



Midland Ski Club News



December 2020

From the Chair Gerry Elgy



Wishing all our members a very Happy Christmas and a covid-free 2021

In this section I would normally use an eye-catching headline from our recent skiing and racing exploits, but Covid has once again interfered. We've still got 8 pages of news and plans though; which I hope you enjoy reading.

There's been a very limited amount of racing and our members have done very well, and others have met outdoors and have further walks planned. Our trips to Alpine snow have been put off till 2022 but our health and safety is paramount.

We have fingers crossed for next summer's artificial race season! Dates for your diary include our own Club National, at Stoke on July 10th and another CN at Swadlincote on July 24th, run by our CESA (Central England) region.

A big thanks to our loyal members for staying with us in these difficult times.

Finally I wish all members and their families all the best for the festive season and into 2021.

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Midland Ski Club Officers and Coaches

President	Jeff Elmore	
Chair	Geraldine Elgy	chair@midlandski.uk
Secretary	Paul Johnson	honsec@midlandski.uk
Treasurer	Bryan Arnott	treasurer@midlandski.uk
Membership	John Elgy	membership@midlandski.uk
Social Secretary	Catherine Frankenburg	socsec@midlandski.uk
Welfare Officer	Jenni Fennell	welfare@midlandski.uk
Head Coach	Roger Crombleholme	coach@midlandski.uk
Chair of Race Steering Group	Richard Newbould	raceman@midlandski.uk
Newsletter editor	John Elgy	membership@midlandski.uk

Training Programme principally aimed at race training:

Place	Day	18:00 to 19:30	19:30 to 21:00
Swadlincote Snowsports Centre	Monday	Under 12 and less experienced skiers	Over 12
Ackers Adventure	Tuesday	Under 12 and less experienced skiers	Over 12
Swadlincote Snowsports Centre	Wednesday	Under 12 and less experienced skiers	Over 12
Ackers Adventure	Thursday	Under 12 and less experienced skiers	Over 12
Ackers Adventure	Friday	Under 12 and less experienced skiers	Over 12

Upcoming events and social functions

Due to current Covid Restrictions it is not possible to give all dates here. However, Catherine Frankenburg is planning some winter walks

Friday 18th December 2020 around some of the Kingsbury Water Park, plus the RSPB Middleton Lakes **7.5 miles**

Thursday 7 January 2021 around Cannock Chase **8 miles**

Club Holiday to Les Arcs 2021 is now 2022 Catherine Frankenburg

The MSC Club Holiday is intended to be a social holiday, and it has always welcomed new skiers to the holiday, and those attending can easily mix with different groups of skiers on different days; often people change groups or meet up with others during the day, according to people's preferred number of 'coffee' stops/preferred difficulty of slopes/speed/style etc. Newcomers are always welcomed, and soon make good skiing buddies.

On the fated Club Holiday to Ischgl this March 2020, a number of members committed to an interest in progressing their skiing into some structured Off Piste experiences, but although the fresh snow fell, it was followed by very warm sunshine, making the snow unstable the next day and then unskiable the following day which ruined the lessons booked with the local Ski School Instructor and Guide, and the final day when the resort was closing due to Covid19! The Club therefore planned its 2021 ski holiday on 27 February to Les Arcs 2000 (as mentioned in an email sent round to all MSC members in July) which was planned specifically to also allow the option of more days Off Piste coaching for the 2 levels of Off Piste experience identified for those interested, or for others to join us.



After discussions with Snowworks about what we wanted, they have created 2 courses specifically for us with coaching in small groups of 6 or 7 (provided by top BASI qualified, English speaking Instructors, who live locally, so know the Off Piste terrain very well). The courses are Monday - Friday, which allows us the first day to find our ski legs, and where necessary to become accustomed to the wider Off Piste skis.

The 2 levels set up are currently:

1. Introduction to Off Piste Skiing - 5 half days of coaching, some mornings/some afternoons, to get the skills and experience of a variety of different snow types, (and also some time to practice/recover if necessary!).
2. Five full days of Off Piste coaching for those who already had some Off Piste experience, to access more terrain and to get the all-important feedback.

The numbers we had enabled us to gain a discount on their normal prices. Approximately half those going on the holiday had booked on the Off Piste courses, leaving the others to ski the pistes as usual on Club Holiday

Unfortunately, Covid 19 has continued to dog our Club Holiday for the coming season, as we do not want to be exposed to the ravages of Covid19 again (last year about half of the group became ill with the virus, many for several weeks, but one seriously enough to need a week in hospital, though thankfully they have all made enough recovery to consider skiing, once the virus is controlled!). **Therefore, the booked trip on 27 February 2021 will now be deferred to the same Saturday the following year in 2022.** The price this season was an amazing £780 (including flights ,transfers, half board and free wine with dinner, but no afternoon tea) and free ski carriage or standard ski hire if ski passes bought with Crystal. We will be deferring the Off Piste coaching groups as well.

At the moment we don't know if we can go to the same hotel next year, or exactly how much more the holiday will be, but at this stage, before the next holiday is booked, we would like to encourage other MSC members to join us - either free skiing for the week or taking the option to also attend an Off Piste course! Should more skiers join us we may well be able to form a third group, with the third level even more tailored to individual's experiences and style/speed of skiing.



Due to our deposits having been paid already, we need to rebook the holiday for 2022 by 31st Jan 2021 ie 2 months' time. So anyone who's thinking about joining us needs to decide in the next 2 months. People could just hope for a cancellation later or take a risk that there is still space at a later date but the group discount might not still hold.

For more details of the holiday please contact Diana Horth : diana.horth@ntlworld.com

Or for the Off Piste coaching courses please contact: Catherine Frankenburg on 0121 408 0550/ mob 07739 460950 or cfrankenbug@hotmail.com

JOHN ARNOLD TRAINING WEEK January 2022 - Bryan Arnott

Due to the COVID pandemic we have had to postpone the training week to 2022.

We have 39 places reserved but we can accept another 6 places if any members are interested

We will be travelling with Inghams/Hotelplan and staying in the Chalet hotel de Champoluc. It's set at the skiers' end of the village centre, in a perfect, virtually ski-in/ski-out location at the foot of the home-run piste, and right next door to the main Crest gondola and ski-hire shop combining the relaxed, informal atmosphere of a chalet with the space and facilities of a larger hotel. The facilities generally include comfortable lounge and bar areas, en-suite bedrooms, free WiFi and a sun-terrace.

Your Chalet Hotel holiday includes all the following:

Daily continental buffet, breakfasts with occasional hot options Afternoon teas on 6 days

3-course evening meals with choices and including wine, served as buffets or as table service on 6 days

WE HAVE A MAXIMUM OF 20 ROOMS OFFERED TO US ON THE GROUP BOOKING. HOWEVER SEVERAL ROOMS ARE ADVERTISED AS TRIPLES.

Vegetarian options are always available, and other special diets are available at a supplement if booked in advance.

There is plenty of skiing with a good variety of pistes You will ski in a group of about 8 friends with similar experience and a BASI level 2+ coach. done on the move with a minimum of exercises and you will do an amazing number of miles, but with ample time for your coach to give personal help.

The cost of the holiday is £1265 .It includes flights from Gatwick or Manchester, transfers, half board in the hotel, all the coaching and your lift pass which includes Gressoney, Champoluc, Alagna & 2 days skiing in Courmayeur, La Thuile, Pila or Cervinia .You will

need to buy your own lunches each day. The only other costs are ski carriage at £65 for your own skis, or Ski hire £65

This does not include insurance - you must arrange your own insurance and furnish the group leader with a copy of the document + next of kin .

To join us please complete the booking form below and return it with a nonrefundable deposit of £150 - sorry to be strict about this but the club has invested a lot of money to reserve the holiday.

You must have a full passport and the name on the booking form must be the same as your passport. You should hold a European Health Card hopefully this will still be in force.

The week is not suitable for beginners.

You must be a MIDLAND SKI CLUB MEMBER to join this trip.

I hope I've given you all the information you need to persuade you to join us but if there is anything else you wish to know please ring me on **07578428864** or email bryanarnott@gmail.com.

Manchester flight details are

16-JAN-2022	LS0935	Manc hester	Turin	07:50	11:05
23-JAN-2022	LS0936	Turin	Manc hester	12:05	13:20

22kg baggage allowance 10kg hand luggage allowance
Hotelplan Ltd (ATOL No: tbc) Booking Reference: 3951546

The Booking form is also on our website <http://Midlandski.uk>

To: Bryan Arnott, 40 Woodland Way, Birchmoor, Tamworth, Staffs B78 1AY, or email direct to bryanarnott@gmail.com confirming your transfer has been made per details below

Please reserve _____ places on the Training Week in Champoluc 16-23 Jan 2021. Transfer to MIDLAND SKI CLUB 089299 A/C 65362479 OR enclose a cheque payable to Midland Ski Club as a NON-REFUNDABLE deposit of £150 and I undertake to pay the balance of the cost by 7th October 2021

I understand that the cost includes £121 for the coaching and this may not be covered by insurance. I have a current (or will obtain) European Health Insurance Card - do check the expiry date. I have a full passport valid for the dates concerned.

Name(s) (as per passport) _____

Nationality _____

Passport number _____ Issuing office _____

Passport date of issue & date of expiry _____ Country of residence _____

Date of birth _____ Contact Address: _____

Phone & email: _____

Ski carriage? £55 yes/no, number of ski bags _____ Prepared to share a triple room yes/no

Do you wish to hire skis?: Advanced £55

Skiing Experience: I have skied for _____ years and am happiest on blue/red/black runs (delete as appropriate).

Special Dietary Needs _____

I would like to share with _____

Social Functions

A walk around Berkswell village July 25 - Peter & Jill Seaman



As planned, twelve MSC members met one evening in late July in Berkswell village. We walked a circular route in two groups in opposite directions, meeting briefly halfway. The weather was kind to us, being dry and not too hot. Afterwards we enjoyed pizza and drinks under two gazebos - one in the front garden and one at the back. It was great to see people again and it was well after dark when most folk left for home.



Catherine Frankenburg also organised an evening walk for two groups on 3rd July from Weeford, with refreshments afterwards in their garden.

Cliff Lakes Aqua Park July 12th John Elgy

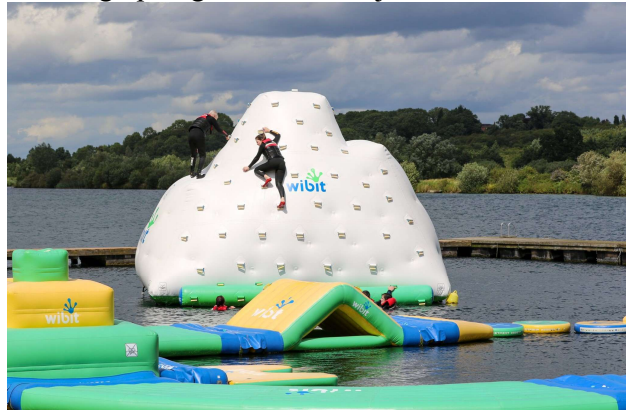
Dianne Fennell organised a morning session at the Cliff Lakes Aqua Park for all club members just as the Covid lockdown allowed such activities to go ahead with groups taking sufficient distancing precautions.



The event attracted many of the younger members of the club but some of us oldies were allowed to join in as well.

On arrival we were given wet suits and buoyancy aids and given simple instructions as to what we were to do and not do.

Then let loose. Basically, this consisted of climbing up large inflatable objects



and jumping in with as much grace as possible



Midland Ski Club Autumn Walking Break - Catherine Frankenburg

The traditional Break previously known as the High Altitude Training Weekend has been renamed Midland Ski Club Autumn Walking Break since Coniston in the Lake District could not be realistically called "High Altitude" and it didn't happen over a weekend.

This year, this long established, and much treasured annual Midland Ski Club event suffered from Covid19. After much discussion it had been decided that although traditionally a weekend event, we would have a midweek break over 3 nights, so we could travel a bit further and get to the Lake District, a beautiful part of the world, which is just too far for driving up and back and enjoying in 2 days, with reduced midweek prices!



A Great Day

Mike Thomas did a wonderful job in getting costings for both luxurious (but too expensive) and basic accommodation, and he booked for a bunkhouse plus a separate 2 bedroom flat in Coniston, close to the centre with options for camping/more luxurious B&Bs to suit all. As Covid19 was still looming, the booking was then transferred to a B&B which would accept cancellations up till the day before, so we weren't risking MSC finances! All good until the seriousness of Covid continued and slowly the reduced number of people who felt able to attend due to people's caring responsibilities, injuries and similar issues. So... an intrepid 5 of us finally made it up to Coniston for the reformulated midweek Walking Break

We were based at the Crown Inn, central Coniston; after enjoying our first Covid secure delicious breakfast, Mike planned a low-level walk back to the base as the hilltops were predicted to be in rain/fog all day. We all took the bus to Ambleside, having an exciting ride marvelling at the driver's patience with

other vehicles struggling past us in the winding narrow lanes! We set off in the wet, but gradually the rain eased along the back of Loughrigg Terrace; before we were halfway back, the mist had lifted to show the Langdale Pikes in all their majesty. We continued but didn't have the patience to queue for the excellent tearooms at Skelwith Bridge. As we continued the sun really came out; snacking on blackberries along the way we all regretted not wearing our shorts. We walked up to Tarn Hows admiring more views and coveting the numerous ice creams coming towards us. Finally, we got back just as the Coniston tearooms closed! But what fabulous views we'd had for a forecast 'washout' day! The evening meals back at The Crown were tasty, hearty, walkers' meals all served with very good Covid precautions. Day 2 started the same as Day 1 so we found a circular low-level walk from Hawkshead via Wray Castle, Lake Windermere and back. We were not so lucky as the weather stayed as predicted. We had a stop at Wray Castle as we just had to support the National Trust, eating our cake/scones in the drizzle! But as we approached Hawkshead it was felt important to support their local businesses too, so a warming drying-out stop at the cafe was enjoyed by all.



Walking from Ambleside to Coniston

The final morning at The Crown we had a delicious last breakfast together, congratulating ourselves on missing the weekend visitors and we made our ways home, avoiding all the weekend M6 traffic. A very successful 'Low-altitude, midweek' walking break!

Thank you Mike for working so hard on it!

Midland Ski Club Annual General Meeting, September 1st 2020

The papers from the annual general meeting were circulated to attendees prior to the meeting and are available on the Club's web site <http://Midlandski.uk>. They can also be sent on request.

The Chair's report is below. Some comments have already been affected by the latest lockdown and tier structures. We have started training again but have decided to defer our snow trips to next year. At the AGM, Jeff Elmore was ratified as Club President. The Club Officers and Committee agreed to stand for another year and were voted in. 2020-2021 membership was discounted for renewals as we were unavoidably out of action for 3 months. Membership for new members was unchanged. Our membership last year was 300 and we remain financially healthy.

Annual General Meeting 2019-20 Chair's Report - Gerry Elgy

This year has been one of high and low points and as we are all so well aware, 2020 has been dominated by the Covid pandemic which has affected all our club activities, including this AGM, which was deferred in the forlorn hope that we would be able to meet face to face by now.

One of the high points has been the introduction of training at Swadlincote, which is currently 2 nights per week with plenty of scope for further numbers once we are allowed. The slope has been very helpful with all we are trying to achieve and this has proved a real asset.

Covid started affecting the club in March, and the group that went to Ischgl just managed their week's skiing before being told to leave. Shortly after, dry slope training was stopped and all socials were deferred.

Our Club National and our Landgraaf training camp were cancelled and we hope to hold these instead in 2021. The summer race season was non-existent.

We made efforts to stay in contact electronically and a group started a series of weekly general knowledge quizzes which were enjoyed by all. Roger made a series of ski fitness videos too.

In July, training started again at The Ackers and Swadlincote with limited numbers and we thank Julie Jones for running the booking system. As I write, we wait to find out how the rest of the year and the resumption of racing in some form pans out.

We have restarted socials too, including walks and as afternoon for the younger members at Cliff Lakes Aquapark, Tamworth.

There was much good skiing to be had on our Alpine trips, although overshadowed by the sad death of our President John Arnold in Champoluc, The JA training week 2021 is already proving popular and we have fingers crossed it will go ahead safely without deferring it to 2022.

While many were in Ischgl a number of club members attended John Arnold's funeral in Sandwell and there was a good turnout with members of his other clubs there too. The order of service booklet had a skiing theme with snowy mountains on the cover, John's love of skiing was referred to in the address and he was seen off to the 'Ski Sunday' theme.

The club made a donation to his charities in lieu of flowers.

Club members managed some winter racing too and we are very proud of the Kingsley girls' success winning the British Schoolgirls U16 Team Championships in Flaine, and indeed all our race results during the Winter. The Winter Race Series and Club Championships at The Ackers were the most popular yet and we are very happy with the number of new young skiers it attracted, including some of those who train at Swadlincote.

Club Membership has grown a little this year despite the issues we face, and we do hope we can retain members as we plan the 2020-21 activities.

Our financial status has improved too, despite the unprecedented year we have faced.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed in any way to successful club activities this year and in particular, Committee and Race Steering Group members.

Should I be re-elected as Chair, it will be my fourth year and I would very much like a successor to come forward who can learn the ropes over the next year. The lucky person will have plenty of support!

Amber Fennell Success in Freestyle Boarding - Di Fennell

Amber set out mid October to Austria, to join her Snowboard team. Once there she completed one weeks training and the slopes were closed. The team continued with fitness and Amber did lots of homework. As time went on Amber was making plans to go skiing. With the offer of staying with Ellie (Big Sis) Jackson and her coach she was half packed when her coach found training in Switzerland. So the big van was packed and the team travelled 7 hours to Glacier 3000.



After a couple of days there the team took part in the Glacier 3000 FIS Competition.

To make this event happen it was just listed as a Male event and a Female event. This was to be Amber's first FIS event. There were 24 women and Amber was the youngest, competing against the Swiss Team. It was a good day and Amber finished overall 12th and 1st in her age group.

The whole team did really well. After enjoying a few more days there, they continued through Switzerland to Corvatsch and had 6 days there. Heavy snow fell on the Saturday as they were returning to the team house, up to her knees Amber said.

A very good trip in all, for the whole team. Living the dream!

Editor's note

There are reports of the Glacier 3000 event on facebook and other social media. Copyright prohibits the excellent photographs of the event being added to this newsletter but can be seen on <https://www.boardriding.com/Events/fis-race-glacier-3000-audi-snowboard-series-2020>

Winter Walk Programme - Catherine Frankenburg

This is particularly for those of us who are already missing the white stuff/who have had their Training week postponed for a year, or who want some socially distance companionship but absolutely all are welcome!

We have 2 walks planned now, but if people are keen, we can plan more, so feedback or offers of walks are always helpful!

1. Friday 18th December 2020 around some of the Kingsbury Water Park, plus the RSPB Middleton Lakes **7.5 miles** (but can be lengthened if some people want more!)

Led by Catherine Frankenburg

Start 10.15 for 10.30am walking from the car park of Dog and Doublet Inn, Bodymore Heath, B76 9JD. (nr Junction 9 M42)

We'll start going to Kingsbury Water Park and then carry onto the Middleton RSPB site, (which is likely to be a bit muddy, then back along the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal with a detour for those wishing to see more of the Middleton Hall grounds, then back to the cars. (The pub will be closed if still in Tier 3).

I've chosen this route so we can split into small groups to be socially distanced, but we will not lose each other!

Soon after the walk starts, near the entrance to the Water Park are toilets, open 9-3, and a Cafe, opens around 10.45-11ish (for takeaway hot drinks and snacks (until 3pm).

There are currently no refreshments or Toilets at the RSPB, so I suggest some sandwiches, and a drink/flask

Nuneaton and Tamworth Explorer map 232

2. Thursday 7 January 2021 around Cannock Chase **8miles**

Led by Mike Thomas.

Start 10.30 walking from the Cannock Chase Visitor Centre, WS12 4PW

The visitor's centre is open from 10.30, so meet there for a takeaway drink to start.

There's also a takeaway cafe 3/4 of the way round with some shelter, for a late lunch if desired, but sandwiches are suggested.

Please email the Walk leader to reserve a place on their walk, with your mobile number

cfrankenburg@hotmail.com

mike999thomas@gmail.com

NB If the weather is forecast terrible for the day I may reorganise mine, up to Mike to decide on his walk!

Dry Slope training New pricing structure and new booking system

- John Elgy

When the dry slopes at Ackers Adventure and Swadlincote opened in the summer for training social distancing rules meant that they did so with far fewer skiers on the slopes. The previous method of skiers just turning up when they wanted clearly could not operate with perhaps 20+ skiers on some nights when we were limited to 12 on the slope at any one time.

Julie Jones gallantly stepped in and started operating a booking system where a set of available dates were published and prospective trainees emailed her asking for slots, which she awarded as fairly as possible to everyone.

Due to the restricted numbers at the Ackers it was also clear that the existing pricing model of £50 per month for contracted skiers and £20 per session for the rest was not viable. The club chair (Gerry) looked carefully at exactly how much we should charge per skier such that the club did not lose money on the sessions. She came to a figure of £16 for both Swadlincote and Ackers for each 1:30 session.

Then came the problem of collecting the money; though the Swadlincote staff were willing to collect the money on our behalf they wanted cash, and at The Ackers our coaches were losing valuable coaching time collecting and managing cash.

To resolve the booking system and cash collection the club decided to adopt an online booking and payment system. eola.co were recommended by Snowsport England and they already had successful systems in place for Southampton and Cardiff ski clubs. We approached them and after a long period of configuration and testing we launched our booking system.

All sessions are now to be booked and paid for online.



The url for the booking are on the home page of the club website <http://midlandski.uk> or directly at eola <https://eola.co/w/1107/activities>

Editorial - John Elgy

It has been a long time since the last newsletter. Not that nothing has been happening but rather too much, too quickly. Every time I think I have the correct material for the Newsletter Covid 19 changes everything again. We have holidays planned for the next season, but we have had to cancel some already. We restart dry slope training, but then we have to stop again.

Our membership, however, has remained loyal. Three quarters of the 2019/20 members have already renewed their membership. Members participate in social events and message each other via WhatsApp. They continue to plan their next ski trips and discuss where they would like to go. The Race Steering Group have planned and are busy organising races for the next summer season. When possible the racers have trained and entered the few available races (where they have done exceptionally well)

I have tried to report every notable thing we have done over the last 7 months and where we stand on all our planned activities in this issue. Sadly, this is only the things I know about. Could I ask members to send me articles and photographs that they think may be of interest to other club members even if it is only why they prefer Borovets to Bansko.

A request for members using the EOLA booking system - John Elgy

Most, if not all the dry slope users are now using the EOLA system mentioned opposite and using it well. However, there are still improvements that can be made in the way it is used.

I get quite a lot of emails asking me to cancel or reschedule sessions. I am happy to do this but worry that I miss an email or be away for a few days and be unable to effect the change.

In the most part users are able to do this themselves on the EOLA site. The user needs to be registered on the site to be able to do this and I see that not all our users are registered.

Could I ask all members using EOLA to register on the site and in the first instance try any make the modifications to their bookings themselves. Please try this before asking me to make a modification

I'll still help anyway if I can, but if you do need me to reschedule or cancel then be very clear what dates are affected.