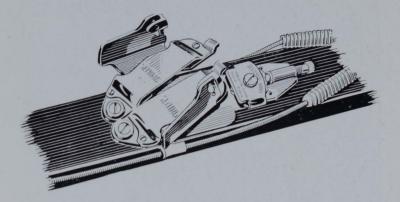


LADIES' SKI CLUB BULLETIN NOVEMBER, 1955

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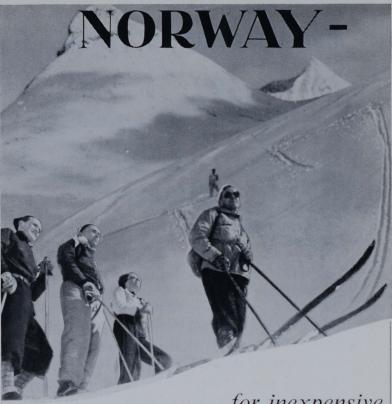


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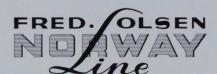
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THE LADIES' SKI CLUB BULLETIN

No. 25

Vol. II. Pt. 17

NOVEMBER, 1955

EDITORIAL

WE regret to have to record the death of Wing Officer E. Kirkpatrick, which took place in November, 1954. Miss Kirkpatrick had been a

member of the L.S.C. for nearly twenty-five years.

Congratulations to Anne Spaull on winning the L.S.C. Cup and Non-International Cup, and to Jean Stanford on winning the Open Cup (she was not then a member of the L.S.C.). The L.S.C. Race was run in conjunction with the Dorftäli Giant Slalom at Davos, as it seemed impossible to fit it in as an independent race, but next year we hope to get back to the traditional "Combined"; Downhill and Slalom. Congratulations also to Jean Stanford on finishing second in the Parsenn Derby; a very notable achievement.

L.S.C. Junior Spoons were won at Wengen by Elspeth Whitley, who was also third in the British Junior Slalom Championship; at Adelboden by E. Pyman, and at Villars by J. Hudson. Congratu-

lations to all.

The L.S.C. Grant to assist a racer to go to the Arlberg-Kandahar was awarded to Lesley Thomson, but unfortunately on the eve of the race she had a very bad fall while practising the course and broke both her legs.

Other casualties were Gillian Rickards and Jocelyn Wardrop-Moore, who both broke legs very badly. Addy Pryor, who broke her leg the previous winter, was still not sound enough to race last season.

We congratulate the following members on their marriage:—

Miss J. Crosthwaite, now Mrs. Bailey.

Miss K. Bates, now Mrs. Alexander Cleghorn, June 1st, 1955.

Miss R. Wakefield, now Mrs. Nigel Clarkson Webb, June 1st,

Miss V. Mackintosh, now Mrs. John Shaw Stewart, June 11th,

Miss A. Stormonth-Darling, now Mrs. M. P. de Klee, July 6th, 1955.

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Congratulations to the following on the birth of babies during the past year:—

To Mrs. R. Hilleary (née S. Mackintosh), a son, October 5th, 1954.

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To the Hon. Mrs. K. Lamb (née A. Saul), a daughter, January 23rd, 1955, in Boston, Massachusetts.

To the Lady Stafford (née M. Campbell), a son, August 9th, 1955. To Mrs. F. Hayward (née S. Daniell), a son, August 31st, 1955.

We are happy to welcome six new members into the Club:—Mrs. W. M. Blagden, Miss C. Doran-Webb, Mrs. Farr, Miss D. Jowitt, Mrs. A. T. O. Liddell, Mrs. Stanford.

The following members, having failed to pay their subscriptions for some years, are assumed to have resigned and have been deleted from the Members' List: Miss P. Morgan-Dibben, and Mrs. R. B. S.

Reford. Mrs. R. O. Lewin has also resigned.

We make no apology for including this year an article which has nothing whatever to do with ski-ing, although it is written by a skier, Mrs. Peter Wood (née Appleyard). It describes their life on the tiny island of Herm, in the Channel Islands, which Joyce and her husband took over after the war in a deserted and derelict condition, and where they have built up a flourishing little community. Evidently the well-known Appleyard courage has not been confined to the brothers of that family.

The Annual General Meeting and Party of the L.S.C. will be held on Wednesday, November 30th, at the Ski Club of Great Britain;

details will be sent later.

It is hoped to hold the L.S.C. Race Meeting at Mürren on Wednesday January 11th, 1956, before the British Ladies' Championships,

but arrangements are not yet complete.

The Editor is always glad to receive articles and photographs for the Bulletin. Articles should, if possible, be typed on one side of the paper, with double spacing and wide margins. Photographs should be glossy prints for preference, but others, or even negatives, can be used. Contributions should be sent by the end of July at latest (we always say this, but what a hope!). The later the articles are received, the later the Bulletin will appear. as it cannot go to press with *nothing* in it.

L.S.C. badges may be obtained from the Hon. Treasurer, Mrs. R. Oddie, 23, St. Leonards Terrace, S.W.1. Prices: 8s. 6d. metal, 5s. od. cloth. It would be much appreciated if members would send

cash with order.

Members are reminded that it is essential that the BULLETIN should be mentioned when making enquiries of advertisers.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

December 1st, 1954

THE Annual General Meeting was held at the Ski Club of Great Britain, 118, Eaton Square, on Wednesday, December 1st, followed by a Cocktail Party.

The meeting was well attended; the President, Mrs. W. R. Tomkinson, was in the chair.

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The Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting were read and passed.

Mrs. Oddie, the Hon. Treasurer, presented the accounts, which

were approved and passed.

Then followed the election of Officers and Members of the Committee:—

President: Lady Chamier was unanimously elected.

Vice-President: Mrs. Palmer-Tomkinson. Hon. Secretary: Lady Blane re-elected. Hon. Treasurer: Mrs. Oddie re-elected.

Hon. Editor: Miss P. Harrison re-elected.

Committee: Miss J. M. Keliher. Mrs. Mabey. Mrs. Nugent.

The President then gave her report. "Last winter," she said, "was a difficult one as regards snow. First we practised our ski-ing over rocks, stones and grass, wire, old bones, tin cans, in fact anything that came our way. Then we had too much snow and again difficulties. All this caused many alterations in races, etc., including our own L.S.C. race, which first could not be held in Grindelwald through lack of snow, then the next week could not be held at Villars because of too much snow, and was finally held at Gstaad just before the British Ladies' Championship. We are very pleased to congratulate Hilary Laing on winning. I would also like to thank Soss Roe and Ted Chamier for so kindly running it.

"I am so very pleased that you have unanimously elected my old friend Ted to succeed me as President. My first recollection of Ted was of her racing with a Maple leaf engraved on her front, always cheerful and helping one over the frightful sick feeling at the start of a race by telling some funny story or a joke. Ted's one idea always has been to get down the hill as fast as possible whether in control or not; in spite of a very bad accident three years ago, she is ski-ing as fast as ever. I am very pleased that the S.C.G.B. has recognised all that she has done for the Club by making her a life member, and I am delighted to hand over the Presidency of the L.S.C. to her.

"I am sure we were all very sorry to hear of the death of a member of 25 years' standing, Wing Officer E. Kirkpatrick, who had

done exceptionally well in the W.R.A.F.

"I want to thank the two gentlemen who so kindly audited our accounts, Kenneth Smith and Eric Lewns, and also my husband for Roneo-ing all the notices, etc. I would also like to thank very much our Hon. Treasurer, Jeannette, for her hard work, especially getting all the subscriptions in and up to date, our Secretary for all her hard work, and also our Hon. Editor, Pip, for her work with the BULLETIN.

"Last Winter was rather full of accidents to our members, and we do commiserate with them. Our chief sympathies go out to Addy Pryor who, to everyone's joy, was sent out to Sweden as the British Team, but unfortunately on the very last training run broke her leg badly. I am delighted to see her walking now without a limp at all and saying that she is going to race this Season.

"As Addy was hurt and all the other young racers, too, our grant to help a racer to go to the A-K was not used. But your President went and made her debut as an official in International racing; it was quite a revelation to be on the officials' side. I arrived the night before the Ladies' Downhill and was met by Patricia in a lovely car put at the disposal of Arnold for the Meeting. I was fascinated to meet all the other officials, who turned out to be mostly contemporaries of my own racing days, but the one big official I had never met before was Otto Menardi. I was very pleased to go down the Ladies' course with Robert before the race; it was a lovely course, fast but magnificently prepared, very well controlled and giving the really good skier a chance to prove her technique. Unfortunately the sun got on to the end of the run, and where the racers came over a series of rounded humps, with flat run-outs at high speed it had become a bit soggy and if they were a little unsteady they took nasty falls on the flat. Here I found the Technical Adviser creating the most awful scene and saying 'This is terrible, all the girls are falling; we must have no more downhill races for women,' etc., etc. I am afraid I leapt into battle and said 'What do you mean, girls have to fall down sometimes!' We continued our arguments at the lunch table, being egged on by Arnie; if it had gone on any more I would have become gynaecological. In point of fact, only one Swiss girl was badly hurt and that was because she had got off the track just at the finish, and one German girl hurt the ankle she had already sprained continually through the Season. I maintain that the A-K course was not dangerous for women and left it still possible for the good skier to win on her own initiative. The Technical Adviser and I remained on very formal terms with each other throughout the

"For the Men's Straight Race Peter Lunn and I went above the big Steilburg, as we both had not seen any first-class ski-ing for some time, and were hoping for something spectacular. Imagine our surprise when we suddenly saw a spider ski-ing down the course; then came another ski-ing the identical line of the first, and so on, competitor after competitor up to No. 30 practically all ski-ing identical courses and all looking like spiders. You see, if you are a top racer now you must cut down your wind resistance, so you wear nylon elastic tights, a tight jerkin and a crash helmet. There was no doubt that Austria had ten good skiers to one of any other country; we placed ten Austrians, one German, one French and one American in what we thought must be the top category. This practically proved right on the results, but I can quite understand why racing has no more appeal to the public, as we found it got extremely boring. We were just going to move on down the course, when just above us some spectacular falls started happening. The sun had just caught the corner of the path where the racers left it and as we were now getting the less-than-first-class racers, they did not hold their turns on this sugary surface and went sailing twenty to thirty yards through deep snow and trees. We saw five do this one after another. I said to Peter, "I can't bear this, someone is going to hurt himself very

badly," and the next one landed in a tree and broke his leg and could not get out of the tree. The first-aid people were very slow and stupid. Finally Peter and I went and helped. I sat with the man's head in my lap and Peter stood above us to act as a buffer in case anyone else fell off the path, but no one else did as the sun had now moved off it.

"Next day was the Slalom. I woke up feeling nearly as bad as if I was going to race myself, as I had to be referee of the Ladies' Slalom, and if anything went wrong I would have to make the decision. I took up a position half way down where I could see the whole course, and was thankful no one put in a complaint, because though I watched everyone very carefully you could not always see if the racer or flagkeeper was right. The German girl, Mirl Buchner, well deserved her victory, she skied magnificently and it was a most popular win. Our new President and all of you will be glad to hear that I think we have a future Olympic Champion in the Empire; Anne Heggtveit, from Canada, who was only just 15, came fifth in the Combined. I was much impressed by her calmness and general technique, in fact, I was very impressed by all the Canadian girls, and though there were no British there it was very nice to see the Maple Leaf being well represented. It was a very happy meeting and the Germans went out of their way to be nice to us. I had long talks with Käthe Grassegger whom some of you will remember ski-ing with long flying plaits in the German team. She looked just the same only the plaits were wound round her head now. She has a daughter of ten. The crowds were amazing; there were many thousands of people there. It made me laugh to be in on all the heated discussions round the table. It was not really very different from the days when one was a racer, except that the heated discussions over wax and line had now given place to ones of organisation.

"Now I won't bore you any more. I wish you all good luck ski-ing this year, and all my good wishes to Ted as your future Presi-

dent.

The Cups were presented, the L.S.C. Championship to Miss Hilary Laing and the Non-International Cup to Miss Cathryn Hinde.

The L.S.C. Meeting was to be held at Klosters on February 28th, Marden's Club undertaking to run it. The British Women's Championship and the Junior Championship were to be run at Grindelwald by the L.S.C.

The meeting closed and was followed by a very well-attended Cocktail Party.

L.S.C. RACING FUND

Members are asked to contribute if possible to the L.S.C. Racing Fund, from which a grant is made each year to enable a promising young racer to compete in the Arlberg-Kandahar. A good many of our members do this fairly painlessly by increasing their Bankers' Order from 5s. od. to 10s. od., the extra 5s. od. going into the Racing Fund. Any donations will be very welcome.

THE F.I.S. CONGRESS, 1955, AT MONTREUX

By Helen Tomkinson

I FELT rather like a new girl at school on arrival in Montreux for my first F.I.S. Congress. But this feeling soon wore off as I discovered that a great many of the other delegates were old friends from my racing days, and it was really like attending a big international race

meeting again and meeting all the familiar faces.

Before the official opening of the Congress, we held a Ladies' Committee Meeting. Elsa Roth (Switzerland) was in the chair, and the other members were Zaja Bolotova (Russia), Christl Cranz-Borchers (Germany), Germaine Desjardin (France), Andrea Mead Lawrence (U.S.A.), Inge Löwden (Sweden) and Helka Ristolanainen (Finland). Erika Spiess-Mahringer (Austria) could not attend, so her place was taken by Helga Gödl. Laila Schou-Nielsen (Norway) was unable to attend.

Elsa was an excellent chairwoman, and I was much impressed by the way she was able to make her speeches in three languages

without any notes.

We had a long discussion on ladies' downhill racing and how we could make it safer. It was very strongly felt that it was largely due to lack of technique that accidents occurred in Downhill races, and that therefore the Committee would like to recommend to all the National Associations that they should not allow girls under eighteen to compete in Downhill races, but only in Slaloms and Giant Slaloms which improve their technique. We also discussed how accidents in training could be avoided, and agreed to recommend that, on the day before a big race, either each national team should practise alone, or the racers should train in groups according to the group draw; therefore that in either case the course should be reasonably clear.

Through Robert Readhead, I was asked to take the English minutes for the Downhill and Slalom Committee. This was most interesting, and it was great fun getting the English, German and

French minutes to agree.

The opening of the Congress was very impressive with everyone sitting behind their national flags. Marc Hodler as President was excellent, and his ability to translate other people's speeches into two other languages was most remarkable. I was much struck by the smooth running of the whole Congress due to the excellent secretariat run by Arnold Kaech, whom it was very nice to see again.

The Swiss had laid on some very pleasant light entertainment for us, the guiding lights here being Godi Michel and Elsa Roth. On the day before the end of the Congress we were all taken up to Champéry for a luncheon "Racklette Party." This was the greatest of fun; we went up in charabancs to Champéry and then up in the téléférique and were given lunch in the charming hut at the top. We had plate upon plate of Racklette and the party became very gay, especially when Godi and Elsa brought in lovely engraved cow-bells for each person; the noise then was terrific with everyone ringing their cow-bells at once.

Later some village children brought round boxes of gentians which one could address and send to one's friends free of charge. Each delegate got a box of flowers. This I felt was a most charming

On the last night we were given a wonderful dinner by the town of Montreux in the famous chateau of Chillon. This took place by candle-light in the old hall; it really was the most marvellous sight and we were all most appreciative of the honour done us by the City of Montreux. We all left the Congress with very happy memories.

DERBY WEEK AND THE L.S.C. RACE

By MOPPY RITCHIE

PARSENN DERBY week, as often before, started off with fairly bad weather. However, on Friday, March 4th, the day of the Dorftälli Giant Slalom, we had brilliant sunshine. It was very cold and the piste was still quite hard by the time of the girls' start.

The L.S.C. Race was held in conjunction with the Dorftälli

race, as it had been found impossible to hold it independently.

Jean Stanford skied beautifully; she was the best British girl, coming in 4th and winning the L.S.C. Open Cup. Sue Holmes was 6th. Anne Spaull was the first L.S.C. member to finish, and won the L.S.C. Cup and also the L.S.C. Non-International Cup. Robin Brock-Hollinshead and John Torrens, our only two men entries, came 34th and 40th respectively.

On Saturday the weather changed again, there were more snowstorms and very bad light and the general atmosphere amongst the racers was slightly depressed. But early on Sunday morning the clouds were clearing and they had all dispersed by the time the ladies were due to start. Conditions for the Derby were excellent, very fast

and very few bumps.

We watched first from the Wasserscheide, always a fascinating spot to be, as you can see the different way people come down from the Gipfel. None of the girls carried the Wasserscheide this year, though Hedi Beeler, the eventual winner, managed to get up furthest. At this point she had nearly caught up with the previous racer, but she then, to our astonishment, proceeded to take the lower line in the first Schuss. It was interesting to see how much slower this line is, and it must have cost Hedi several precious seconds.

We then slowly went down the course, taking up our stand for a while at the Derby Schuss, always one of the most exciting places to watch. Actually while we were there we only saw competitors of the older age groups, but even amongst them quite a few took it absolutely straight, and one almost held one's breath till they had

safely negotiated the Gauderloch below.

By the time we arrived at Schwendi most of the girls' results had already been written up, and soon it transpired that Jean Stanford had skied magnificently and was second after Hedi Beeler, of the Ski Club Stoos, who had the best time of the day, 7 min. 42:48 sec. Sue Holmes came in 5th and Penelope Nowell, who was racing for the first time, was 6th. Angela Carr and Anne Spaull were 7th and 9th. It was a very good British entry and a most successful one, too.

Soon we went on to the Conterser meadows to watch the now tiring men skiers negotiate the bumps there, and then slowly down to the finish where we arrived in time to see the Elite come in. Hans Forrer arrived completely unperturbed, almost dancing from bump to bump, and so did one or two others. Forrer set up a new record, beating Fopp's previous record by over 30 seconds, and Fopp's record had seemed unbelievable.

Among the British competitors Robin Brock-Hollinshead was 34th in a time of 17 min. 21·1 sec., and John Torrens tied as 62nd in a time of 17 min. 42·4 sec.

LADIES' AND JUNIOR SLALOM CHAMPIONSHIPS

BY BUNTY TULLOCH

On Sunday evening, January 9th, the young gathered at the Belvedere Hotel, Grindelwald, all thirty-five of them with Helen Tomkinson as C.O. To tackle the organisation of a Junior and a Ladies' Championship is no mean feat, and to make a success of a slalom in pouring rain would have indeed been impossible without the wonderful help of Herr von Bidder and the Grindelwald Kurverein; nothing seemed too much trouble.

The Trainees from the different centres had all arrived by suppertime except for those from Gstaad. We then had the difficult task of dividing them into three classes for the final training—difficult, as they all seemed incredibly good and/or incredibly modest! Two trainers had been engaged, Peter Kaufmann and Peter Borgmann; both proved most helpful throughout. The third group was taken by Helen herself.

At 9 p.m. "Gstaad" arrived fresh from the "Duke of Kent" and roaring for food. They seemed larger and noisier than the rest, as indeed they were. But as they never thought of getting up when speaking to the C.O., who was more than twice their age, they lost their advantage in height by lack of manners!

Our difficulties in controlling our "little" family were increased by a boys' school party also being in the hotel; they were about the same ages as our Junior Trainees and as far as I could see were wearing the same faces!

Helen had warned me that it would be like a Pony Club camp. She was wrong in that at a P.C. camp each child has a pony attached for identification purposes! She was right in that I have never been at a P.C. camp yet where a bed was not broken, with all the agonising "'oo done it" business. Beds seem to have a strange fascination, for breaking purposes, for the young.

Also in true Pony Club style the girls raided the boys' dormitories and *vice versa*. This is easily dealt with in camp, but in a respectable Swiss hotel it naturally did not go down well with our fellow guests. And this had to be explained to the young in words of one syllable by our able C.O., who pluckily patrolled the passages to ensure order and peace.

Excessive noise from one room involved careful checking of numbers to see if they were "Juniors" or "School." If the latter we could turn to the master in charge with a "your birds, sir, I think." If the former we demanded entry only to find three demure, dishevelled damsels! We then had the alternatives of the "come out, I see you" gambit, or an undignified hunt of the room for the attacking party. This time we fortunately spied a carelessly hidden elbow. "Come out," said Helen, fiercely. "Both of you," I added for good measure; and as luck would have it two emerged. I vaguely remember wishing I'd tried "all three of you"—but as order was restored, we departed.*

The British Ladies were also in residence, sitting demurely at one long table ably presided over by their captain, Addy Pryor, who was talking brightly of racing again although, as far as I could gather, she was still held together by nuts and bolts with a few floating bits!

The chief topic of conversation was poor Gillian Rickards, languishing in Interlaken Hospital waiting to be "bolted" together. As a parent, my hair fairly stood on end; truly this is a mechanical age! In my young days I don't ever remember anyone not mending on their own. In future we may look forward to seeing Addy, Gillian, Alan Crompton and others ski-ing with adjustable spanners in their pockets for the various nuts and bolts in their anatomy.

The British Damen all looked incredibly young—that comes of having grown incredibly old oneself! I was fascinated by the new "Horsey keep your tail up" hair-do. All that is required is one elastic band, which appeals to my Scottish instinct, and the result is a perfect tub-time tail, so useful for brushing the snow off one's ski after a fall. "Trés pratique," as the French might say.

All went well on the first day of training, and indeed the only day of good ski-ing and sunshine, and then it rained . . . and rained . . . and rained It was every bit as good as Scotland!

On Thursday I went up with Helen and Addy to inspect the course. We clucked down it like three old hens squawking at our ducklings to "go carefully," even if they were standing still. A Swiss helped our views on the course by breaking his leg in the slush at a very moderate pace right under our noses! The course was definitely unfit for racing and I think all parents of Ladies and Juniors should be grateful for the decision to cancel the race. I know several competitors would have liked to have "had a bash"; but why risk reducing some of our few young hopes to the nut-and-bolt mechanised class if we can avoid it?

^{*}As it happened, there was a third; which just shows that in certain circumstances two blacks do make a White!—B.T.

With the help of the Kurverein again it was decided to hold the slalom only, and the competitors spent the afternoon helping to stamp the course—a fine old-fashioned custom which I should like to see revived. The young had never heard of such a thing and I'm sure it was jolly good for them.

The race was duly held next morning. The mist came and went and came again. I was in a fortunate position and was able to see both start and finish—or not—as the mist decreed. It rained on and off, but we were getting used to that. The course was kept in good order by experts with shovels; the Kurverein again, God bless 'em.

The Ladies came first. I had not seen them in action before and I was impressed by Sue Holmes, who won fairly comfortably. Jocelyn Wardrop-Moore, who was second, did well and I was very sorry to see that her racing came to a stop for this year at Sestrière. I hope it was not a serious break of the nut-and-bolt variety. Lesley Thomson was clearly using her head, another old-fashioned custom worth reviving, and appeared to know just what she could do . . . and did it to finish third. Margaret Torrens did one good run but messed up the other. She might do well to study the old-fashioned custom afore-mentioned!

The Junior Girls came next. Verity Lawrence (or "Variety" as she appeared on one list) ran well, and her times would have placed her fourth in the senior event. Sara Garnett (second) should also do well in future. Elspeth Whitley was third and Elspeth Nicol fourth and winner of the Under-Fifteen Cup, she is a very promising Junior. I would also like to mention Ginny Tomkinson, who skied carefully, using her head, and put up a very neat performance for an eleven-year-old.

Of the Boys, Robert Skepper did two steady runs and shows great promise. J. Taylor (second) and Michael Sherwood-Smith (third) are also promising but rely more on strength than technique. Colin Griffeth may surprise us all next year, he has very good style. P. Reichwelt was 11th and won the Under-Fifteen Cup, with N. White close behind with one penalty.

There was a noticeable difference between the under-fifteens and the "older" juniors; I think the introduction of the Under-Fifteen Cup is an excellent idea.

The prize-giving was held at the Belvedere Hotel after lunch, presided over by Sir Arnold Lunn, who thanked Mrs. Tomkinson and Herr von Bidder for a successful race in spite of the weather. He then called on Lady Blane to present the prizes.

We were all most grateful to Mr. Hanson of the Belvedere for putting up with so much youthful energy. Also to the First Bahn, who, not content with giving us all cheap tickets, although they were losing money owing to the weather, refunded everyone 25% as they felt that the rain had done us out of the advantage of the cheap tickets.

And so ended the Junior and Ladies' Slalom Championships, but not the bad weather—it rained on. . . .



ROGER GYSIN (TRAINER), ADDY PRYOR, GILLY RICKARDS, SHEILA GRACIE, SUE HOLMES, ANGELA CARR, JOCELYN WARDROP-MOORE, CAROLINE SIMS, MARGARET HARRIS BURLAND, ANNE SPAULL, MARGARET TORRENS, ZANDRA NOWELL, JEAN STANFORD



VORLAGE (ADDY PRYOR)



Photo by]

THE SCHLITGRAT, MÜRREN
PART OF THE ARLBERG-KANDAHAR COURSE

[P. Harrison



Photo by]

OUTSIDE THE BLUMENTAL AT MÜRREN PEGGY SHERER (GARGLING?), HELEN BEST AND SOSS ROE

[P. Harrison

HERM, CHANNEL ISLANDS

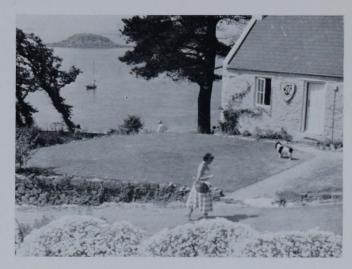


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THE ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

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JOYCE WOOD WITH JOCELYN AND PENELOPE, ABOVE THE HOTEL AND HARBOUR

[P. Wood

RACES FOR L.S.C. JUNIOR SPOONS

WENGEN

By D. K. D. FOSTER

THE Ladies' Ski Club Spoon was awarded this year to Elspeth Whitley, one of our Junior Trainees, who subsequently came third in the British Junior Slalom Championship.

Of the various awards competed for here in Wengen over January 4th and 5th, only some of those open to men are for combined Straight and Slalom, those open to ladies being Straight Races only. We had therefore hoped to hold a Ladies' Slalom on the 5th for the Spoon. Unfortunately the combined effects of ankles sprained in the Straight Races of the previous day and the imminence of the Junior Kandahar Championships across the valley left us with only one lady.

We therefore awarded the Spoon to Elspeth Whitley, runner-up in the Straight Race on the 4th, in which she beat by 1.4 sec. Verity Lawrence, the current British Junior Slalom Champion.

ADELBODEN

By M. M. MARQUAND

THE Ladies' Ski Club Spoon given to us has been awarded to E. Pyman for a Slalom Race held on January 7th, 1955.

VILLARS

BY LADY BLANE

A RACE for the Ladies' Ski Club Spoon (Juniors) was held in Villars, and was won by Miss J. Hudson, with Miss V. Tomkinson second and Miss C. Waddell third.

RACING RETROSPECT

By Lesley S. A. Thomson

THIS past season, in spite of the rather drastic finish, has been one of the most enjoyable I have ever had. It started in the usual way, going to Grindelwald as S.C.G.B. representative. While there I was able to race in the Lady Denman, the S.D.S. and the British Ladies' Slalom Championships. Then the L.S.C. asked if I would like to go on racing, and offered to help me with training, which was a wonderful opportunity.

So off to Sestrière at the end of January with a thirteen-hour journey there and back. The ski-ing was fascinating—I loved it—and the snow while we were there was excellent, although we had three days of weather with visibility about 6 yards, when training on the *schuss* consisted of holding a broad stem for as long as possible. The lower section through the wood had a separate ski lift so that training could be confined to this, the more difficult section, where, among the trees, visibility was better. The day of the race was

glorious, and the organisation excellent. Back to Grindelwald and

repping for three weeks.

For sheer hilarity the Inferno Race on February 20th was for me quite the best. I spent a week in Mürren, having slalom lessons early in the morning, soft-snow ski-ing during the day, and then joining Alfred Staeger again at 4 p.m. to do the lower section of the course—Allmendhubel—Grutschalp—Lauterbrunnen. For girls doing this course (unless they are Langlauf racers anyway) I don't think they should try to do the Langlauf section fast in training; I thought I was fairly fit until I had been along it three times! Grutschalp to Lauterbrunnen in the conditions we had this year was fun, particularly using Gommes, provided you knew when to check hard before scraping over the odd rock or tree root. Lower down where there was plenty of space, there was also plenty of snow, and being a softsnow enthusiast, I found it wonderful until I dropped my glasses into about 10 inches of powder, after taking them off to remove the snow from a somersault. The sight of one of the competitors digging frantically in the snow for five minutes, caused some amusement. Then the final grand-stand somersault within 20 yards of the end, and the most snow-covered girl ever seen in Lauterbrunnen collapsed through the finish. It took two days to dry out my pullover, by which time I was in Mégève.

To organise a Citizens' Derby that attracts quite a large entry at the end of Carnival Week was asking for trouble, and they got it. Accommodation was extremely difficult to obtain, even with the help of the tourist office, and there were just so many people in Mégève that the queueing for ski lifts and *téléfériques* was quite beyond belief. Unless you were at the *téléférique* before 10 a.m. there was no hope of getting more than two runs in before a late lunch. Between 9 and 10 a.m. you could do four runs easily or three full length runs and several of the lower half using the short ski tow. The results showed

who got up early!

We were all glad to get away, some for Davos and the Parsenn Derby, myself back to Grindelwald for four days. The weather was perfect, and joining the D.H.O. touring I had two glorious days. An Eismeer first, which was exceptionally easy, then the second day we went from the Jungfraujoch up to the Ober and Unter Mönchjoch. We then did an unusual route down the centre of the icefall (the crevasses were exceptionally well filled this year) and on to the Eismeer. Across that and down the Kalli, quite the most interesting and enjoyable day of the season.

The Sunday Times, and the Wengen Ladies' No Fall races which had been postponed at the start of the season, were run the next day on spring snow, a very pleasant change from the usual breakable

crust.

My last day there was sheer pleasure ski-ing with a Canadian cousin who turned up unexpectedly. We spent the day doing as many different runs as possible between Grindelwald and Wengen. Finally, having sent our luggage off in the morning, we took the trains for Mürren.

I always did believe in doing things thoroughly.

THE ABOMINABLE SKI-MEN

BY BUNTY TULLOCH

THERE are at least three kinds of skier who must live somewhere in the Swiss Alps—like the Abominable Snow-Men they leave tracks but have never been seen.

Firstly, there is the fellow who skis with one ski under his armpit. He traverses on steep slopes—suddenly the track of the upper ski is only possible for someone wearing their upper ski on their upper elbow. He is a good skier, and is usually going quite speedily at this point. Being, myself, one of the short-legged race I would dearly like to know if the gentleman (if he is a gentleman, which I doubt), is getting the laugh he ought to get while watching my tubby elderly frame trying at speed to perform the impossible contortions required, while my expensive vorlages decide that this circus act should not be done in pairs so smartly divide themselves into two separate legs.

The second chap is the three-legged man, who usually favours run-outs after fast *schusses*. He leaves two nice tram-lines into which one settles comfortably at moderate speed. Just as one is enjoying the beauty of nature sliding by, one is faced with *three tracks*. I loathe speedy decisions, and failure to think quickly (I usually fail) brings disaster as one automatically disregards the centre track with a vague feeling that it might electrocute one like the centre rail of an electric railway. The result—disaster to the vorlages again!

The third man has less sense of humour than the others. He is the one who kicks the footsteps on any steep "carry," but unfortunately about every twenty steps he develops two left feet. He is a tiresome fellow and merely interferes with the even tempo of a steep climb, taking one's eyes from the scenery, the ski from one's shoulder and bad words from one's mouth. He is no gentleman, as he doesn't really give anyone else a laugh. For some reason people seem to get more enjoyment out of the misfortunes of others when going down than when going up.

I wonder if anyone else has been bothered by these Abominable

Ski-Men?

ISLAND VENTURE

By JOYCE WOOD

I've never written an article before that I can recall, which accounts for the fact that I've been waiting a week now for what I felt certain would be a "writing mood" to descend on me—it hasn't and so here I am having to make do without. Let's hope the setting of orange umbrella, sun, sand and sea at 8 a.m. of a sparkling morning at Belvoir Bay will do the trick. Life is being very idyllic this year—early morning swims, breakfast on the beach, long days with the children exploring rock pools or swimming in little coves around the coast, picnics, moonlight bathes and barbecues.

But it hasn't always been like this—this is our seventh year here now and—though we wouldn't have changed the last seven years

with anyone—it's been fairly hard going.

Peter and I embarked on this island venture quite literally on the spur of the moment—Herm Island was for sale and we happened to hear of it. Within two months of a chance encounter with the previous owner, here we were—Peter and I, our two children and our dog. No-one lived here then—the buildings and farmlands were derelict after the neglect of war years, and yet the enchantment of

the place laid its spell on us and has done so ever since.

Unbelievably lovely—one and a half miles long by half a mile wide—it lies midway between Guernsey and Sark, three miles from either. Towering cliffs at the south end, the nesting ground of countless sea birds, give way to undulating hills, woods and valleys, with common and sand dunes at the north end. The north end is entirely bordered by sandy beaches and midway along the east coast facing France is one of the loveliest little sandy coves I've ever seen—Belvoir Bay, where I am writing this now. Hard, firm sands bounded by bracken- and gorse-clad cliffs give way to smooth granite rocks which slide into the clearest of clear sparkling water.

On the other side of the island is a minute but useful harbour—the nerve centre of most of our island life, for here we ship every kind of provision for the inhabitants, supplies for the hotel, food, coal, coke, fuel oil, farm supplies, building materials, etc. A little village lies immediately behind the harbour and here hydrangeas, fuchsia, camellia and rhododendron border the paths, in fact, the island is at all times a wealth of flowers, especially in the spring. We have painted the houses in hydrangea shades of pink, blue and white—they have red roofs and make a gay picture against the dark green of the pines. Peter and I live in a house in an old walled garden sheltered by pines and eucalyptus trees, on the hill which rises steeply behind the harbour.

On the common at the north end, in an expanse of rolling grass-covered sand dunes, covered with a tiny sweet-smelling pink briar rose, are cysts and dolmens, burial grounds of an ancient Neolithic people, testimony to an island history dating back some 5,000 years. Even to-day there is an atmosphere of pagan worship about this place.

I'll not bore you with a detailed description of our seven years'

hard labour, but briefly our programme has been to establish a selfsupporting community. In the summer there is a tourist tradewe have a hotel, an inn, a little shop, boats, and beach huts-in the winter, flower-growing for the English markets. We have the farm and other island industries—more of these anon. This meant a new and more efficient water supply. A main was laid to connect all the wells, including two new ones which we dug, to a main reservoir, a sand filter was built and a distribution system from this reservoir to all houses on the island. Communication was essential and whereas we once used a morse lamp, we now have a fully automatic radio telephone exchange; an electric light and power plant was also essential (it was paraffin lamps and flat-irons for our first four years!) and a couple of years ago we put in two 101 kW. diesel generators in an old granary and underground cables to every house on the island. There is no post office in Herm, and so we have issued our own set of local stamps to defray the cost of transporting residents' and visitors' mail in our launch to St. Peter Port and thence to the G.P.O. there—and collection of mail in the reverse direction. These stamps have to be affixed to all mail leaving the island in addition to the normal Great Britain postage stamp.

Houses required re-roofing-in some cases rebuilding-roads repairing, for though we have no cars on Herm, stores and provisions have to be carried by tractor to many points of the island; all these and a mass of other things too, and last but not least, a school. This latter copes with the educational needs of 15 of our 19 island childrenthe rest being still under school age. We contribute five to this number ourselves now, our three youngest children having been born here on the island-Penelope was the first child born here for as long as the records could trace. A nice little school it is, tooset high on the island with windows looking over the sea. The children are summoned to lessons by the bell in the old chapel belfry. The chapel, too, is delightful; quite tiny, it seats only thirty and is built on the spot where centuries ago, in the 6th century, in fact, a Breton saint-St. Tugual-founded a cell which was subsequently the place of worship for various French monastic orders who inhabited the island up to the 16th century, when the island was acquired by the Crown during Elizabeth I's reign. The arched roof of the Chapel as it stands to-day is Norman and dates back to the 14th century. We have a service there every Sunday. Peter leads it and one or other of the islanders reads the lessons.

People often say to us, "Well, it must be a grand life in the summer, but what about the winter?" I'm not sure that I don't like it best of all then. In the summer we have an inflated community due to the additional seasonal staff we must employ, but in October our island community contracts to its hardy core of permanent island residents, about 40 of us—and a feeling of peace and close comradeship descends on the island. Then we get boisterous days, crisply cold days—it's never damp or muggy—even warm, sunny days when it's possible to eat out of doors, long evenings by log fires, an occasional evening down at the old smugglers' inn, "The Mermaid," or in the

home of another island family. Then, too, we are all busy with the various industries which we have developed over the past seven years—stocking up the old boat-store gift shop with gifts and souvenirs to sell to the daily visitors who come across here during the summer months. We collect shells off the beaches; there are countless varieties in delicate and lovely colours, and we make necklaces, ear-rings, brooches and little figurines with them. Others are engaged in weaving or making knitwear and at the moment we are considering starting a pottery. We have gone some way towards this already and find we have a source of clay on the island well suited to the job.

If I miss anything at all, it is, as you might imagine, snow, and keen, hard frosts, for neither of them do we get here. I think I am very lucky to live here and to have this life, there hardly seems any aspect of it that is not in some way or other a venture and something we have done together. So long as life continues to be an adventure and to provide a full and satisfying existence and a good living for all who live here—that's all we ask and hope of it.

The children arrived some minutes ago, scrambling down the sandy track to the beach and raring for a swim, so there's an end to writing, I can see.

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