraged and sufficiently emboldened to suggest to some of them that she should ski down with them. She was immediately conscious of some constraint in their replies. They suggested that they should see her at the Swizzlestick bar that evening, but it was intimated to her, with the greatest politeness, that waiting for people was a nuisance on a cold day, and that her standard was not the same as theirs; so she watched them set off without her.

Saddened, she waited hopefully for the next train to disgorge its load of those who did not like getting up early. She saw faces she had met in other spheres; she even saw a Brigadier under whom she had once served in a humble capacity during the war. He spotted her and this happy reunion was celebrated by the sharing of their pack lunches in the restaurant. They also shared a bottle of something. She suggested that the party should be continued by descending the mountain together. Her suggestion was not approved and an amendment proposed by the Brigadier to the effect that they would all "have another little something" was adopted instead. Several more little somethings followed and a plan made to meet again at the Swizzlestick that night. Then the Brigadier and his party got up to make their descent, by train.

So this was winter sport! The holiday to which she had looked forward all through the war. Alone and forlorn she put on her ski at last. They felt unwieldy and unlikely to take her anywhere in the direction she wished to go. She looked at them closely. They were on the wrong feet so she took them off again.

* By some pronounced to rhyme with aria, and by others to rhyme with harrier; just a few insist that it should rhyme with Maria.

THREE GENERATIONS



Plain

and

RISING HOPES



TOMKINSONS, Palmer-
Charles, Christopher and Jeremy



BRITISH CHAMP. AND ANNE.



THE YOUNGEST MEMBERS.
ANNE GREENLAND, 1 YR. 11 MTHS., AND MOPSY SPENCE, 3 1/2 YRS.



B.A.O.R. SELECTED TEAM: GEOFFREY SPARROW (*Capt.*), MAJOR TONY DOBSON, PTE. JUKES, FVIE PINCHING AND ALFRED WILHELM (*instructors*), S./SGT. JUKES, CAPT. GUY CHILVER-STAINES AND L./BOM. HARRY TAYLOR.



SKI HOIST, GALZIG, ST. ANTON.



Photo by]

SKI-ING IN CYPRUS.

[Betty Arthur



SKI-ING IN CYPRUS.

Just then another train arrived and emptied itself. Her heart rose as she was hailed by a party of old friends from her own home in Scotland. It was by then tea-time so she agreed to join them and for a happy hour they discussed the Tummel Hydro-electric Scheme from every aspect. At last they reluctantly made a move to go. She was filled with excitement, she was really going to ski! It was snowing by now and everyone was delighted. But, alas—

“Too late to go down in this,” they said, “Come on, we’ll all go down by train.”

So they did, and so did she, and they talked about grouse all the way down. Before parting from them she said, “What about a run to-morrow, going up on the 9.30?” “Oh! Not with you,” they said, “but meet us at the Swizzlestick to-night.”

* * * * *

So the next day she spent all her Swiss francs on nylons, and went home to England because nobody would ski with her. Her faded blue wind-jacket, on the sleeve of which was sewn a Union Jack, reposed sadly in the bottom of her kit-bag.

L.S.C. CHAMPIONSHIP

BY FOUR NON-COMPETITORS.

THE L.S.C. Championship was run at Mürren on March 11th, after being postponed from Scheidegg on February 27th, owing to lack of entries.

The well-known face of the Schiltgrat, now called the Kandahar Course, was selected for the race. There had been a number of entries on the start-list, but for various reasons only four members took part. The first non-starter was Birnie Duthie, who, in true ladylike manner, preferred to hit a bank, chiefly rock and mud lightly disguised with a crust of snow, instead of Soss Roe, who was occupying the path at the time. Eliza Dobson scratched because of the "Spring Sowing," and Peggy Sherer was blown off the hook of the ski-lift on the way up to the start which discouraged her and several others from competing.

The day dawned snowing slightly through a thick mist. Anxious officials had a difficult time flagging the course while the wind mounted. By 10 a.m. the blizzard raged so wildly that several "fair weather" skiers scratched, deciding the Schiltgrat would be no fun at all. A meeting was held to discuss whether the event should be abandoned, when the sun filtered through the clouds and the wind abated, so it was decided to start from the ski-lift hut instead of the Gipfel. Conditions were difficult, cut-up soft snow in poor light, and all competitors chose Shambles instead of the Cornice.

The winner is to be congratulated on making such an excellent time in such tricky weather, especially as the Alpine Ski was being decided down the same Slalom course and only one man, C. S. Hudson, put up a faster time.

The Slalom was held in the afternoon on Finel in slightly improved conditions. The setter had cleverly utilised the uneven bumpy ground to set traps for the inexperienced and successfully caught some of the unwary. As the course could not be stamped in the time available an unusual feature was introduced allowing the competitors a trial run to smooth out the course. This increased the number of graves for those who came last, providing extra entertainment for the spectators. The winner made two excellent controlled runs, proving how important experience is in racing.

Despite the disappointing weather for our first post-war meeting, it was delightful to see so many members gathered in Mürren.

RESULTS (4 entries)

Straight (Schiltgrat): 1st, Miss I. M. Roe, L.S.C. (3 min. 36.6 sec.); 2nd, Mrs. Marian Allen, L.S.C. (5 min. 14.8 sec.); 3rd, Miss Sheena Mackintosh, L.S.C. (5 min. 26.2 sec.); 4th, Miss V. Mackintosh, L.S.C. (6 min. 1.6 sec.).

Slalom (Finel): 1st, Miss I. M. Roe, L.S.C. (136.2); 2nd, Mrs. Marian Allen, L.S.C. (156.8); 3rd, Miss Sheena Mackintosh, L.S.C. (166.6); 4th, Miss V. Mackintosh, L.S.C. (183.8).

Combined: 1st, Miss I. M. Roe, L.S.C. (5 min. 52.8 sec.); 2nd, Mrs. Marian Allen, L.S.C. (7 min. 51.6 sec.); 3rd, Miss Sheena Mackintosh, L.S.C. (8 min. 12.8 sec.); 4th, Miss V. Mackintosh, L.S.C. (9 min. 5.4 sec.).

* * * * *

PS.—Believe it or not, this puny effort took the four of us over one-and-a-half hours' hard work in the bar.

A.K., 1947

BY JEANETTE ODDIE.

NEARING Lauterbrunnen after a long and tiring train journey depression crept in. Was it a "good thing" to be taking on the A.K. as an official after the golden memories of competitor days? What would a post-war A.K. be like anyway? These grim forebodings lightened at Lauters, where the gathering of the clans started. The Wengen officials joined us—Tom Hankey, Paul Hepworth, Penny Fox and Joan Paynton. From Mürren Station onwards it felt like coming home. Arnie, Bobby Hudson, Bob Handley and Peter Bumphrey and others were on the platform, and at every corner some familiar face appeared, although the racers themselves were new to us. The Palace hall and bar were packed, and there was the familiar atmosphere of "eve of the race"; wax, ski, lines, etc., were eagerly discussed, and, greatest worry of all, the weather. What was it going to do? It was then snowing hard, and looked as if for once the A.K. was going to be held in bad weather.

It is far more exhausting being a race official in a large race than it is to be a competitor—for there is no call for early nights, and much more for early rising, as the course must be prepared. Having got to bed at 3 a.m. we were called soon after 6, to be greeted by a foggy morning and inches of new snow. We were asked to hurry out and join the bands of Mürrenites who had been stamping the course for hours, most of the night in fact, and there was still much to be done. Slight delay was caused by breakfast with Arnie, but it was still early as we walked to the ski-lift wearing every garment we could lay our hands on, including fur coats. After side-stepping the course from the ski-lift to start, and down to Martha's Meadow, with Arnie talking and Mark Hödler directing, we were required to mark the course with bits of fir-trees scattered *ad lib.* This occasioned much suspicion and comment from competitors, but afterwards was voted a good idea as it helps enormously when the visibility is bad. At the end of our labours, finding our control taken over by a Swiss, we were free to watch, as and where we liked.

The start, due at 9 a.m., was postponed in the hopes that the weather might clear, but it remained much about the same—fog and gentle small flakes of falling snow. There were 57 men and 23 women

racing, and we were more than thankful for our fur coats! Eventually they were off, and the lines taken in that visibility were quite amazing. There were some bad falls but luckily no serious injuries. The line from the top is different from what it used to be. It comes over the edge much higher up than Shambles Corner on to a narrow curve, near Peter Robinson's line, in the Kandahar Decenary Meeting so long ago in 1934. We watched the first half of the men from the high rock, above Broody Bump, from where we could see all the steep bits, the Bump itself and a bit below again; then going to Broody Bump itself, from where the ladies were due to start in weather which was becoming worse as the fog thickened. Celina Seghi, from Italy, and Trude Beiser, of Austria, were the most spectacular runners, and Hedy Schlunegger must have been worth watching on the lower slopes. She fell several times on the face, and yet managed to finish fifth.

Lunch was about 2.30 p.m., and very welcome it was, with a good rest afterwards! Then the social whirl started again and went on for many hours. Weather looked more promising for the Slalom on the morrow. We were called at 7, and the rendezvous for officials was 8 a.m. at the top of the Bubble. The Slalom, set by Mark Hödler down the South Slopes, was extremely long and very good. Unfortunately, I was controlling three pairs of flags very near the top and so saw little of the rest. The Frenchmen were quite outstanding, and took the first three places and fifth and sixth, with a Czech fourth. In the Ladies' Slalom it was again Austria and Italy, but this time Austria first. The morning was brilliant with sunshine and rapidly becoming hotter and hotter. The course had been prepared quite beautifully, but between runs it was thought necessary to put on some freezing mixture. An outcry from competitors stopped this, and in the end it was used only on the lower flags. The usual long pause between runs got everyone thoroughly impatient except myself, but I was happily varnishing my nails, and only wanted time to finish them!

Lunch was again after 2 o'clock, and now the festive feeling really started. Most people set off for the ski-lift, only to find hundreds of others with the same idea. "Clever" queueing resulted in *only* an hour's wait, and we had a very pleasant run down, but *not* to Gimmelwald.

Prize-giving was held in the ballroom at 10 p.m., but, owing to rationing, no dinner was held. We found that no places had been reserved for the racers, who were scattered about the room, with little hope of mixing in the gay, old fashion. Wendy, Helen and I managed to join up the Austrians and Italians (not perhaps the happiest mixture) when the prize-giving started. D'Eggers came to the rescue and got the party going by arriving as the "Chinese Delegation, arriving a little late." This impersonation, with costume and suitable conversation, gave ample scope for his talents and the room was soon rocking with laughter. The band started the dancing, and all went gay, so the evening ended happily in the early hours of the morning.

SKI-ING IN AUSTRIA AND GERMANY WINTER, 1947

BY EVIE PINCHING.

IN response to a kind invitation from B.A.O.R. to spend the winter ski-ing with them, I crossed the frontier from Switzerland into Austria on January 3rd—the same frontier I had crossed so often before in the comparatively care-free days before September, 1939. My mind was full of memories of those other journeys made amongst a crowd of skiers of all nationalities, of the light-hearted gaiety of the Tyroleans, and of the affection and respect which always enveloped the *Englishe damen*.

The last time I had seen Austria was nine years ago—a week after the Anschluss which degraded Austria into the Ostmark. As I craned my head out of the carriage window on approaching St. Anton, I dreaded the changes which I was bound to find. However, the villages looked very much the same, only shabbier. The mountains were there too, so was the snow, and even the Arlberg tunnel. The station at St. Anton looked exactly the same, crowded with skiers, and decorated with branches of fir trees, with the Post Hotel on the one side, and the nursery slopes with the cable car "in motion" on the other. Even the old horse recognisably identical with our old friend, was still drawing a cart of manure across the last *schuss* and skiers were still falling in the ruts it had made! I felt much better.

I went back to St. Anton on many occasions with the B.A.O.R. Team after that first fleeting visit. We were welcomed with open arms by all our old friends. The Schulers, of the Hotel Post, were there, looking well and unchanged, and they were always more than accommodating and kind to us. Rudi Matt was running Hannes Schneider's house and shop, surrounded by the same staff as before. Hannes, of course, was badly missed, but all were looking forward to his forthcoming return. Sepp Fahrner was still working gallantly in his little *atelier* for *Ski Reparaturen*, though much hampered and harassed by lack of material—as was everyone else. Franzl had just returned to take charge again of the Post Hotel bar, where the band still played "In Sankt Anton am Arlberg." Many familiar faces were to be seen amongst the ski-instructors, though there were many new ones, and many sadly missed, though there was news of Friedl Pfeiffer, who had visited St. Anton as a member of the U.S. Forces last year. There was also news of Friedl Schaffgotz, who has now turned into a successful and hard-working farmer. All seemed delighted to see us back again, and expressed the hope of seeing many more of us next year. To quote the author of the article on B.A.O.R. in *Ski Notes and Queries*, we all felt this welcome "came more from the heart than from the pocket." Many were disappointed not to have seen more of their old English friends, as Austria had been open to tourists since January this year. Only one Englishman turned up at St. Anton as a "pukka tourist," and it was felt that it had not yet been sufficiently advertised. Certainly many were unaware of the newspaper articles stating that travel to Austria was now possible.

Ehrwald, where the B.A.O.R. had their main leave centre, is an attractive but rather straggling village situated at the base of the Zugspitz, on the Austrian-German frontier. It is better known as a summer resort, attracting mainly sightseers to the famous mountain. Many will remember it for the mountain climbing. As a winter sports resort, however, there is not much scope, although it can boast of two excellent runs; one from the fourth Pylon of the Zugspitz-Bahn, and the other from the top—a 15 km. run back to Ehrwald or down the other side to Garmisch-Partenkirchen. Owing to the lack of snow this year, the latter descent was not often practicable. As a place for beginners, Ehrwald was excellent, though we hope it will be improved by the addition of a ski-lift next year. Many who came to Ehrwald had never skied before, but most enjoyed it enormously and became real enthusiasts. A few—but only very few—were noticeably luke-warm. One gentleman, thinking himself dressed for the occasion in a “hacking-style-lounge-suit,” was heard to complain that the snow was dirty outside his hotel! I wonder what he would have said had he been at Chamonix after a sandstorm! However, these few found some solace in buns and coffee at the N.A.A.F.I. and drinks at the Regina Bar.

Thanks to the kind hospitality of our neighbours, the Americans, we visited their recreational centre at Garmisch-Partenkirchen every week, where we were able to get plenty of good ski-ing from the Kreuzeck and the Hausberg. Our American friends were most generous in allowing us the use of their ski-lifts, and admission to their excellent snack-bars and Red Cross Clubs. In the evenings we were more than once invited to attend some very good ice reviews and ice hockey matches on the Olympic Stadium, and to watch the night jumping on the floodlit Olympiaschanze.

Garmisch-Partenkirchen, and in particular the Kreuzeck, revived many memories of the Olympic Games and German Championship meetings. Fortunately, there was very little ice this year, so some of the more unpleasant memories were not renewed. However, on the occasion of the Bavarian Championship practices, there was nothing but a very narrow icy track bordered by deep heavy snow. There were only two ways of going down the Olympic Course that day—by funicular, or “bash on regardless.” Most took the second alternative, and there were no less than six cases of broken limbs that day, to say nothing of minor injuries! Christl Kranz came over to watch these races, and was no doubt very much interested in the performance of a new German star, Marianne Fischer, whose time was the best of the women, and would have classified her amongst the ten best men.

The height of the Ehrwald season culminated in the B.A.O.R. Ski Meeting, in which B.A.O.R. Team, which I was fortunate enough to train, met the teams from C.M.F., B.T.A., B.A.O.F. and C.C.G. Through the kind permission and help of the French, the Downhill Race was held at St. Anton down the Kandahar Course, a slightly modified version of the one we knew so well before the war. Some old friends turned up to watch. Frau Poland, still full of *joie de vie*,

came over from Kitzbühel. Her ski-ing is as good as ever, and she hopes to race again. Emmy Schwabe (Ripper) was there, and was more than kind in putting up members of our team for the night, as did some other friends, who, despite the many hardships and losses they had suffered through the war, had on many previous occasions entertained the team, showing true Austrian hospitality. Tony Praxmaier and his Yodellers were enjoyed as much as ever when they gave a performance at the Hotel Tyrol.

The Slalom races were held at Ehrwald, and Rudi Matt came over to set the Slalom, and to open it.

The following week, representatives from the Rhine Army Team took part in the *Championate Militaires de Ski en Autriche*, which was organised by the Chasseurs Alpins. This meeting was carried out in full military style, with an opening and closing ceremony and parade. We arrived at St. Anton to take part in it, but were rather caught unawares when we found the other participants had arrived all “dressed” for the occasion. Reminiscent of the Olympic Games, there was a last minute scramble around for a “uniform” dress for the British. We managed, by dint of borrowing and hasty sewing, to make ourselves look something like a team, though not exactly military. I fear the 5th Battn. Scots Guards would not have approved of the final result! However, despite these drawbacks, the French were most welcoming, and expressed the hope of seeing the British Army represented again at their future meetings. Our best man, S./Sgt. Juhas (a Pole), commonly known as “Papa,” did very well and finished thirteenth in the Combined results. Our British hope, Geoffrey Sparrow, was unlucky in breaking his binding not far from the finish, but up till then he was going extremely well.

Ski-ing with the Army this year was certainly one of my most pleasant experiences. They could not have been kinder, more considerate, or more enthusiastic about ski-ing.

SKI-ING IN THE MIDDLE EAST

BY BETTY ARTHUR.

MEETING so many skiers again, the first time since the war, at the party for Herr Hew, of Klosters, in London last September, it came upon me with a rush how madly jealous I was of all those who were planning to go to Switzerland this winter. It was too much altogether to hear those miserable people discussing the Parsenn again, quite apart from the rumours that two-way stretches were to be found under every alpen-rose, and, had the bar been more accessible and less closely guarded, I would gladly have added a touch of arsenic to the gin. However, I could do nothing but return to the Middle East, and drown my sorrows in describing my efforts to get some ski-ing in these parts during the war, and the present facilities available in Cyprus. (All this in an orgy of self-pity.)

In 1938 my husband and I virtually started the ski-ing in Cyprus and found it full of possibilities. By the next year quite a number of others had joined us and become most enthusiastic. (We finished the season in Klosters after a gap of a few years and were treated as slalom posts by all our friends. How the standard has improved!) In 1940 I had a few days here at Easter, much to the surprise of the French surgeon, who happened to see me on the snow a very short time after the arrival of my son, at which he had assisted. Not only the English but quite a number of Cypriots were interested. In June that year, during the Battle of Crete, the women were evacuated from here, and I joined the Red Cross in Cairo. It seemed worth the gamble to save my year's ration of leave—a week—till the winter, and in January, 1942, six of us managed a trip to the Lebanon. My ski were, of course, in Cyprus, and I wired my husband for them, not with much confidence, however, as the last parcel I had asked for, a most precious pin-stripe suiting, had come over in the care of an airman of a R.A.F. Desert Squadron, tied on to a basket of fruit! The ski reached Port Said safely enough, but were handed over to some Indians who were going to a rest camp at Mena. Unless you have unlimited time and good temper, I would suggest better means of recreation than telephoning Indians and asking them if by chance they have any ski lying about their camp. But the telephone operator of the Red Cross was a woman of sterling qualities. Russian by birth, she had red hair adorned with a purple ribbon, was the wrong side of middle age and suffered with her feet. She spoke fluent and execrable French, English, Arabic, Russian, Italian and German, but, unfortunately, truck with Indians had never come her way. However, she won through in the end, and the ski were produced at Gezireh Club only half-an-hour before we were due to start.

We motored to Kantara, visiting some friends in a Canal Zone Hospital on the way, took the train to Haifa and motored from there up to the Cedars. There was about 14 feet of snow and we had to walk the last hour to the hotel. We had 5 days, all of them in a blizzard! We skied as if possessed, got lost once or twice in the cloud and only reached home by listening to the snowplough working

round the hotel. The Army Ski School, under Major Riddell, was in full swing. On the last day, one of the party who had survived many battles and the siege of Tobruk, fell and hurt his knee very badly. The sun came out as we were leaving, the view was magnificent and the snow heaven. Four-and-a-half days' travelling for five days of blizzard! Why is it so often like that? It was the last leave for the four officers before returning to the Desert. Two of them later gave their lives that we may go on enjoying ourselves.

In 1943, I left the Red Cross to go and retrieve my children from Capetown, but my week's leave again being due, determined to ski again first, and, if possible, get to Cyprus. This was in March when the weather is usually very stormy and I was told I was mad, would never get back from Cyprus even if I managed to get there, and would consequently miss my ship to South Africa. The best plan seemed to fly to Beirut. I got an R.A.F. passage, but, on arriving at Heliopolis, discovered the destination was Ryak. It was then too late to go back. We took off in filthy weather, tearing wind and cloud, and by the time we reached Lydda the rain was so bad that we landed with difficulty and were grounded. Wondering what on earth to do next, I was most kindly rescued and motored all the way up to Beirut. It was a heavenly drive, but on arrival I discovered that the roads to the Lebanon were blocked with snow, the planes to Cyprus grounded by bad weather, so there was no ski-ing anywhere. The St. George Hotel was a guinea a minute, but, fortunately, in two days the route to Cyprus was open, and, again through great kindness, I was put on a plane and arrived back after two years' absence. It was most exciting. On telephoning my husband's office (50 miles from the airport) I discovered he was ski-ing, and he told me afterwards that a fat policeman was sent puffing up the hills and half over the mountains to tell him I'd suddenly arrived in the Island. We had six days ski-ing and I returned to Cairo, with, I may say, the greatest difficulty. For two days the plane was cancelled, and I began to think the pundits who discouraged me on the mainland had been right. Then, while actually on the airport of Nicosia, a message arrived that the plane was about to land at Larnaca on the coast, and that if we all hurried down the 25 miles it would wait for us. We hadn't enough petrol and had to suck some out of a staff car! Owing to the usual security measures, I didn't, of course, know when my ship was sailing for South Africa, and I was in a fair frenzy that I'd miss it, and there wouldn't be another convoy for months. Actually I made Cairo in time, but with only a day or two to spare, and was so thrilled that the trip to Cyprus had been possible, as there was no telling how long my husband and I must remain separated.

In 1944 everyone was back in Cyprus, the Ski Club was formed, and we chugged up to the mountains every Sunday with Cypriots and Servicemen in a 'bus. From then on ski-ing in Cyprus has been increasingly popular. We have advanced a long way from the early days when we pottered over the mountains alone, when the road was uncleared, when there was nowhere to stay above the snowline, and no means of getting equipment. Now there is a large army leave

camp for ski-ing, a "pub" is open on the snow, and the open road works as a ski-hoist, as it gives one 300 to 500 feet lift—a considerable help. The Club is really a going concern. It has imported ski from France and an instructor from Palestine. We have started teaching the young, and Mrs. Marjorie Greenland, who is now living here, has offered to take on the children next year. It is an ideal place for them to begin. The season is roughly from the middle of January till early April, and as it freezes hard at night and thaws all day, spring snow conditions prevail. The runs are short and all wooded. For the last three years we've had a race meeting, each time making the course harder. This year the competitors included the well-known skiers Peter Wilson and Lt.-Col. Marriott.

Ski-ing in Cyprus is fun. It is as yet gay and unorganised, and, as Arnold Lunn puts it, still in the Gothic Age. The sun shines, the dicky birds sing, and it's in the sterling area, so for those who would winter out of England and put in some light-hearted ski-ing, along with swimming, motor drives in really lovely and most varied country, and perhaps a taste for archeology, I would suggest a visit to Cyprus. It is quite possible to ski and swim on the same day. We guarantee to give you a good laugh on the snow and a good drink off it. What more can one offer? Come to Cyprus and ski for yourselves.

INFORMATION FOR MOTHERS

In France children up to four years of age do not need tickets for rail or 'bus, and in Switzerland they travel free up to the age of six years.

DIARY OF A PLANNER

"MAN DISPOSES . . ."

BY E. KIRKPATRICK.

BEFORE the last war I had made a habit of visiting Switzerland or Austria every winter for six or eight weeks. It had become a necessary part of my life, and I think I was more horrified at the realisation that such pleasures were now over, than by the actual thought of war.

In the spring of 1939 I transferred from the Women's Legion to the W.A.A.F. and thus on the outbreak of war found myself in the role of Sergeant M.T. Driver, but posted as a Supervisor Teleprinter Operator to a country retreat of part of the Air Ministry—not a very logical sequence of events, but typical enough of Service proceedings. Feeling a little self-conscious in civilian clothes, I and my small band of Signals' personnel arrived to find that no teleprinter machines had yet been installed, or were likely to be for some weeks. I had to cast round for something to do, and, being at a high pitch of enthusiasm, decided to work in the War Room. (Those were the unregimented days when one did whatever seemed to need doing, with sublime disregard for red tape.)

To my delight there was a well-known skier there, who had many a time patiently explained to my sister and myself how to attack those agonising 2nd Class Tests. Studying maps was a large part of my duties, and quite naturally I sought out Switzerland; it certainly looked unlikely that I should be improving my times down to Küblis within the next few months, so my eye wandered speculatively to Eastern France and Scandinavia. There was ample time for reflection of this sort, for little was happening as yet and we were more or less standing-by. With great zeal I drafted letters to the Air Ministry making extravagant claims to a fluent knowledge of German, and offering my services (I had no idea in what capacity) so soon as a decent depth of snow had fallen in the Chamonix district. Time passed and no acknowledgment of these letters was ever received, but, nothing daunted, I persevered with application after application, widening my range of suggestions to include Finland, Russia and the Lebanon. Air Ministry continued to take no notice whatever—they did not even post me to Scotland, which was strange, because for some reason I had never asked to go there, and I found myself wandering between South Wales, Essex and the wetter and more dismal parts of Lancashire.

Meanwhile volunteers for service in Canada were being accepted from the Code and Cypher Branch, and when a last despairing bid to transfer to that branch failed it seemed that all my efforts were doomed to disappointment. However, in 1944 Higher Authority relented, and I found myself *en route* to Delhi—which is, after all, only a few hours' flying and a car ride from the snow-clad slopes of Kashmir. Scarcely had an outline of ski-ing plans formed in my mind after the first throes of adjustment to hot climes when Fate intervened and I was posted down to Ceylon, where my only consola-

tion was the discovery of a file on "Aircrew Mountaineering Courses." My first real break came in May, 1945, when a rest camp for W.A.A.F. personnel was opened in the Murree Hills, and it fell to me to inspect it. Wangling a few days' leave in addition, I arranged to meet some friends in Gulmarg and discuss plans for the following winter. The perfect sun and mountain air of the rest camp were heaven after the stickiness of Colombo and the stifling heat of Delhi, so it was feeling considerably refreshed that I sped on up the Jumna valley.

I have never known such thunder-storms. Our "super-bus" swayed and hurtled along a winding road that was poised above the torrent; on our right towered the mountains, and down their sides rushed avalanches of mud and rocks. Frequently we rounded a bend to find the road blocked a few yards ahead, and pulled up with frightening precipitancy. Then our driver and his mate, together with the male passengers and a gang of weary roadworkers, struggled to pitch the boulders over the already crumbling edge of the road down into the roaring river below.

Of course we did not get through in the day. When we reached the final 'bus stop, where a track led on up the mountainside and we should have taken to ponies, it was already dark, the storm was still raging, and the pony-men refused to undertake the journey. They told us that the evil spirits were abroad and that if we attempted to go further into the mountains they would certainly hurl us over the edge of the rocky path to our death. I found it hard to accept this reverse, remembering how, many years before, we had been similarly stuck on the way to Zurs. A blizzard was raging and the sleighs could not get through the drifts, so two men, another girl and I put on our ski, left our luggage with the rest of the party, and with one very annoyed guide struggled up the Flexenstrasse at intervals of 20 yards. I enjoyed every moment of it (and the knowledge that we were being very foolish) and what a reception we had when we eventually reached the hotel! So now I tried with my meagre stock of Hindustani to persuade one of the men to let me have a pony and set off alone, relying on the pony to know the way to Gulmarg. This was a fruitless endeavour—which was probably just as well—and I had to spend the night in an unexpectedly comfortable little guesthouse run by an Indian who spoke fairly good English and informed me that he had worked at the Ritz!

Next morning I awoke to find the rain pouring down and a thick fog everywhere; messy yellow patches of slush raised my hopes of snow higher up. But not a pony-boy was to be seen, and I had to wait two hours before one could be found and persuaded to risk getting wet. Alas, the snow got no better as we climbed, and the rain got worse. When at last we reached the village I saw that most of the golf-course (which is most of Gulmarg) was flooded, and drifts of soggy yellow-grey snow three and four feet deep lay among the trees. It was impossible because of the fog to see what conditions were like higher still above the tree-line. And I had only five days' leave, two of which had to be allowed for travelling!

My friends met me with monsoon capes, spare woollies, and the information that as all the stocks of wood were soaked it was impossible to light a fire! The cold was agonising. Gulmarg village had not opened for the season. The Golf Club was practically deserted and Nedu's Hotel was no brighter. They told me that the ski-hut was closed and all equipment had been taken down to Srinagar, whereat my last flicker of hope expired. Of course I had not expected to get real ski-ing in late May, but I had dreamed that here and there a slope might be possible and that boots and ski would be available.

The next day was slightly better and we rode up to the hut. The drifts were up to the ponies' bellies and so heavy that it was tedious going. One cannot easily judge a run under such conditions, but it struck me that the wood-running would be tricky indeed, even with metres of snow to cover the boulders and the fallen trees. The slopes were thickly wooded, steep and very uneven, with sudden narrow gullies and little run-out before reaching the garden fences of the first houses.

When we arrived on the open slopes the snow was hard enough for walking. One or two children were tobogganing, and the inevitable seller of coloured drinks and "char" and little cakes had even managed to get his wares up here. Trade was not good, but it gave an alarming impression of what the place might be like in the summer season. We were lucky to find the hut open, as the guardian was stacking logs. It was somewhat primitive compared with most Swiss huts, and the stove did not look as if the heating would be very adequate. My plan for running a leave-course for airwomen was abandoned right away. It would probably be magnificent for experienced runners, but conditions were far too tough for complete beginners. I learned later that provision of kit in small enough sizes would in any case have been impossible.

On our way back the clouds lifted momentarily to disclose a view of the nearby slopes; they were steep and boulder-strewn and even in the best snow conditions would obviously require a certain amount of skill to negotiate, especially as no rescue sledges *à la Parsenn* wait round corners for the unlucky. The transportation of a badly-injured person down to Srinagar was horrible to contemplate. We returned by a different route, where the snow had practically disappeared, and never have I seen such exquisite flowers. Azaleas, primulas, irises, rock-roses, lilies, were all just coming into bloom, and I could hardly bear to put a foot to the ground, as every step meant crushing delicate plants. I am quite unable to describe how beautiful it was.

The following day we went further up the valley and found more steep and open slopes, and range upon range of hills tempting one to explore, but the weather continued to be appalling and no tours could be made. The day I had to return to the plains the sun came out and the skies cleared, and for a few moments I saw Kanchenjunga and all that magnificent range to the north.

My next effort was made after I had moved to Singapore, and Hong Kong was within my "parish." Kashmir was now far away

and out of any leave schemes, but Hong Kong led one to think of China (which was "out of bounds") and China led naturally to Japan. There were rumours that W.A.A.F. were needed in Japan, and here was an opportunity of exploring new ski-ing grounds, but, unfortunately, after a while conditions were thought unsuitable for the Women's Services and I never got there.

In August, 1946, I unwillingly returned to the United Kingdom. Once I had recovered from the most shattering cold and sore throat of my life I started planning for the winter. I had had no disembarkation leave and a lot more leave was owing to me, so I wangled three weeks and booked for Davos for the last week of January.

I will pass over the agonies of December and early January as friends returned from Switzerland, and some spoke of metres of powder snow, and some came back as pale as they went out and grumbled of *foehn* or fog and bitter cold! I bicycled exhaustedly up and down the Buckinghamshire hills trying to find my lost muscles, and I counted every flake of snow that fell, and prayed that it was falling a thousandfold in the Grisons. I had word that my ski and kit were safe and ready for me, and, at last, the great day came.

The 24 hours' journey slipped by so quickly that it did not seem long before I found myself running from side to side of the carriage looking out on the familiar breath-taking panorama of mountains rising up out of the snow-dusted pine trees. I felt impatient and excited at having at last captured a dream. With the exacting eye of one who returns after years of separation to some beloved and well-known place I eagerly sought out landmarks and revelled in the delight of recognition. It was true, snow was scanty and the sun seemed to have left us for Singapore or Kandy, but here was Davos and the Kanonen, my planning and dreaming was coming true at last! I resolved to be tremendously sensible and careful for the first few days—I would limit myself to a few of the shorter runs—no late nights until I was really fit—but when do plans ever turn out right? Here comes the moral of my story. . . . Man proposes . . . but on the seventh day I broke my leg.

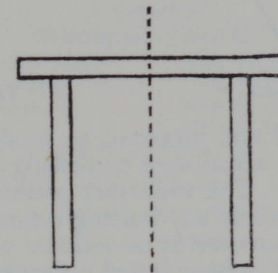
"STEM QUEENS"

A Scientific Defence of the Wide Track for the Feminine Chassis

By E. S. MACFIE.

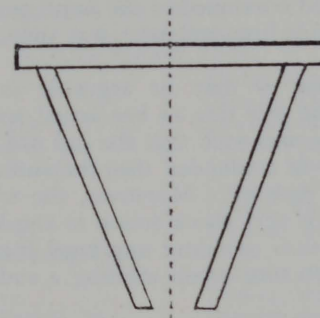
THE study of the human skeleton shows us that the upper leg bones (femurs) of the woman are attached to the hip bone (pelvis), farther apart from each other than they are in a man. This is because the pelvis (you know what that is now) in a woman is arranged wider to start with.

For a woman to stand with her feet together and parallel she has two alternatives neither of which are left to her personal choice. Firstly, she can be made in such a way that her whole leg is curved from hip to heel in order to achieve the object gradually, or else she can have a sudden slant inwards from the hip direct to the knee, effecting junction at that point in the hope that the heels and feet will follow suit. The first of these systems is called the "bow-legged," and the second the "knock-kneed." Both methods can be observed clearly in those ladies who wear *vorlage* bags, as most of these types do.



A.

Note centre of gravity giving plenty of space in which to swing about within the base, thus ensuring stability.



B.

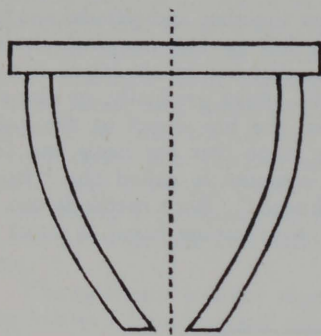
Note no room for centre of gravity to swing within the base, thus table would fall over at slightest jolt.

There are, however, some women who have not been granted either of the two structural adjustments mentioned above. These unfortunates have neither bow-legs nor knock-knees, and can be

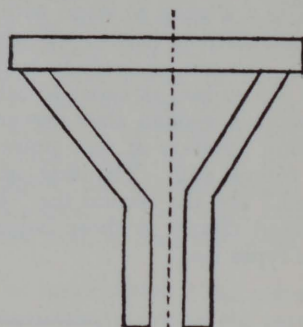
likened to an ordinary table with legs going straight downwards to the floor (see diagram A).

To require of the straight-legged lady that she places her feet together, in a sport needing all the balance she can muster would seem to be as unsound as to build a table with legs as at diagram B.

It is agreed, however, that many bow-legged (diagram C) and knock-kneed (diagram D) ladies do achieve the single track in skiing remarkably well, in fact they can hardly avoid so doing without contortion.



C. THE BOW-LEGGED.



D. THE KNOCK-KNEED.

This subject should not, however, be brought to a conclusion without reference to the actual stem or braking action in relation to the wide-track position. The wide-track method is not in itself a stem, and has not necessarily any braking action whatsoever. This statement can best be illustrated by an incident which occurred some years ago in an Open Kandahar Race*. Our famous Father Lunn was heard shouting "Stop stemming!" to a lady racer as she flashed past him in her habitual position as at diagram A. The competitor so addressed continued to the finish quite regardless of the suggestion from the side-line, and later was found to have won the race.

It is admitted that it may be arguable as to whether this competitor's good time was due to her actual speed or to the fact that her lateral balance was such that she did not fall, but in favour of the first premise it is contended that the surer a skier is of not falling, the faster she dare go. Moreover, the wide space between the ski allows room for very quick action in checking by use of the stem braking action, thus avoiding any need for waste of time in rotation of the body to turn when meeting a sudden undulation in the ground.

Discussion on this very controversial subject is invited for the next issue of the BULLETIN, particularly from ladies built as at diagrams C and D.

* Hindmarsh Race, 1934.

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Lillywhites
introduce ...

THE "CRITERION" SKI BOOT



MADE OF black "Zug" waterproof leather with white chrome leather instep and ankle strap. This season's boot combines the best features of both Continental and Canadian models, and is by far the finest ski boot that has yet been produced in England. Outstanding points are the cut of the leg and sponge rubber tongue, both of which give greater comfort. Patterned rubber sole to prevent slipping, and twin grooved heel to accommodate cable binding.

Men's (9 coupons). Women's (7 coupons). **£4:17:6**

WE OFFER no apologies for suggesting the purchase of our new ski boot at the present time because

- (a) in any case it is a valuable investment.
- (b) you may want to use it this season. If snow falls in Great Britain this Winter we can help you find it.
- (c) you can buy everything to go with it from a pair of socks to the latest type of Telescopic ski stick at Piccadilly Circus.

Lillywhites
LTD

PICCADILLY CIRCUS Tel.: Whitehall 3181



SKI OUTFITS for HIRE

In order to assist as many Winter Sports enthusiasts as possible we have set aside a certain number of men's and women's outfits which can be hired without coupons. Next year, however, we hope to have better stocks for sale.

Write to Dept. L.S. for particulars

MOSS BROS
OF COVENT GARDEN

Corner of King St. and Bedford St., W.C.2 Temple Bar 4477

Branches at: Aldershot Bournemouth, Bristol, Camberley, Manchester, Portsmouth

She ski!

Designed for people who know, our women's ski clothes are practical, gay-coloured and completely correct. Do come in and see them :

LEATHER JACKETS

SKI JACKETS

in bright-hued Poplin (with hoods)

SUEDE HOODS AND MATCHING MITTS,
lined with white lamb or beaver lamb

WOOL JERKINS

with check tweed fronts

SKI TROUSERS

in Black, Navy and Grey

And a host of other merchandise !

WOMEN'S SHOP, FOURTH FLOOR



Simpson (Piccadilly) Ltd
202 Piccadilly London W.1. Regent 2002

