

Issue 57
Winter '22



TRACKS



The Newsletter for Midland Ski Club Members



Opportunity of a lifetime

MSC members get to train alongside GB's best

More than just skiing

Club members explore Warwickshire countryside

**MSC Members take the plaudits
at Club Championships**

New Tri-Club Championships - see page 3

Welcome to Tracks from the Editor

Contact: news@midlandski.uk

Dear Readers, I hope you all had a fantastic Christmas and New Year.

Welcome to the Winter edition of Tracks. It's been a busy few months, with members new and old coming together to promote the club at the National Snow Show. Club racing is as strong as ever with a new generation of racers taking part in the Club Championships and Winter Race League. Plus keep reading to see some great photos of members who trained next to Dave Ryding and the GB slalom squad in Peer, Belgium

Julie Jones - Editor of MSC Tracks

Dry Slope Training Resumes...

Training has resumed after the festive break
Dates are as follows

Swadlincote:

4 January, 5 January, 11 January, 12 January 2023.

Ackers:

6 January, 12 January Fundamentals,

Winter Race League 13 January 2023.

Due to the John Arnold training week there will no dry slope training w/c 16 January 2023.

The normal schedule will return thereafter.

Your club needs YOU!



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

Dates for your Diary

Winter Race League at Ackers, Birmingham

Friday 13th January 2023

Friday 10th February 2023

Friday 10th March 2023

For details on how the format works or to enter all races
email Di Fennell @ lesleyh@blueyonder.co.uk

Upcoming Holidays:

MSC Adult Training Week: Niederau 14th January - 21st January 2023

MSC Club Holiday Week: Obergurgl 4th March - 11th March 2023

Please contact Catherine for details (cfrankenburg@hotmail.com)



Tri Club Cup

A new Tri Club Cup is launching in January 2023

Saturday 21st January - Telford Ski Centre

Saturday 4th February - Stoke Ski Centre

Saturday 18th March - Ackers Ski Centre, Birmingham

Entry £16 per race

3 runs with the best two counting in both mini's and U14 and over

Medals will be awarded at each race

**Any racer taking part in all three races regardless of where you finish
will be entered into a draw to win a pair of skis**

Children and Adults Welcome

**You will earn points from your position in each race for your home club
and the winning club will receive the Tri Cup for 2023**

Contact details for Midland

lesleyh@blueyonder.co.uk

Contact details for Telford

www.skiteamtelford.co.uk

Contact details for Stoke

stokeskiraces@hotmail.com

Payment would be made to each club as each event come up



Many thanks to all those members who supported the club at the National Snow Show in October at the NEC, and welcome to all our new members who joined at the show! It was lovely to see faces old and new get together and share all that is great about being a member of MSC.



Fiona Duncan

1958 to 2022



It is with great sadness that we are informing everyone in MSC of the tragic death of Fiona Duncan.

I first met Fiona and her husband Mike Woodall many years ago in Tignes on our regular skiing holidays. As ski addicts, we tend to choose the same snow sure resorts year after year, and we built up a large friendship group with other skiers. Fiona, along with Mike, became very dear friends of mine, and my family.

Some of you may remember that Mike did his instructor training at Ackers in the 80s and continued to support the club over the years. Fiona was an excellent skier, not least because of Mike's instruction, but also his encouragement in all sorts of skiing conditions. After Mike was not well enough to continue skiing, Fiona started to ski with the MSC on their training weeks and the club holidays. She encouraged me to join, and we started to share a room and to make sure that we skied together. She was always laughing and was incredibly caring, she would take charge of situations and often gave care to others. She was very sociable, and everyone loved being in her company. She also joined in on many of the social walks organised when none of us were allowed to go skiing during the pandemic and these continue to this day.

She was a much loved member of the social skiing section of the club. She will be greatly missed by us, and as a relatively young member of the club her loss to us will be even greater. Our thoughts and love go out to everyone who had the joy of knowing her, but especially to Mike her husband.

Fran Mercer

If you would like to make a donation, Fiona has chosen two charities; Cancer Research and Compton Hospice. You can make this in 3 ways as follows, and the monies will be divided equally between the two charities:

1. Bank Transfer:

'Cancer Research UK Regional' Nat West Bank Sort Code: 56-00-13 A/c No: 22994270

2. By post: Cancer Research UK, PO Box 1561, Oxford, OX4 9GZ

3. Telephone: 0300 123 1022 for automated telephone transfer.

Please quote Fiona Duncan supporter code 739 265 870

Mo Woodfull

We are very sad to report that Mo (Maureen) Woodfull died unexpectedly earlier this month.

She died peacefully in her sleep and didn't suffer. She was 86 years old and was very active right up till the end. Mo said recently that she had had a good life and achieved everything she had wanted to.

Details about the funeral will be circulated to members in the New Year.

MSC Members enjoy one of the Peer, Belguim - October 2022

With Covid restrictions finally behind us, October half term saw three coaches, 24 racers, a variety of parents and Corrie the dog head off to Peer in Belgium for five days of indoor snow race training.

Levels of ability varied from hard-core racers to some who have never raced at all but were keen to learn, with ages from under 10 to over 60 with every decade in between. Half stayed together at Hotel de Boskar in Peer, with the rest occupying short-term lets or bed & breakfast accommodation they had chosen themselves.

The quality of the coaching was amazing and the racers were offered video feedback by their coach after each session. With 16 hours of slope time, this was a lot of coaching packed into five days, and everybody took maximum advantage of the opportunity.

Not long after we arrived we saw that one of the other teams training alongside us was described as 'GBR'. Without getting too excited, we discussed various permutations of what those letters might stand for, hoping that we might see a few union flags on catsuits zoom past. Now, we all knew of Di's ability to organise a great trip, but we had no idea that she had arranged for Dave Ryding and the GBR mens' slalom team to train with us!

OK, so maybe they didn't actually train with us, but training alongside them for six hours was pretty amazing and such motivation for all of the skiers. It's only when you get up close that you realise quite how blindingly fast they can ski. Many thanks to Dave, Billy, Laurie and the team for making this week such an inspirational week for our next generation of racers.



longest indoor slopes in Europe



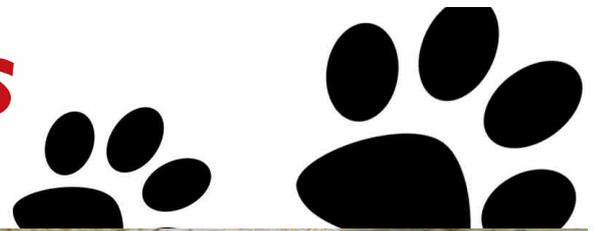
Winter Race League Race 1 & 2

Congratulations to all who took part and raced in the first two Winter Race League fixtures of the 2022/23 season. Thanks to Di for organising the race and all the volunteers who gave up their evening to make the race possible. Thanks to Stuart Brown Photography for the photos.



Midland Ski Dogs

This edition's poster boy is Trevor



This edition we introduce you to Trevor Fennell, who is eight months old. He loves meeting people at ski races and can usually be found sitting under the table where his hooman Brandon is doing the race timing. Come and say 'hello' to Trevor at the next Winter Race League!

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





Telemarking by Dave Beech

The word telemark actually denotes a type of turn where the downhill ski is moved ahead of the uphill ski, with the inside knee bent significantly

Telemark skiing is a form of downhill skiing where the boot is attached to the ski at the toe and the heel is able to move vertically. Although the boots are stiff like those used for downhill skiing, the 'bellows' in the forefoot allow the boot to flex during turns.



It is a very graceful and beautiful movement that makes the skier look almost as though they are performing some sort of dance on the snow. One advantage of Telemark skiing is that skins can be attached to the bottom of the skis so that you can move uphill. Skins are textured pieces of fabric material that can be attached to skis to enable them to grip the snow instead of just sliding over it. By utilizing skins and a free heel, Telemark skiers can access new terrain and explore untouched backcountry conditions.

Want to give Telemark a try?

Ian Acey runs sessions of the Midland Telemark club on the 1st Monday of the month at Tamworth SnowDome to improve and develop telemark skiers. If you would like to give it a try then please contact Ian Acey via

email midlandtelemark@hotmail.co.uk to arrange an introductory session.

The slope pass for the telemark session is at the reduced rate of £18 for 2 hours and a £25 payment to Ian on the night for equipment hire and instruction, great value! (Instruction may be arranged on an alternate night).

George Herd is a Midland Ski Club member that regularly attends Ian's sessions, here is his take on these sessions:

"Telemark is a great fun way to push yourself skiing. I learnt about 10 years ago at Tamworth with Ian, having grown up skiing alpine mainly on dry slopes and at Glenshee. Telemark is definitely a leg workout! But once you get used to the technique (somehow managing to keep pressure on the back foot while keeping your weight forwards) it's fantastic. When it goes right it feels a bit like taking giant-sized strides down the hill. Come give it a try. As they say... "Free the heel, ski for real!" And if nothing else you can enjoy your own personal moment of glory answering: "what is that weird kit?". The inevitable confused follow up - "Why?!" - is trickier".

I am myself much newer to this discipline, Ian's sessions are very welcoming and as a complete beginner he quickly built my confidence and I have to say that Telemark skiing feels quite liberating, a real freedom of expression on the hill. Another factor that is important to note as a beginner is that you can ski telemark gear in alpine style (albeit in a slightly modified way to accommodate the bellows of the boot and bindings) so if you were to go away on telemark bindings (as I did last Christmas) then should you tire or be on terrain where you are not completely comfortable you can have an easy run or two. Also I have found that telemark skiing has had a positive impact upon my alpine skiing, in agility, balance and coordination – that's all the key elements then!

So why? Why not!

Here is a link to a YouTube video from Jasmin Taylor GB telemark skier

"In Between the Gates"

https://youtu.be/hFD_mrLtlJGw

and a link to her appearance with Graham Bell on Ski Sunday

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUePd90-9_Y



Club Championships 2022

One of my favourite races of the year is the club championships which was held at Swadlincote. I particularly like the race as it has a friendly and supportive atmosphere where all the racers are cheered on by the crowd, whilst still having a competitive element to it. This year's course was good, with a few tricky turns towards the end that provided a challenge to all.

All the racers tried their best and there were some great performances across the different age categories. I'd personally like to thank all the volunteers who enabled the race to happen and to our Dry Slope Ambassadors for presenting the medals.

Nick Evans (U12 male champion)





The Annual Club Holiday

Diana Horth reports...

The club holiday has been part of the Midland Ski Club in one way or another since the very beginning. The early years were mostly organised by friends choosing a resort and making their own way. Then, in the late 80's early 90's, the holidays became more cohesive with volunteers organising the resort, accommodation and transport. The club began to use travel agents which made the holiday more secure in terms of travel and hotel. Early March and a different resort each year became the usual format.

Mike Thomas had been organising the trips for a number of years and was keen to pass on the baton. I was very apprehensive but agreed to have a go. In 2008 I arranged my first holiday to Tignes; we had a snow sure resort and were accommodated in 2 adjoining chalets. This wasn't such a good idea because there was a definite split in the social aspect and I have aimed ever since to ensure we are all in the same accommodation. There were 43 members on that trip which is daunting because as the organiser there is a tendency to worry about things e.g., people will be critical, they don't enjoy their holiday and plenty of other negative thoughts.

My second attempt using a high street travel agent was to Wengen, a vehicle free resort. Sometime after confirming our chosen hotel I received a call telling

me they didn't take groups but we would be transferred to Hotel Silberhorn. This is a 4-star hotel right opposite the railway station and from our point of view this was a very good swap. We would love to return but despite requests and even with group discounts the full cost of the Silberhorn was, and still is, well over what most are prepared to pay.



Skiing one of the itineraries, Mont Fort, Verbier 2011

The format I took over from Mike still works well. I have been using the excellent online SkiLine travel agency for a number of years now. They are helpful, know the resorts and come back with a range of options. I then consult other regulars about a

shortlist of options, pick the resort and the club pays

Skiing one of the itineraries, Mont Fort, Verbier 2011 the deposit. We then advertise the holiday to the club on a first come basis. Those who book send their deposit payments to the club and hopefully we end up all square. For the last few years members have been sending their balances to the club account and the treasurer then pays the travel agent. It has worked very well.

Selecting the resort can be the hardest part of organising the holiday. Most club members are very good skiers and want a resort with challenges, long runs and the opportunity to travel to other resorts on the lift pass.

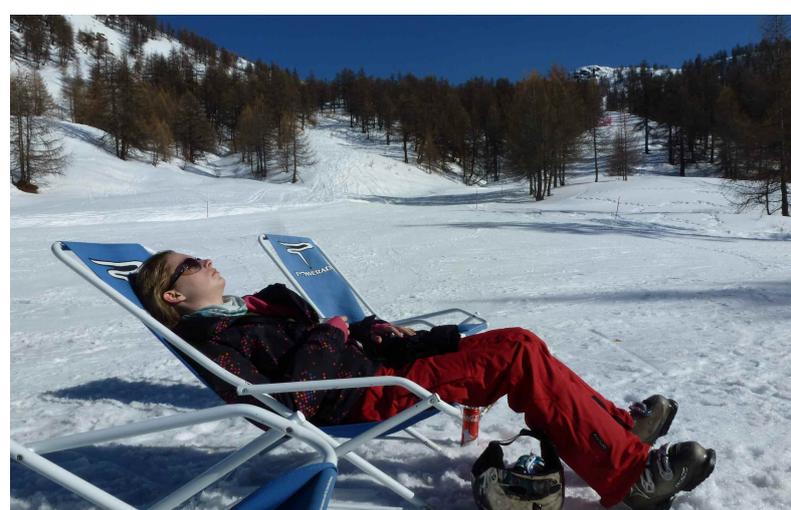
Since that first time, back in 2008, I have been organising the March Club Holiday every year. We have visited a number of resorts, tried various types of accommodation and experienced the different approaches and customer service offered by numerous tour operators. Some years the holiday has pretty much sold itself and in other years we are looking for people to make up numbers where people who have booked need to drop out. We are keen to welcome new faces – it keeps the dynamic alive and with a number of the long-standing members no longer able to ski we would love to see other members joining in.



Champoluc 2012

Over the years members have spread across the country but still come back each year to ski with and enjoy the company of friends we don't actually see at any other time of the year. The MSC and its holidays are what brought us together.

There is no point in trying to get over 30 people into the same accommodation via a late booking so it's no cheap deal. The group offers tend to come out early and most years we are booking the following year's trip before we get home. For 2023 we are going to Obergurgl, a very popular resort which sold out within the first week of the notice (there is a waiting list). Just hope it's a good one.



Sauze d'Oulx 2104

It is a social holiday. Groups tend to form themselves based on abilities, enthusiasm and some choose to ski with a different group each day. Nobody is left home alone at the hotel unless that is their wish. The evening meal is where we mix up the tables to sit and chat with different people in the group. The restaurant staff would probably prefer it if we stayed put but it works out.



Verbier 2011

After 14 years I too would like to pass on the baton so if anybody feels they would like to take over the iconic club holiday please get in touch. Bryan Arnott, who organises the John Arnold Training Week, and I will give you as much help and assistance as you want.

Diana Horth



social scene

more than just a ski club

A walk in the North Warwickshire countryside

18th October 2022 - Yvonne Gossange reports...



It was a glorious, sunny day when Graham and I were joined by Maureen Cromblehome and Roland Winzer for a walk through

the ancient woodland of North Warwickshire. We parked at the Bull & Butcher at Corley Moor and three of us watched the donkeys while we waited for Rolly to join us. With quite a distance to travel, he had been unavoidably delayed on the M42, but was undeterred and we were so pleased he was.

We walked across pasture, through woodland and along field tracks, enjoying our surroundings, the weather and each other's company. Half way round, Rolly found a few aggregate bags which made a perfect and comfortable perch for a refreshment stop.

Continuing on our way, the spires of Coventry came into view on the horizon and there was a faint hum of traffic on the nearby A45. It didn't trouble us though as it was soon left behind as we continued through the delightful countryside.



Back at the start after our 7.5 mile walk we were soon in the traditional bar of the black and white timbered pub to relax and enjoy drinks and food. Suitably refreshed we said our goodbyes and went our separate ways.



MSC Walk & Social get together

Saturday 19th November 2022

By Maureen Crombleholme

What a fabulous day this was, not just because nineteen of us got together to catch up with old friends, but the weather and scenery were lovely too. Thank you to Jill and Pete Seamen who arranged and led the walk and kindly picked Rog and I up from Baddesley Clinton where I left my car halfway along the walk.



The starting point was the Fleur de Lys pub in Lowsonford. Fourteen of us gathered for coffee before setting off on the 7 ½ mile walk at 10:30. A bit of a cold start, but the sun shone and we warmed up as the morning went on.

The walk took us from Lowsonford north to Rowington and then to Baddesley Clinton, where we had a picnic lunch outside the beautiful church. Liz Bennett and I then picked up my car, took responsibility for the safe keeping of Catherine



Frankenburg's NT purchase of a plant (we did a good job) and went to meet those arriving to meet up with us later. The rest of the walking group carried on to Kingswood junction, where the Stratford canal links with the Grand Union canal, and then they followed the canal all the way back to Lowsonford. Along the way, they met Linda and Jim Pielow coming to meet them and a lovely picture was taken of the group at the lock. So sixteen people took part in the walk at some point. This is a fantastic number of walkers and it was such a lovely social time to chat, laugh and enjoy each other's company that the walk seemed to fly by.

Back at the Fleur de Lys, Liz and I found the Elgy family awaiting their lunch & we partook in a little drink whilst we awaited the walking group to arrive. Then it was hot drinks and cake for some and a beer for others, but also a big "Thank You" to Pete who bought us wine so that we could raise a glass to Fiona Duncan, a club member who passed away on the 17th



. It was an important addition to our memorable day. Eventually there were just seven of us left to stay for a meal. The pies were wonderful! We didn't get thrown out for overstaying our welcome, but it did feel like we'd get dusted if we stayed much longer.

We hope to do another combined walk and social get together in Spring, so even if you would like to do a shorter walk or no walk, we've found a format that works for everyone and we hope to see others joining us in the future.



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

Please help us to help our young winter sports athletes

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

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

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.theelliesoutter.foundation

TO MAKE A DONATION VISIT:
www.gofundme.com/f/riding2win

media@theelliesoutter.foundation

If you have any news stories or photos to contribute, please send them to news@midlandski.uk