Fostering, promoting and developing the interests of English skiers and snowboarders

SWITZERLAND’S
SAAS-FEE
P12,13

FOUR GREAT
COMPETITIONS
P6,8,10 & 23

ALSO INSIDE

CHEMMY ALCOTT –
ON HER WAY BACK
P8

FROM THE SLOPES
WITH GRAHAM BELL
P7

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Our 2013 Ski Brochure is now available. Visit www.pgl.co.uk/brochures to order your copy.

www.pgl.co.uk/ski  0333 321 2143
With the ‘seasons openers’ now in the past, World Cup opener at Soelden, the Ski shows in London and Birmingham and the ‘Big’ British event at Battersea, our thoughts now turn to snow and the real start of the winter ski & board season.

Snow is what we all want to hear about, where is it, how much of it has fallen and can I manage a winter holiday this year. Well heavy snowfalls have landed in the USA, even New York managed to get caught out with some unseasonal snow, Europe has been getting some as well, Italy had some then the temperatures rose again and it disappeared, Formigal in Spain had some 60cms fall in a couple of days, then announcing that there season opening will be November 27th. But there is still plenty of time left before the holiday season really takes off for snow to make it’s appearance.

The London and Birmingham ski shows seemed to be a little busier this year than last, particularly noticeable on the new products.

Tour operators eager to get some early bookings in. If you are thinking of booking study the advertisements and get around on the internet and consider the options.

Well what have we got in this issue, an interview with Chemmy Alcott, telling us the story so far on her return to skis after her accident nearly a year ago. Chemmy is working hard on getting fit and her recovery is going well. Four competitions appear in this issue, thanks to Atomic for providing us with a fabulous prize of a pair of Atomic Vario Scandium in a size to suit the eventual winner, Holiday Xtras for giving away a Meet & Greet plus Airport lounge prize, Chill Factor providing a pair of 2 hour lift passes and firebox.com for the prize of a Power Monkey Extreme, so if you want to win a great prize get the scissors out, fill in the entry forms and get them in the post. You will also find lots of other interesting and informative articles for the coming season.

So let’s all get ready for the season ahead, if you are heading out over Christmas and the New Year, have a great time. Let us have your resort review of 2012.

Happy Skiing, have a great Christmas and New Year from all at Snowsport England and the Piste magazine.

Barry Spouge
‘Piste magazine’, Countrywide Publications, 27 Norwich Road, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 8BX
email: barry.spouge@snowsportengland.org.uk

Cover Picture: In the powder at Saas Fee.
NEWS

TAKE A BREAK
BY AIR...

Ski weekends by air from just £314 per person – giving maximum time on the slopes with fantastic value for money – are being highlighted by SkiWeekends.com.

This twin-share price is valid for a four-night break departing Luton on 15 December to the resort of Chamonix in France and includes return flights, transfers and accommodation with breakfast at the family-run Hotel des Lacs.

...BY LAND...

SkiWeekends.com and its sister programme SkiWeeks.com has introduced flexi stays by coach to France’s Three Valleys, Chamonix and Morzine into its 2011/12 programme.

This means there’s the opportunity to ski for three, four or five days over a weekend with departures on a Saturday or Friday, returning Monday or Tuesday.

For those wishing to enjoy a longer ski break, there’s the option to stay between a Saturday, Monday or Tuesday, Friday, returning Monday or Tuesday.

Weekends start at £219 per person, twin-share, alternatively, a Saturday to Saturday trip – with six full days’ skiing and five nights’ half-board costs from £239.

More details on all breaks can be found at www.skiweekends.com or call 08444 06 06 00.

... AND BY SEA

Travel to the slopes from just £30 each way for a car and up to nine passengers – including skis, boots and all luggage!

Savvy ski bunnies can avoid rising airline charges and penalties for extra bags and equipment this winter by hopping across the Channel with SeaFrance Dover-Calais Ferries and driving to the slopes instead. With any duration car crossings starting at just £30 each way, four people in a car with their skis and luggage can cross the Channel for less than £15 return per person.

Resorts in the Alps are already reporting that it’s going to be a particularly snowy winter, and so with no charges for checking in bags or bringing skis and the option to pack as much as you can cram into the car, driving to a ski resort could be the perfect solution for those looking for a ski break on a budget.

Some of the best ski resorts in France are accessible in less than nine hours why not take a look at SeaFrance.dk for a breakdown of drive times? Even taking into account petrol costs and road tolls, driving to the slopes this year could save a family of four almost £500.

For more information or to book your crossing visit www.seafrance.com

TOUR OPERATORS CONTINUE TO OFFER
‘VALUE FOR MONEY’

Despite an overall drop of 4% in the snowsports market, a 1% rise was seen in the number of bookings made through a tour operator, according to the Ski Club of Great Britain’s annual Snowsports Analysis report.

The number of skiers and snowboarders travelling with tour operators has risen steadily by 5% since 2006/07, with more people seemingly attracted to the ‘value for money’, inclusive deals and financial security of booking with a bonded operator. Due to unfavourable exchange rates and rising fuel prices, the cost of booking holiday components individually remains higher than booking a package holiday. This could account for the subsequent drop in the independent and self-drive travel sectors’ market share.

Awkward holiday dates led to a difficult season structure in 2011 and may have deterred bookings. A very late Easter, sporadic snow conditions and early spring thaw are thought to be the main catalysts for the 4% drop in the snowsports holiday market.

Acknowledging that the poor snowfall this season and the unappealing Easter weekend has deterred bookings. A very late Easter, sporadic snow conditions and early spring thaw are thought to be the main catalysts for the 4% drop in the snowsports holiday market.

Caroline Stuart-Taylor, Chief Executive of the Ski Club, commented on the report:

“Tour operators are innovating and adding value to their holidays in a number of ways – from introducing more all-inclusive packages, to offering deals on lift passes and free child places. Resorts are also doing their bit by revising their pricing and offering special promotions in an effort to win back the UK market. We hope this, combined with a more positive season structure (including an earlier Easter), will entice more people back to the slopes for the forthcoming winter.”

Despite the hard economic climate and fluctuating exchange rates the average cost of a ski holiday remains virtually unchanged year on year and now stands at £717. Tour operators have engaged their significant buying power and passed many savings on to the consumer.

Other findings from the report include:
• Austria has increased its market share by 5% since 07/08. This is due to people seeking a more affordable destination and an increased capacity offered by tour operators to Austrian resorts.
• The ski touring hardware market is reportedly as big worldwide as the snowboarding market.
• Self-drive holidays and train travel to the mountains both dropped by 1%.
• Club hotels saw a 2% increase in market share and we expect this figure to grow along with the number of catered chalets available for the coming winter.

DO SOMETHING FOR CHARITY... GO SKIING!

The Good City Ski Company is a unique social enterprise set up to provide outstanding ski trips as well as support to youth charity Snow Camp, at no extras cost to you.

It has formed a unique partnership with leading snowsports tour operator Ski Solutions, ensuring all aspects of your ski trip can be tailored to your groups needs.

Booking with the Good City Ski Company means you have an unforgettable ski experience coupled with the knowledge that your trip has made a massive difference to inner city young people. You can find out more about Snow Camp at: www.snow-camp.org.uk

Go on make a difference, and enjoy a great holiday.
SWITZERLAND: HIGHER, SUNNIER, AND SNOWIER

Ski closer to the sun. (Like Daedalus, but on guaranteed snow.) The sun meets the Alps in Switzerland. It’s home of the highest and most snow-sure pistes in Europe, with many above 2,000 and even 3,000 metres, magnificently ringed by Switzerland’s signature 4,000 metre peaks (52 of them, at last count). When it comes to skiing, signature 4,000 metre peaks (52 of them, 2,000 and even 3,000 metres, boarding, sledging and all things magnificently ringed by Switzerland’s holiday always represents top value for money (which it does) we are also delighted to announce that Swiss destinations are offering special franc-fighting offers to attract and retain their loyal guests. For example: in St. Moritz, 30% savings are to be made when booking for select weekends outside the main holiday season.

See www.MySwitzerland.com/winter for everything as well as daily snow reports from 250 ski resorts, current packages and accommodation deals for every budget. Alternatively, call the Switzerland Tourism freephone number 00800 100 200 30 for personal advice.

THE BERKELEY GROUP PARTNERS WITH BRITISH SKI AND SNOWBOARD

British Ski and Snowboard (BSS) is delighted to announce that it is entering in to an agreement with the Berkeley Group, one of the UK’s leading residential property developers, which will see Berkeley provide financial support to Britain’s elite Freestyle, Freeski athletes and back some of Britain’s leading young sportswomen and women.

Commenting on the new arrangement David Edwards CEO of BSS said: "We are delighted that the Berkeley Group has chosen to support our Freestyle Freeski team for the next twelve months. We have high hopes for this particular group of athletes. With Berkeley’s help we can provide them with the correct preparation for the 2012 Youth Olympic Winter Games and begin our preparation for the Olympic Winter Games in 2014. Podium finishes are a real possibility now that we have the help that we needed."

Crystal Ski serve up Olympic exclusive

You still have a few years left to step up your training for the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. However, if you don’t fancy your chances of qualifying or would prefer to visit before the crowds arrive, Crystal Ski has just the ticket.

Crystal is the only UK tour operator offering holidays to Sochi this season and the excitement is mounting as they get closer and closer to whisking people away on this new winter adventure.

As you’d expect from an Olympic host venue, Sochi is gearing up to be a world leading ski destination. Billions of pounds (that’s hundreds of billions of roubles) have been invested into Sochi’s three ski resorts of Gasprom, Rosa Khutor and Mountain Carousel which is great news for visitors. Each resort has new, modern lift systems and receives huge snowfalls. Brand new hotels will also be opening their doors this winter with great access to the slopes, first class facilities and plenty of opportunities for après ski vodka.

The resort of Gasprom has the most beginner terrain on offer and also has a good range of blue and red runs. Rosa Khutor is the resort that aims to offer the best access to harder runs, offering the largest of the ski areas and a good mix of terrain including a number of surprisingly steep black - some with a vertical drop of over 1km. Mountain Carousel, with its really testing bowls at the peak, is also definitely worth visiting for a day or two.

Ski aficionados or those simply looking for somewhere completely new will find all this a tantalising proposition; and with Sochi being exclusive to Crystal for 2011/12, it’s the perfect time to go.

Short breaks of 4 nights to Sochi with Crystal Ski start from just £325 with 7 nights from only £1,129.

Although this will be Crystal’s first season in Russia, they have more than 30 year’s experience providing great ski holidays in Europe, North America and Japan. Few can claim to match the passion and expertise on offer from the UK’s no. 1 ski operator.

This season Crystal has over 130 resorts on offer with a staggering choice of chalets, hotels and self catering apartments to serve as the base for your next snowbound adventure. In addition, the dedicated groups team make sure organising a ski holiday for you and your friends is stress-free.

For those seeking a more luxurious adventure this year, Crystal Finest offers a selection of the most prestigious accommodation in the world’s most desirable ski destinations. Most properties have a little extra something to set them apart from the rest - whether that’s outstanding spa facilities, gourmet dining or superb locations.

You can now book with Crystal Ski at the UK’s leading in-door snow centres, You’ll find the Crystal Travel shop at Chill Factor e in Castleford near Leeds and SNO!zone Milton Keynes, all open seven days a week.

Be sure to pop in next time you’re honing your skills for inspiration, help and advice on your next holiday from the experienced Crystal staff made up largely of ski and snowboard nuts - many of whom have spent seasons on the slopes.

To book or find out more visit www.crystalski.co.uk or call 0871 231 2256*

*Calls cost 10p per minute at all times from BT landlines. Other operator networks may vary.
**SNOW FALLS IN FORMIGAL**

Some 60cms of fresh snow has fallen on the resorts of Formigal in Spain, this along with snow cannons are set to increase the snow depth over the next week or so.

Formigal is now looking forward to opening on 27 November 2011. With flights from the following cities such as Birmingham, Manchester, Bristol and London, Formigal opens its sales to more British skiers. The news of this year is the ‘Ski Formigal Pack’ that will offer the flights programmed by Thomson Airways once a week, on Sundays of the airport of Toulouse.

Holidays to Formigal with very special offers booked before December 15th are available through Crystal, Thomson, Igluski.com, Zenith Holidays, Skinspired, Ski World and J2Ski.com.

**HOT STUFF AT CHILL FACTORE AS SKIERS SET NEW WORLD RECORD**

Manchester skiers can write their names in history as record breakers today as they managed to break the Guinness World Record for the longest chain of skiers at Chill Factoré.

The current Guinness World Record for the longest chain of skiers stands at 50 people, and was smashed on the slopes with a chain of 60 skiers.

The Record is much harder than it sounds, as the chain had to travel for 100m without breaking to count as successful. After eight attempts the record was broken on the final turn, much to everyone’s delight!

The chain skied down the main slope in a snake formation to allow a record breaking 60 people to ski on the slope at the same time together, all holding hands. The attempt was verified by two independent witnesses and supervising officials made sure the chain stayed intact.

Morwenna Angove, chief executive at Chill Factoré, is delighted: “We’re so excited to have broken the Record! We were watching with bated breath as the chain travelled down the slope, and on the eighth attempt we finally broke it. I just want to say a big thank you to everybody who came along to take part, and we’re very proud to now be Guinness World Record holders.”

The Manchester skiers registered to take part in the Guinness World Record were recruited from the ranks of Manchester ski clubs, regular skiers at the Chill Factoré and other advanced skiers in the region.

**Win a Meet & Greet and Airport Lounge package**

HolidayExtras.com is offering one lucky Piste reader the chance to win Meet and Greet parking and an airport lounge for two at a UK airport - a travel package worth over £100* and a great way to get your winter break off to a hassle-free start.

Meet and Greet parking means that there’s no need to struggle with skis and snowboards on a shuttle bus, and this coupled with a relaxing stay in an airport lounge will ensure that you start your skiing holiday on the right foot. HolidayExtras.com services include: airport car parking, airport hotels, travel insurance, airport lounges and Airports by Rail. Booking in advance with HolidayExtras.com can save up to 60% on airport parking and up to 40% on airport hotels, with a range of money-saving upgrades on offer.

*Meet and greet parking and lounge access are subject to availability – if these services are not available at your chosen airport then we will offer suitable alternatives. The prize is valid until December 31st 2012.*

All you have to do is answer the following question: **How much can you save on Airport parking?**

A). 40%  B). 50%  C). 60%

Name: ____________________________
Address: __________________________
Postcode: __________________________

Circle the correct answer and return to: Holiday Extras Competition, The Piste magazine, 27 Norwich Road, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 8BX. Closing date for entries is 24 December 2011.

The winner will be the first correct entry drawn from all entries received.
The USA have some of the best ski resorts in the world, longer seasons than the Alps, and a snow record to be proud of, and now with Lindsey Vonn, they have the world’s most recognisable skier. Is the sleeping giant waking up and if so why has it taken so long?

Ever since the World Cup began in 1967 American skiers have threatened an invasion across the Atlantic: Billy Kidd and Bob Cochran in the early days, Christin Cooper, Tamara McKinney, Cindy Nelson and of course Phil and Steve Mahre in the 70’s and 80’s. Into the 90’s they picked up Olympic Gold medals with Picabo Street and Tommy Moe. This season the USA opened it’s World Cup campaign with a double victory in Solden, thanks to Ted Ligety and Lindsey Vonn, and let’s not forget the achievements of the unconventional role model Bode Miller. Yet even with all these talented skiers, they have still lacked the strength in depth to win a Men’s or Women’s Nations Cup.

The established reasons against the USA becoming the new power house of ski racing stand, ski racing will never match the big four US sports of Baseball, Basketball, Football and Ice Hockey so there is always likely to be a talent drain, because of the time difference during a predominately Alpine season, ski racing has limited TV air time in the US, and even in the mountains, snowboarding and other extreme sports provide stiff competition.

On the flipside, the USA have really got their act together in recent years generating significant sponsorship money, the USA have always understood the need for dedicated ski racing schools which have grown in number and popularity, in the Birds of Prey course the USA now has an excellent home venue for World Cup events, yet the USA Ski Team also realises that in order to compete on a mainly European circuit, they need to base themselves in the Alps for most of the season. Lindsey Vonn speaks fluent German and does not feel the need to fly back to the USA for apple pie at Christmas. Finally with the Crystal Globe winning successes of Miller, Ligety and Vonn, young American ski racers have confidence that their system works. If not a full invasion, expect the USA Ski Team to be a major force for years to come.

Graham Bell is a former World Cup and Olympic skier, currently co-hosting the well known BBC ‘Ski Sunday’ programme. Well known for his exploits, Graham with his helmet and ski camera, takes viewers down some of the World’s most feared downhill slopes as part of ‘Ski Sunday’.
NEWS

SLEDGE ZOOMS INTO KAPPL

The Zibob, a mini sledge that actually carves like a ski, is the latest craze to hit the Alps and the Austrian ski village of Kappl is the first in the world to create a permanent course.

Kappl, a beautiful family-friendly resort in Tirol’s Paznaun Valley, just down the road from the party town of Ischgl, launched the Zibob in April and is confident that it will be hugely popular this winter with children and adults.

The Zibob is compact, light and easy to transport. Apart from its size, what makes it excitingly different to conventional sledges is the side-cut that gives it carving qualities. This means turns are much more smooth and sweeping, with steering achieved by small movements of the body. It also has a grab-handle (zipfel, hence Zibob) for balance. It has become so popular so quickly that race events have already been organised in more than 20 resorts in Europe and North America.

For more details on activities and events in Kappl take a look at www.kappl-see.com

CHEMMY'S COMING ON FINE

Visiting the Ski Show at London’s Earls Court recently I met up with Chemmy Alcott, the first time since she had her accident around a year ago. An accident that put on hold her first love, skiing for last season and probably this coming season also.

Chemmy as normal is always bubbling, positive and ever hopeful, surprisingly after all she has been through this past 12 months has not changed her one little bit. We talked about the aftermath of the crash and how she felt once the realisation of what had happened set in. “It was December 2nd 2010 I think you put things in perspective, I’ve always searched for perfection in my skiing and to have skiing taken away from me I thought, right what am I going to do. I started by resetting my goals, starting with weekly goals about walking unaided or doing a squat or say 50 press ups as opposed to say 35, putting things into relative terms, that I could achieve while being injured and that’s what helped me get through my rehab. If someone had told me Last December that is was going to be 1½ years before you ski or race again that would have been really tough to imagine. But because of the improvements I have made and the help of a great support team around me, I’ve a great medical centre in Piccadilly and when I go there I have a physiotherapist, a doctor, I have a personal trainer for the first time in my life, having that

“HAVING SUPPORT FROM YOUR PEERS IS REALLY UNIQUE, THAT SHOWS WHAT A SPORT LIKE SKIING IS, ALL THE GIRLS WANT ME BACK”

WIN!

A PAIR OF ATOMIC VARIO SCANDIUM SKIS

Choose your Size from: 154, 162, 170 or 178.
All you have to do is answer the following question:

Which English female skier skiis on Atomic skis?
A. Julia Mancuso
B. Chemmy Alcott
C. Lindsey Vonn

Just fill in your answer below and send the entry form back by 21st December 2011 to: Atomic Competition, The Piste Magazine, 27 Norwich Road, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 8BX

The winner will be the first correct entry drawn from all entries received.

Answer............................................................................................................
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A. Julia Mancuso
B. Chemmy Alcott
C. Lindsey Vonn

The winner will be the first correct entry drawn from all entries received.
support and the team around me along with the Compx guys on board it makes it easier for me to come back. It could have been so different, it could have been the end, but I could never retire on a crash”.

Directly after the accident you had surgery, at that point how did you feel then? “Delirious, I don’t react well to painkillers. It happened and I can’t change that and I have to use it as an opportunity and as an athlete I have never had an enforced time away from my sport and to say you are going to have a year or more to deal with all the reason why you are not the best in the world, the feeling in my feet, the fact that I broke my back and that my thorasics are not strong enough to curve into that catlike position, the fact that all my crashes come down to one thing, my upper body discipline, my swinging right shoulder is the main reason for the crashes. We have analysed hours of video and we could not touch the legs but we have now done a lot of work so that when I come back I have now ironed out all the inconsistencies and problems I had, you just have to use all the opportunities you are presented with to better yourself”.

So are you now feeling positive about the outcome? “Yes, I was ranked 8th in the world when I crashed I had a good leg and the support so coming back with a leg that’s maybe healed but the senses are not all there, no financial support from Government at all, it is going to be challenging I got to 8th in the world with that support so it’s going to be tough to get that back again but I have got to give it a good go, I love this sport.”

I said I noticed a tweet last week from Julia Mancuso saying “Team Chemmy, can’t wait to see you back on the slopes”. Chemmy said “Having that support from your peers is really unique, that shows what a sport like skiing is, all the girls want me back, yes I might come back and beat them but they want me back because you want to race against the best in the world”.

I asked Chemmy at what stage of her rehab is she at now? “My leg has essentially healed, you would not think that if you saw and X ray, because it was so shattered that people who did not know what happened and the extent of my injuries think my gosh look at how bad it is. The leg is healed the only issue I have now is the metalwork and the screws, where the metal in my bones starts is right at the top of my boot so I have a lot of pain there because my natural bone at the top is rotating and where the metalwork in my leg is does not let my body rotate so that conflict in that bone is really, really sore, my surgeon has said I will have to get used to that but it is a horrible thing to have to get used to pain. I am just reading Herman Maires autobiography, which was given to me by the Bartlett’s, when he came back he had an immense amount of pain and it was something he was able to deal with. He had this amazing boot fitter through Atomic who made him a boot that enabled him to ski without pain. So I called up Atomic and said is that guy still there, yes, so now I am going to get him to make me my boot, so it’s just now that I can start to think about coming back and putting a ski boot on and making a new ski boot for my new leg, it’s really exciting”.

What are you doing at the moment? “Well every day I go to Piccadilly to do my rehab, I still spend about 10 hours a day doing rehab and training, you can’t cut corners with this”.

Are you finally looking forward to getting back on skis, and snow? “Yes it has always been at the top of my mind, the days when I have been in tears because of the pain and not wanting to push myself, it’s always been about getting back on skis”.

I asked if she had any idea about when she will return? Her answer was “How long is a piece of string, I have no idea, as soon as I am ready I will be there. I don’t want to put a date on it, I’ll know when I am ready”. Last season you were doing some commenting at the races, did this make it worse for you? “It’s tough hearing about it when you are so far from getting back, but this season it will be easier as I am closer to getting back. I was jealous of my boyfriend Dougie Crawford who has recently been on a camp in Chile and is back following an injury last season, I was so happy for him, but at the back of my mind I was jealous because he was out there doing what I want to do, but hearing from him and Julia (Mancuso) how great it is out there it is tough”.

How do you get through a day? “I just keep myself busy, Kelly keeps sending me emails!!”. Is it good to be at the ski show? “Yes it is good to be back in Earls Court, it’s a much better venue all on the same level. It’s nice to be relaxed…no it’s not nice, but I know where I really want to be 3 days before the opening race at Soelden!”

So looking forward to when she can put on those skis, hopefully during this winter, with a thought of skiing with her brothers, not done those skis, hopefully during this winter, with a thought of skiing with her brothers, not done so for around a decade, it was good to see Chemmy still as the old Chemmy, positive, always looking forward, never looking back. We wish her a full recovery and a return to her old racing self.
CORTINA D’AMPEZZO LEADS THE WAY IN EXTRA WINTER THRILLS

Even with fabulous skiing on the doorstep, many winter holidaymakers like to try something different – and this winter the top Italian resort of Cortina d’Ampezzo has some of the most exciting alternative activities in the Alps. All are attractions that you can combine with a ski or boarding day – spend the morning on the slopes then head for an entirely different thrill after lunch.

Why not try winter climbing – a fabulous chance to experience an excursion usually thought of as purely a summer feature. Via ferrata is a climbing route with permanent cables to clip onto, making it a totally secure way of getting to the most spectacular of locations on the mountains.

Back in the big resorts and takes guests to unspoilt, traditional villages in the French Alps, has won Best Ski Company in the prestigious annual Guardian, Observer and guardian.co.uk Travel Awards for the third consecutive year.

Proving that small is beautiful, readers voted the Portsmouth-based company their favourite in the 2011 Awards ahead of several higher profile and larger UK tour operators.

“IT’s a huge honour and a real surprise to win this accolade for three successive years and perhaps even more rewarding to know that our efforts have been recognised especially considering how competitive the ski market has become. We are incredibly proud,” said the company’s managing director and founder Xavier Schouller.

“With a dedicated team we make it our priority to ensure our clients get the personal service they deserve which in turn leads to a lot of repeat business.”

Peak Retreats which celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2012, has helped thousands of British skiers ‘discover’ the real skiing in the Alps and resorts generally ignored by the big name operators. For the coming 2011-12 winter its new additions include Briançon, the highest town in Europe, and La Rosière which join many resorts – now long standing favourites - from the company’s launch including Samoëns, Morillon, Le Grand Bornand, Aussois and Vaujany.

Another key to success has been in providing the new generation of more spacious and comfortable self-catering accommodation which for 2011-12 sees the addition of many more 4 star luxury apartment residences with indoor pools and leisure facilities.

Due to the success of Peak Retreats, Ski Collection was formed as a sister company in 2005. Ski Collection specialises in 3 and 4 star self-catering ski apartments in the main high-altitude ski resorts in the Northern and Southern French Alps, as well as value for money resorts in the Pyrenees.

Peak Retreats can be found at www.peekretreats.co.uk or call 0844 576 0123 (023 9283 9310), Ski Collection can be found at www.skicollection.co.uk or call 0844 576 0175 (023 9289 0960).

WIN!

A two-hour Main Slope lift pass at Manchester’s Chill Factory®

Chill Factor® is Manchester’s indoor real snow centre, bringing the UK’s longest indoor real snow slope (180 metres) and an Alpine village experience to the North West.

Chill Factor® is offering you the chance to win a pair of two-hour Main Slope lift passes®, with clothing and equipment hire included. There are two pairs of lift passes on offer!

Chill Factor® offers Ski and Snowboard Lessons for all levels, ages and abilities, and thrilling snow activities, including the Luge ice slide, Tubing, Sledging, Airboarding for big kids and children alike, with Snowplay also on offer for little ones.

And, once you’ve finished on the slopes, you can enjoy the authentic après ski atmosphere with the range of restaurants, bars and shops in the Alpine Street.

All you have to do is answer the following question:

What can the ‘Little Ones’ do at Chill Factor®?

A. ColdPlay B. NoPlay C. SnowPlay

To enter, circle the correct answer and post your entry form back to us at Chill Factor® Competition, The Piste magazine, 27 Norwich Road, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 8BX, to be received by 21 December 2011.

Name.............................................................
Address................................................................
.................................
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Postcode...... Tel......................................

The winner will be the first correct entry drawn from all entries received.

T&C’s: *Users of the main slope must meet the recreational standard. A taster lesson prize will be offered if the winner does not meet the main slope standard. Prize must be redeemed by 31st March 2012.

For more information about Chill Factor®, visit www.chillfactor.com or call 0161 749 2222.

HAT-TRICK FOR PEAK RETREATS

Peak Retreats which looks beyond the big resorts and takes guests to unspoilt, traditional villages in the French Alps, has won Best Ski Company in the prestigious annual Guardian, Observer and guardian.co.uk Travel Awards for the third consecutive year.

Proving that small is beautiful, readers voted the Portsmouth-based company their favourite in the 2011 Awards ahead of several higher profile and larger UK tour operators.

“It’s a huge honour and a real surprise to win this accolade for three successive years and perhaps even more rewarding to know that our efforts have been recognised especially considering how competitive the ski market has become. We are incredibly proud,” said the company’s managing director and founder Xavier Schouller.

“With a dedicated team we make it our priority to ensure our clients get the personal service they deserve which in turn leads to a lot of repeat business.”

Peak Retreats which celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2012, has helped thousands of British skiers ‘discover’ the real skiing in the Alps and resorts generally ignored by the big name operators. For the coming 2011-12 winter its new additions include Briançon, the highest town in Europe, and La Rosière which join many resorts – now long standing favourites - from the company’s launch including Samoëns, Morillon, Le Grand Bornand, Aussois and Vaujany.

Another key to success has been in providing the new generation of more spacious and comfortable self-catering accommodation which for 2011-12 sees the addition of many more 4 star luxury apartment residences with indoor pools and leisure facilities.

Due to the success of Peak Retreats, Ski Collection was formed as a sister company in 2005. Ski Collection specialises in 3 and 4 star self-catering ski apartments in the main high-altitude ski resorts in the Northern and Southern French Alps, as well as value for money resorts in the Pyrenees.

Peak Retreats can be found at www.peekretreats.co.uk or call 0844 576 0123 (023 9283 9310), Ski Collection can be found at www.skicollection.co.uk or call 0844 576 0175 (023 9289 0960).

SHEFFIELD ADVENTURE FILM FESTIVAL

Next year’s Sheffield Adventure Film Festival will be held in March (9-11). It’s an annual weekend long film festival with the best adventure films from around the world - including a dedicated ski/snow screening.

This year special screenings will be running throughout November, December, 2011 and January 2012 including the incredible feature length ‘Like a Lion’ doc on the life of skier Tanner Hall on 29th November and also a rerun of the ski short Chiamera as part of Best of ShAFF 2011 on 8th December.

For full details go to the website at: http://www.shaff.co.uk/news/2011/10/26/Cant_Wait_till_March_Dont_worryweve_raided_the_archives/
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Thirteen four-thousand-metre peaks wrap themselves around Saas-Fee in Switzerland and its neighbours Saas-Grund, Saas-Almagell and Saas-Balen like a shell. They give the valley its distinctive name of "Pearl of the Alps". Saas-Fee is a traffic-free resort with access only by car or public transport.

Even the journey through the Saas valley is an experience. Steep mountainsides and deep gorges hint at the sheer forces of nature that occur here. Traffic-free Saas-Fee has managed to hold on to its rustic character despite its state-of-the-art infrastructure. With their old Valaisian wooden houses and grain barns, Saas-Grund, Saas-Almagell (home to the former skiing ace Pirmi Zurbriggen) and Saas-Balen (famed for its circular Baroque church) have all retained their original village character.

From Saas-Fee the cable car Alpin Express and the new panoramic Felskinnbahn rise up to the glacier tongues on the Felskinn (3,000 m). From there the Metro Alpin, the world’s highest underground funicular, runs to the Mittelallalin. At 3,500m, in the world’s highest revolving restaurant, these Alpine giants are almost close enough to touch. And visitors can learn some of the secrets of the glaciers in the world’s largest ice pavilion.

The “Pearl of the Alps” lays at the Mischabel Chain containing the highest mountain in Switzerland the 4,545 metre high Dom. The unique views from the Mittelallalin extend as far as the Bernese and Grisons Alps. And in good visibility it is even possible to see the lights of the Italian metropolis of Milan.

Skiers and snowboarders, whether beginners, average or experienced, will find plenty to suit their abilities. With ski runs rising up to 3,600m, snow is guaranteed in

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12 the piste Dec 11/Jan 12
Saas-Fee and the Saas valley. Most of the pistes that are not on the glacier are kept in condition by the 95 snow cannons.

The Saas-Fee/Saas valley holiday region lives the Swiss Tourism Federation’s “Families welcome” quality label, the ski pass for young skiers up to 9 years of age is free. And where else would you find such a wide range of ski lifts so close to the village – and a Kids’ Funpark.

If you feel like getting the adrenalin pumping try “Feeblitz”, the 900m long toboggan run, opened in 2000. Ride down the slope at up to 40 kph on toboggans with comfortable backrests – tremendous fun for all ages. Steep turns and a 360-degree corkscrew at a height of 9 metres are guaranteed to get your pulse racing!

Saas Fee is a great place for skiers and boarders of all ages, once you are up on the slopes it’s just great fun skiing around at the top of the world, so give it a go.

For more details and further documentation: Saas-Fee/Saastal Tourism, CH-3906 Saas-Fee. Tel. +41 27 958 18 58, Fax: +41 27 958 18 60. E-Mail: to@sasas-fee.com or go to the website at: www.saas-fee.ch

“SAAS FEE IS A GREAT PLACE FOR SKIERS AND BOARDERS OF ALL AGES, ONCE YOU ARE UP ON THE SLOPES IT’S JUST GREAT FUN SKIING AROUND AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD.”
COACHING

COACHING TOOLS – PROFILING

Coaching is a process that helps people to achieve their goals more efficiently than if they work on them alone. Coaching helps to turn dreams into reality and one tool often used by Coaches is called Profiling. Profiling creates a dialogue between coach and skier where they explore mutual understanding of performance elements and ratings.

Everyone sees and perceives events from different perspectives. The power of performance profiling is in helping coach and skier to consider the task through the same pair of eyes. The coach considers the task from the skier’s perspective, developing awareness of what the skier considers to be important to their performance. Coaching support can then be tailored accordingly.

Profiling involves a number of steps and it requires the coach and the skier to work together. The process looks like this:

- **Agree the task**
The coach and skier agree a standard, repeatable task; for example Core Form skiing or running a drill course.

- **Brainstorm the vital elements of the performance**
The skier writes down all conceivable performance elements of the task. This might involve their skiing the task to feel their movements or visualisation and thinking it through. At this point it’s important to discuss the meaning of any terms used as they will become your personal coaching language. Coach and skier must understand and agree what they mean.

- **Identify the top ten elements**
It’s now important to prioritise the elements of the task that matter most. The coach and skier discuss the list and the skier [sometimes with guidance] selects the 10 most important elements that are needed for a ‘World Class’ performance.

- **Score the performance**
The coach observes the skier performing the standard task. Separately, coach and skier rate the current performance ability for each element on a ten point scale; with ten being “World Class”.

- **Compare and agree ratings**
The coach and skier then compare their scores. If there is a difference of two points or more this suggests a mismatch which you should explore and may need further negotiation and recalibration.

- **Transfer the information onto the profile disc**
The purpose of the disc is to give a visual representation of the scores which can be efficiently reviewed. At this stage it is important to separate coaching from evaluation sessions. Evaluation and progress-plotting should be done at different times from coaching in order to maintain focus.

- **Agree development goals**
Once the coach and skier agree where they are they must discuss and agree which elements of the profile will benefit most from work in training. Goal setting and feedback tools then come into play. You’ll read more on these in the next article.

In its simplest form profiling is a tool for raising awareness of current abilities and performance qualities. Creating the profile and displaying it focuses the attention of skier and coach on what is real at that moment. It can also serve to clarify understanding and underpinning knowledge.

Profiling and other coaching tools are covered in the Level 3 and Level 4 coach courses. Coaching tools will also be used on the Personal Performance Week in Austria 11th-17th March 2012. For more details see www.uksnowsports.co.uk or contact Julia Parker julia@snowsportengland.org.uk

Richard Barbour is co-author and editor of the newly revised Level 3 and Level 4 Development Coach resources.

“IN ITS SIMPLEST FORM PROFILING IS A TOOL FOR RAISING AWARENESS OF CURRENT ABILITIES AND PERFORMANCE QUALITIES.”

RICHARD BARBOUR (PICTURED ABOVE)

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US TEAM LINKS UP WITH TOP EUROPEAN DESTINATIONS

When the US ski stars race down the pistes in the future, Sölden and Obergurgl-Hochgurgl will be in the spotlight too. As now these two top ski destinations are the official sponsors of the US ski team and the “Official European Training Home Base” of the men’s team including Bode Miller and Ted Ligety.

Last year Sölden made the first move with the head gear sponsorship of Bode Miller; now this exciting cooperation with the United States Ski & Snowboard Association (USSA) has expanded.

Sölden and Obergurgl-Hochgurgl will now sponsor the entire US ski team of about 80 athletes. “We really look forward to supporting this strong team”, Oliver Schwarz, Director of Ötztal Tourismus, raves about this cooperation. The Sölden logo is now visible on the base layers of the men’s; the brand mark of Obergurgl-Hochgurgl adorns the turtleneck of the US ski ladies’ gear. Additionally the team of trainers sport branded caps.


One can easily identify with the athletes and trainers and get excited about the coming winter – the tourism experts of the Ötztal valley are more than confident in that respect.

What’s more, the team including the likes of Bode Miller, Ted Ligety, Julia Mancuso and “Speed Queen” Lindsey Vonn continue to sweep the leader boards with eight Olympic medals and nine World Cup crystal balls in the last two years. “Success unites”, Schwarz is convinced and adds: “Together we can achieve even more.”

“With their casual, laid-back and at the same time authentic ways, Bode Miller and his team mates are perfectly in line with the brand of Sölden”, Jack Falkner, director of the Bergbahnen Sölden lifts and one of the initiators of the sponsorship, stresses.

Within the scope of this sponsoring partnership with the USSA, Sölden can also call itself “Official European Training Home Base” of the US men’s ski team. “Meaning that these world-renowned athletes will set up their European training camp in Sölden”, explains Schwarz.

As US Alpine Programme Director, and native of Sölden, Patrick Rimi is particularly pleased about the new sponsor: “With Sölden and Obergurgl-Hochgurgl we have reliable partners on side; we can pursue our goals. In the Ötztal Valley, there are perfect training conditions to prepare. The team will train on the ski slopes at the back of Ötztal valley over forty days of the year.”

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It has been a busy couple of months with all the renewals and affiliations. Julia, Emma and Chris have done a fantastic job processing them as well as settling into our new offices at SportPark. There has been a slight delay in getting the licences out due to the card printer breaking down but this has now been resolved. So hopefully by the time you are reading this everyone has their licence and renewed for the season ahead.

This year Snowsport England had a stand at both the London and Birmingham Ski Shows which was a huge amount of work for the development officers but both shows went fantastically well especially with the launch of the new initiative GO SKI GO BOARD. If you want to get involved then there is more information on the Snowsport England website.

At the British Ski and Board show we had our club and volunteer awards which were handed out by Andrew Singham, MP for High Peak. A big thank you to all the volunteers and all the work you put in over the year as without you Snowsport England would not be the same organisation. It was great to see so many club members at the show and I would encourage everyone to come along next year as it is a fun day out and a great chance to catch up with other members.

The next challenge ahead is the Sport England funding submission for 2013-17 which needs to be completed by May 2012. In-between completing this I will hopefully make it out on to the snow this season and will be in Bormio for the English Alpine Championships. I hope to see as many members as possible out there.

Fingers crossed for some fantastic snow this year!

Tim Fawke

• Thank You to all those who visited us on the Snowsport England stand at the Birmingham NEC, it was a successful show!

One of the main focuses for SSE at the show was to launch GO SKI GO BOARD, our new national programme aimed at engaging more into skiing and snowboarding.

Whether wanting beginner or improver lessons or wishing to access recreational slope time, this programme will enable participants to take part in six weeks of lessons or slope time at discounted prices with a group of like-minded people, creating a social group and having fun! These will be facilitated by Volunteer Activators, who will receive benefits to motivate others! See more at www.snowsportengland.org.uk/ goskigoboard.

Snowsport England also launched our new Supporter Membership in association with Crystal, available to those who are not currently performing, coaches or instructors but wish to receive the benefits of the regular Piste magazine, access to a discounted annual holiday and free entry to next year’s show to name but a few! Sign up at www.snowsportengland.org.uk/supporter-membership.

We spoke to lots of lovely people and it was great to celebrate the achievements of clubs and their volunteers at the Snowsport England Awards 2011. See you next year!

With the hill at Norfolk’s magnificent artificial ski facility absolutely swamped with racers looking for the perfect line during a hectic course inspection period it was clear that this was no ordinary day.

Indeed with almost 200 athletes primed to do battle down a brace of championship testers on a bright September Saturday, even as early as course inspection it was clear that the athletes were going to provide the lucky spectators with a battle royale. Snowsport England’s premier summer event, the All England Championships, was up for grabs and a substantial number of racers had genuine designs on lifting the most prestigious title in summer racing.

The ladies event was a truly hard fought affair as Sega Fairweather’s return to downhill racing coincided with a rare 2011 start for Charlotte Gould and the efforts in-form trio Charlotte Gould, and Sarah Lambden. Indeed at the halfway stage of the competition only 0.11 seconds separated the aforementioned racers the afternoon run promised to be an explosive affair. No breathing space, no room for error and no time in hand to play safe – it was a 13 second blast to the finish line. Suddenly the race had evolved into the All (or nothing) England.

Indeed if that wasn’t pressure enough Alice Hales turned the screw all that tighter with a fantastic 2nd run as the top four watched and waited. Gould was next to play her hand – and what a hand – cutting Hales time by half a second, heaping immense pressure on her rivals in the start and propelling herself into genuine overall contention. Could anyone better that?

Certainly both Davies and Lambden set out looking to get inside Gould’s time but mistakes for both ended their challenges and only Sega Fairweather could deny Gould. Just shy of fourteen and a half seconds later it was all over and the returning Fairweather had both denied Gould and opened up an impressive half second winning margin.

In the categories Ella Ward captured the chi 1 title, finishing ahead of Alexandra Lillywhite and Millie Jackson. In chi 2 Annie Usher squeezed out Francesca Lee for victory with Jessica Spanton in 3rd. Sophie Skipper, an impressive 4th overall, did enough to push Sophie Ogden into 5th overall and 2nd in category with Georgia Haliet in 3rd. In Jun 2 Charlotte Gould claimed the honours in front of Alice Hales and Charlotte Shrimpton. Fern Barker and Ella Slater claimed the senior category podium places behind Sega Fairweather whilst Vivien Hanson edged out Melissa Sampson in the Masters category.

The male race proved to be an altogether different affair however as Michael Molloy learned from and then capitalised upon the mistakes of his counterparts to open up an

continued on page 23
A NIGHT OF CELEBRATION AT THE 2011 CLUB AND VOLUNTEER AWARDS

Snowsport England held their annual Club and Volunteer Awards on Saturday 29th October at the British Ski and Snowboard show. The Snowsport England Sport Development team hosted the event to recognise the amazing work that snowsport clubs and their volunteers have put in over the past year.

The awards took place in the Ski Club Lounge and we were grateful to be joined by MP for High Peaks Andrew Bingham, a representative from the Parliamentary Sports Fellowship Team, a Sport England programme which works to build a better understanding of sport within Parliament and a stronger partnership between the worlds of sport and politics.

Andrew Bingham presented awards in six categories. Winners received a trophy and a £200 voucher courtesy of Ski Bartlett and the first runners up were awarded certificates.

Competitive Club of the Year: Midland Ski Club
Runner Up: Norfolk Ski Race Club
Recreational Club of the Year: Midland Ski Club
Volunteer of the Year: Phil Deller (Midland Ski Club)
Runner Up: Kevin Johns (White Mountain)
Nominees: Lyndsey Allen (Pendle), David Saunders (Southern Freestyle)

Midland Ski Club and its volunteers managed to win three out of the six categories, a great achievement, with Volunteer of the Year awarded to Phil Deller, MSC’s Treasurer who has been key in changing the financial structure, facing tough times but remaining committed.

The Judging Panel commented ‘Competitive Club of the year was one of the hardest categories to award, the nomination scores came together as equal due to both delivering a strong competitive pathway through the club and achieving a number of successes throughout the year. Midland just took the edge with their pathway development to improve on what they already do and the ‘winning of the Club National circuit’.

Young Volunteer of the Year: Peter Kennel (Avon Ski Club)
Runner Up: Matthew Wigmore (Norfolk)

Young Volunteer of the Year was won by Peter Kennel from Avon Ski Club for his continued commitment to his club over the past four years and personal development so he could help others, including writing the club’s Child Protection Policy, admirable at just 22 years of age.

Unsung Hero: Chris Day (Gloucester Disability Ski Club)
Runner Up: Adrian Carey (Aldershot)

Chris Day was awarded the Unsung Hero award for continually going above and beyond the call of duty to ensure others could take part in snowsport at Gloucester Disability Ski Club. For example, Chris travelled to France at his own expense to train in using a new piece of adaptive skiing equipment so one additional person could take part.

Ambassador Club of the Year: Rossendale
Runner Up: Suffolk Vikings

New for this year was the Ambassador Club of the Year, where nominations had to come from outside of member’s regions to recognise clubs that were setting an example to others, giving a positive experience to both newcomers and committed members. This year it was awarded to Rossendale, for the hard work of the Social Enterprise group that has battled to re-open the slope after its closer earlier in the year. We know they are going to have a great season ahead.

Special thanks goes to the Judging Panel made up of, Sharon Smith (Crystal Ski), Jenima Barnes (Snowsport England Board), Heather Windust (Sport Hampshire and Isle of Wight) and Susie Moore (Snowsport Development Officer – South).

SALLY WOODS
SERVICES TO SKIING AWARDEE 2011

Sally is a volunteer whom many athletes, parents and coaches will know well. She began her association with ski racing 26 years ago and has helped out in a wide variety of capacities over the years.

Those of you who live in the south eastern region will know Sally best for her work at LeSERSA races. Her warm and friendly personality coupled with great organizational skills result in races that are fun to attend and efficiently run.

Sally began helping in 1985 when her children started competing and is still volunteering today. Over the past 26 years she has been Race Secretary at numerous Regional and National Races. More recently she has helped to set up Raaks, the Kent schools Championships and also the Surrey Schools Competition. In addition to her work at the races, Sally and her husband Rod look after and repair regional equipment, hire it out for races and transfer it to races if necessary.

Rod has supported Sally throughout her years of volunteering and is also owed a debt of gratitude for all his hard work.

It is with great pleasure that Snowsport England announce that Sally Woods has been awarded the Services to Skiing Award and Honorary Life Membership for the enormous contribution that she has made over the past 26 years.
ENGLISH ALPINE CHAMPIONSHIPS RETURN TO ITALY

The clocks have gone back and Christmas is fast approaching, how time flies. Before we know it, it will be February and time for the premier event in the English Calendar: The 16th English Alpine Championships. Once again we will be returning to the wonderful and friendly town of Bormio, Italy. Which is already preparing for the coming season, snow has already fallen on the upper slopes, and no doubt training and racing will begin soon.

Many thanks to Steffano Cassin and Energiapura for their continuing support as our main Sponsor. Steffano will be in resort during the Championships, so do take the opportunity to speak with him about equipment and clothing.

The programme will be similar to last years with the addition of the extra FIS SG race on the first Saturday. This will be run in partnership with BARSC, to ensure that there are as many opportunities for competitors to take part in SG races. We will also be organising SG training on the Friday, prior to the BARSC race, for those that are able to arrive early. This will be run under the same conditions as a race but without timing. As per last year there will also be SG training for the Children on the last Thursday prior to their SG race.

Fri 10  Snr/Jnr Super G Training
Sat 11  BARSC FIS Super G
Sun 12  FIS NJR Slalom
Mon 13  FIS NJR Giant Slalom Children’s Slalom
Tue 14  FIS Super G Mini’s Giant Slalom 1
Wed 15  FIS Giant Slalom Children’s & Mini’s Slalom
Thu 16  FIS Slalom Children’s Super G Training
Fri 17  Children’s Super G Children’s Prize Giving

The Race Office and Team Manager’s meeting room has moved, we will now be operating out of the Auditorium, where the Children’s Prize Giving has and will be held.

For more information visit www.englishalpinechamps.org.uk

NEW MISTING SYSTEM AT SWADLINCOTE

Swadlincote Ski & Snowboard Centre has announced the installation of a brand new slope misting system for the start of the 2011/2012 winter ski season. The fine water spray is to be delivered by 180 misting heads built into the Perma-Snow slope matting which provides the skiing surface at the South Derbyshire winter sports centre.

The new system will mean that the slope surface is regularly watered by a fine spray, improving the sliding properties of the matting and creating a much more realistic skiing and snowboarding experience.

For more information the centre can be contacted on 01283 217200 or visit the website at www.jslswadlincote.co.uk

AVALANCHES AND OFF-PISTE SKIING CAME TO BASSINGBOURN

Co-organised with Active Sports Resources, and William & Carolyn Bell Ski Leaders for the Ski Club of Great Britain, made a series of unique presentations and practical demonstrations to more than 80 members of the Junior Club section and club members about off-piste skiing. They talked about the thrill of off-piste skiing, introducing its equipment and making members aware of safety aspects. Following each talk several club members experienced what it felt like to wear and then deploy an Avalanche Air Bag. The presentations were concluded by everyone participating in “find the buried skiers”, simulating an alpine rescue search by using avalanche transceivers. The day was a great success with everyone enjoying the event & learning a little about other aspects of skiing and snowboarding.

IN REVIEW

SSE GRAND PRIX SERIES 2011

With the Pendle GP event missing from the calendar the Snowsport England Grand Prix series reverted to a 5 race format in 2011. Indeed with three indoor events and two outdoors the series reflected the general trend amongst the summer alpine race community towards the indoor racing surface.

The first event hosted by ERSA at the ever impressive Norfolk Ski Centre produced a feast of top racing with a number of new names and faces looking to challenge the group of established GP contenders. Experience prevailed however at old faces Andrew Watson and Charlotte Gould proved too good for their rivals, despite a series of notable defeats. Hannah Bozier, Alex Bullock and Alice Hales all looked capable of challenging at the halfway stage but a sublime 2nd run from Gould and DNF’s from Hales and Bullock proved decisive. The male race followed a similar pattern with a number of old names and faces dominating. Tom Hales, Davis Hatcher and Dan Curtis all got their GP campaigns up to impressive starts but Watson proved too good, sneaking just inside his Cardiff team mate Hales for the win.

The series then moved north for its second event with Silksworth’s immense hill providing the racers with a contoured and somewhat windswept challenge. Again Charlotte Gould was to be found looking to place herself in and around the winners enclosure but had to settle for 2nd as her Telford team mate Alexandra Bullock dominated proceedings to ease to her maiden GP overall win. Inevitably Alice Hales also forced herself into contention in 3rd, just denying Emma Peters the opportunity to complete an overall 1-2-3 for the Telford team. The male race was blown wide open by 1st run failures for Andrew Watson and Michael Molloy and in the end it was David Hatcher who capitalised, blending raw speed with consistency to take the win just ahead of Daniel Curtis and Andrew Davies.

With the outdoor events now completed the series returned back south and relocated into the oldest indoor venue on the race calendar in Milton Keynes. In the ladies race the series found its third different winner of the season as Caroline Powell produced the decisive moment of the race with a fine second run that proved too good for runner up Charlotte Gould. Francesca Lee’s stunning...
2nd run proved enough for the Ravens athlete to claim 3rd with Florence Bell and Megan Jeffries completing the top 5. In the female event James Greenwood proved far too strong and quick for his opponents, and whilst Matt Thompson proved able to match Greenwood’s 2nd run time you couldn’t help but feel it was a little too late as the knockout blow had already been landed. Andrew DuPlessis flew the flag for the multi surface athletes in 3rd with James Knock & Elliot Simpson following suit to complete the top 5.

For the penultimate challenge of the series Manchester’s magnificent Chill Factor played host. Again the indoor only athletes were certainly looking to make hay upon the surface which they are most comfortable on and they again most certainly achieved this, not least Sega Fairweather who impressively marked her return to GP action by dominating the event and easing to victory with a little more than a second to spare. Indeed with runner up Beth Widdup, Caroline Powell and Megan Jenkins all placing in the overall top 5, only Charlotte Gould proved able to mount any kind of serious challenge from the field of active outdoor contenders. The male event also followed a similar pattern with Gerard Flahive and Andrew Davies flying the outdoor challenge but finishing well shy of James Greenwood’s impressive winning mark and Eliy Rubín-Beelaert’s second placed time.

Hemel’s rather plush and spectator friendly indoor facility played host to the final event and Charlotte Gould added a bit of symmetry to proceedings by adding victory in the final event to the one achieved at the first race of the series. Indeed only Gould denied a rampaging pack of impressive children 2 girls with the foursome of Megan Jenkins, Yasmin Cooper, Emma Peters and Francesca Lee completing a somewhat youthful top 5. In the male event Calum Henderson’s fantastic 2nd run denied James Greenwood and hat trick of overall wins and an indoor clean sweep, who in turn pushed Matt Thompson into 3rd. Andrew DuPlessis again impressed with a 4th place and home racer James Grant completed the top 5.

In the overall standings Charlotte Gould dominated the series, top five placing in each event on top of racking up two overall victories proved far too consistent for her rivals. Francesca Lee also proved a model of consistency, amassing impressive results at each event whilst a solitary mistake at Milton Keynes cost Emma Peters the chance to improve on 3rd. Andrew Davies was rewarded for a season of consistent finishes with overall victory in the male series. James Greenwood’s impressive indoor performances were enough to earn him 2nd overall with David Hatcher placed 3rd.

In the Categories Telford racer Grace Williams claimed 1st in children 1 with Megan Riley 2nd & 3rd respectively. Ravens’ Francesca Lee proved too good for the rest of chi 2 however both Emma Peters and Megan Jenkins pushed her hard. In the junior categories Telford racer Ellen Brown claimed 1st in jun 1 with team mate Alex Bullock & Sophie Ogden in 2nd & 3rd. Charlotte Gould added to Telford honours in jun 2, also edging team mate Charlotte Shrimpton and Caroline Powell into 2nd & 3rd. Loughborough’s Jemima Barnes took the honours in the senior category ahead of Emily Goddard and Rachel Bill whilst Hemel’s Kerry Turnock won the masters event in front of Vivien Hanson & Judy Read.

The two early wins from Pendle’s Declan Huppach allowed him to control the destiny of the chi 1 title with Kristofer Bergljindarson and Finlay Davis completing the podium.

At some stage most of us have endured the frustration of not getting our technique quite as perfect as we’d like. You know there are improvements to be made but just can’t figure where you’re going wrong in order to correct your technique. The answer could be to actually SEE how you ski or snowboard and discuss your performance with a qualified coach.

Available at many US resorts, video analysis of your technique is now on offer at The Snow Centre in Hemel Hempstead. If you haven’t already checked out the 160m slope at Hemel, it’s the closest real snow to the centre of London and offers by far the best instruction this side of the Alps. Recognised as the UK’s only Centre of Excellence by BASI (British Association of Snowsports) their qualified instructors can provide Video Analysis as an ‘add on’ to their private lessons.

One on one tuition followed by an in-depth analysis of your technique as you examine a video of your performance could be just the boost you need to take your skiing or snowboarding to the next level.

Head of Snowsports, Pete Gillys, says, ‘Video Analysis is ideal if you’ve reached a plateau in your performance – at whatever level you ski or snowboard. It really helps to see yourself on screen and analyse the areas where you could improve – most people find it much easier to incorporate the instruction into their technique after they’ve watched their own performance on the slopes.’

Video Analysis is just £25 in addition to the cost of a private lesson and you’ll have a copy of the recording to take away as well. Adult private lessons cost from £85 for non-members/£70 for members.

Contact The Snow Centre via www.thesnowcentre.com or call 0845 258 9000.

Andy Davies at the NESA GP in Sunderland. Photo credit: www.racer-ready.co.uk.
BEGINNINGS OF A FREESTYLE CLUB

BY RICHARD WILKINSON

It all started by chance on a cold, breezy, March Saturday morning, when 2 old friends met up by chance at Sheffield Ski Village. When I say chance it was a pure accident that we all happened to be there at the same time. It was the weekend that the Sharks Ski Club had departed on their annual ski trip. We obviously hadn’t gone, and our nine year old daughter was practicing her freestyle on the park. Simon Ashton approached me and asked if I knew who her parents were. I was proud enough to say “she’s ours”.

We chatted and discussed the need for a freestyle freeski (half-pipe, jumps and rails) type of activity on Saturdays as primarily the skiing was mainly aimed for ski racers. Kids who generally went on the park after the Sharks session, had no direction or coach to help and point them in the right direction. Two old friends chatting and here is how it starts.

I had been a ski instructor at Sheffield Ski Village from its inception, where Simon and I first met as young, very young men in the late eighties. Sadly my instructing days lapsed due to work commitment, marriage and family. However my love of skiing never waned and I continued to enjoy the sport and I am delighted to say, our daughter has taken up the sport with enthusiasm and joy.

After a great deal of thought, a lifetime of emails and message via facebook etc. to one another, all because of a chat on a winter’s day, I thought “why not - I’ll give it a go”!

Sheffield Ski Village/Sharks Ski Club have produced in the past, names such as James Woods “Woody” and Katie Summerhayes to name but two. Sadly, there didn’t appear to currently be a structured pathway for young children to progress along the freestyle freeski route. Sharks did at that time, provide coaching on a Thursday evening but this is mainly aimed at coaching competent freestyle skiers, but not for first timers.

I researched courses available with the help of other Shark’s coach’s and so on a very hot July weekend I set off to the Snozone at Castleford, Yorkshire for a two day Skillful Skiing Course. Following on from this course, the following weekend in fact (another hot July weekend) was the two day Park and Pipe Coach’s Course which entailed another 2 day’s of training. However this resulted in me now being qualified to teach freestyle freeski. I also had a fantastic opportunity to shadow Pat Sharples and his team at the Salomon Grom Camps, an experience which has proved invaluable. I now enjoy coaching regularly at Pat’s Grom camps and hold him and his team in high esteem.

The adventure began on Saturday 10 September this year when myself and Nabeeel (another father within Sharks Ski Club & recently qualified Park & Pipe coach) began a freestyle freeski session within the Sharks Ski Club on a Saturday afternoon for young up and coming freestyle skiers. The first week was helpfully set off in style with guest coach Becky Hammond - “thank you so much Becky” - giving up her free time to help instruct the first one.

Our session is run after the morning Sharks Ski Club and is aimed at children/young adults who have an interest in freestyle freeski. Our aim is to encourage youngsters to try freestyle freeski in a safe and fun environment. We have only been running this session for 5 weeks and our numbers have increased on a weekly basis which proves that there is a need for this type of skiing session, which hopefully can be mirrored at other clubs all over the UK. Even more importantly now as the Freestyle freeski disciplines are to be included in the forthcoming winter olympic games at Sochi 2014.

TWO OLD FRIENDS CHATTING - how it all started.

FREESTYLE ROUND UP

BROMLEY SKI & SNOWBOARD CENTRE
They have training 8-10pm on Tuesdays and trampolining on Friday nights at White Oak Leisure centre, which costs £5 for 2 hours (7.30-9.30pm). For more details and prices go to: www.bromleyski.co.uk/

NORFOLK SNOWSPORTS CLUB
Freestyle meets every Thursday, sessions from 6-10pm. Training for skiers is from 7-8:30pm on a Sunday and for boarders 8:30-9:30pm on a Monday. For more details and prices go to: www.norfolksnowsports.com/

AIRBAG TRAINING
On selected Saturdays there is an airbag session at Sheffield Ski Village at 12:30pm for 2 hours. The cost will be £14 for Sharks and Snowport Unlimited members with the cost to others being £18. Airbags are useful training tools for performers wanting to perfect their tricks or try new ones. For general information about Sheffield Ski Village go to: www.sheffieldskivillage.co.uk/

SNOZONE, CASTLEFORD MOGULS TRAINING
Moguls sessions happen every 3rd Sunday weekend of month, with a jumps session the 2nd Sunday weekend of each month. For more details and prices go to: www.snozoneuk.com/v/castleford/activities/coaching

THURSDAY FREESTYLE NIGHTS
Each Thursday 6:30pm to 8:30pm there is a Freestyle coaching session at Sheffield Ski Village for Sharks Club Members. If you want to take part and are not a member, go to: www.sharks.org.uk/ for details of how to join.

BRACKNELL FREESTYLE
Each Sunday 9am to 11am and Tuesday 7pm to 10pm there will be an organised Freestyle training session at Bracknell Slope. The setup is a mix of rails, jumps, boxes and quarterpipes. For prices and more information please visit the web site at: www.southernfreestyle.co.uk
NEW PRODUCTS

PARADISKI LAUNCHES FREE APP
Paradiski – the large ski area located in the French Alps – has launched a free app together with Les Arcs and La Plagne to provide visitors with up-to-the-minute information on the ski area this season.

With slope map, skier geo spatial positioning, ski-lift opening hours, seven-day weather forecasts, webcams and personal performance measurements [altitude differences, maximum speed etc] this app could prove a real asset to your holidays.

Available free of charge from the Apple App Store, it will work on iPhones, android phones and iPads and is available in two languages: French and English.

Download from Apple iTunes app store/Sports/Les Arcs

IT’S SNOW TIME
Wherever you are heading this snow season, the new outdoor digital camera from Pentax will enable you to keep an accurate record of your trip.

The PENTAX Optio WG1 GPS compact camera has been specifically designed to withstand the rigours of winter sports and includes geo tagging functionality too.

With this unique GPS functionality, the camera automatically stores the ground positioning data of your shot as well as when you took it. So, back home, you can locate exactly where and when you took any particular image or video, no matter how far off-piste you have gone.

The camera can also withstand a freefall from 1.5 metres, weight pressure of up to 100kg, temperatures down to -10°C and is waterproof to a depth of 10 metres.

Housed in a rugged aluminium-alloy body, the WG1 GPS is equipped with 14 megapixels and 2.7” LCD monitor. A wide angle 5x optical zoom and 1cm macro mode enable you to take all types of shots from close-ups to landscapes.

Available now in green, grey and shiny orange. The Optio WG1 GPS has an RSP of £299.99.

BEST OF BOTH WORLDS
New for Autumn this year from Marmot is the Zion Jacket for men - a softshell jacket constructed from Polartec’s new Neoshell fabric - great for wearing on the ski slopes. RSP: £280.

Polartec Neoshell is the first fabric to combine the superior breathability, ventilation and stretch of a soft shell with the waterproof performance of a hard shell – delivering the best of both worlds. Combining protection from wet weather with unprecedented breathability, be completely waterproof and windproof, warmer than a hard shell, more stretchy than a hard shell, quieter than a hard shell and conveniently it is machine washable.

For more details visit www.polartec.com

PRE-CUT MENDING
Kinesio Taping was first brought to the world’s attention in 2007 when David Beckham wore it in pink for a back injury when he was playing for Real Madrid. Since then, Kinesio Taping’s healing properties have largely been spread by word of mouth amongst athletes and trainers who swear by it.

Now High Street store Boots has come on board and is selling “pre-cut” Kinesio Taping in convenient, light weight packs at £5.99 each for lower back, neck, shoulder, knee and foot injuries.

Traditionally, athletic tapes were wound around injuries to form a stiff bandage that would immobilize a joint or muscle. By comparison, the 100% cotton Kinesio Taping which comes in bright, funky colours, is light, fully waterproof, comfortable and modelled on the thickness and elasticity of real skin.

For more information, go to www.kinesioprecut.co.uk or call 0191 287 7008.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS

BEARD BEANIE ARRIVES IN UK
It simply has to be seen to be believed. It’s a hat, beard and moustache rolled into one, with all elements hand-knitted and produced to a high quality finish, ensuring warmth and comfort, as well as wicked amounts of fun!

The Beard Beanie is priced at £39.99 including p&p and delivery, but the guys at Rosetta Trading have heard that snow could be in the UK long before you board your plane for the Alps, so are offering a light grey bearded stocking hat Beard Beanie (with black beard and moustache) for just £24.99, for a limited period only. Visit www.rosettatrading.co.uk

LOOKS LIKE REINDEAR!
Headztrong ski helmet covers introduce you to the newest member of the team – Mr ReinDear. The perfect gift in time for Christmas and throughout the ski season.

One size fits adults and children’s helmets and are available from £34.99. Visit our website www.headztrong.com to see the 15 other styles in the range or contact Terry Tavner on 07770 785 181 for further details.

THIS CHRISTMAS, CHARITY BEGINS WITH SOCKS
We all know socks are one of the most popular Christmas presents and an ideal stocking filler. This year, Horizon hopes to make this present an even more worthwhile purchase with their Help for Heroes range.

The collection features socks for all activities and a percentage each sale will be donated to Help for Heroes. Prices range from £6.99 to £14.99. Visit www.horizonsocks.co.uk

CHRISTMAS GIFTS
**MY STORY: JO WILLOUGHBY**

**RIDING HIGH AGAIN**

Disabled skier, Jo Willoughby, was once riding high. In 2008, she was European Giant Slalom champion, number 2 in Slalom and 2nd overall in the European Championships; medals were strewn around her neck. The 2010 Paralympics were upcoming, and Jo looked set to storm the podiums in Vancouver. Her hopes of being a ski champion were coming true and she was living her dream. Then, real life interrupted and everything changed!

In August of 2008, Jo suffered a deep vein thrombosis, a blood clot in her groin, which stopped blood and lymph flow to her left leg. As a result, she suffered lymphodeama, which blew her heavily ulcerated left leg up to five times its normal size. Life looked pretty bleak. Jo qualified for Olympic funding, so she decided to attend the Wittlinger Clinic in Austria; a specialised centre for Lymphodeama. Treatment lasted 16 days. Jo departed with life changing news; her leg had to be amputated. She had to ski again.

Doctors in England concurred and on 12th May, 2009, Jo had her left leg amputated through the knee. Now she had another disability to add to the list. Jo is paralysed from the neck down, has 80% movement in her right arm, 60% movement in her left arm, no feeling from the neck down, a partial amputation of the left hand and is blind in her right eye. Her leg was just another problem that she would overcome. Six weeks and three days after the amputation, Jo was back at SnoZone, Castleford, attempting to get back into racing. She was like Bambi on ice and fell repeatedly, but she wouldn't let it defeat her.

Jo received tremendous support in 2009/10 from Yorkshire business man Victor Buchanan, who organised a winter wonderland ball fundraiser to aid Jo’s Paralympic bid. Monies raised were spent as Jo chased European and World Cup races that, upon arrival, was not allowed to enter. As a result, the Paralympic dream did not materialise for Jo; something she is still ruing from today.

Fast forward to November 2011. Post-op full time training has led to Jo conquering physical barriers, through modifications to her monoski. A false leg now rides shotgun in Jo’s rig. Coach Mike Smith believes that, despite health issues, Jo will perform to standards previously set as she enters this season’s races.

As the season approaches, Jo is, as ever, looking for sponsorship. With the approach of the London 2012 Games, gaining sponsorship is increasingly difficult. Companies want to invest in the summer Olympics; winter sport is marginalised and overlooked.

One company redressing this is Bennett’s Winter Sports, based in Jo’s home town of Barnsley, in Yorkshire. Bennett’s pledge to help Jo ranges from sponsorship of a pair of skis for Jo and her coach, to her skis technical management. Jo’s skis are tuned to precision technical specification to achieve race perfection and Jo and Bennett’s have worked collaboratively on edges, bases and waxing. Bennett’s Winter Sports prides itself on their skills as ski techs and their ability to assist a local disabled athlete makes them proud.

This newly founded and upcoming company aims to showcase skiing, and highlight its accessibility, whether participation is at the elite level, like Jo, or at grass roots.

The firm’s Director Russell Bennett says, ‘We are immensely proud to be able to help an athlete in a climate of recession. We want to support our local Barnsley and Yorkshire based talent, and be there for the skiing community. Helping Jo is part of our mission to promote skiing. The shop, and the ski services that we offer, such as boot fitting and ski tuning, is simply an extension of this’. Jo will now sport the Bennett Wintersport Logo on her clothing and fender; demonstrating the backing of her local ski shop. She will wear their logo with Yorkshire pride.

With this support behind her, Jo will leap forward in European, Noram, National and Ipcas competition. Such provision comes on the back of numerous accolades that Jo has won this year. Despite being a winner on the slopes, Jo being the only woman to finish both runs of the Canadian 2011 Giant Slalom championships, accolades have also ensued on dry land.

Jo was presented with the Jane Tomlinson Woman of Courage Award and then won the Yorkshire Overall Woman of achievement Award in May 2011. Jo was then awarded the Sports Personality of the Year with a Disability 2011, at the MBNA Northern Sports Awards in Manchester. Jo is especially proud of this award as it was achieved in the company of fellow award winners Jessica Ennis. For disabled skiing and skiing in general to be viewed as a sport worthy of an award, was a huge leap forward for snow sports in England, therefore Jo was jubilant when she received the honour.

Now she is back with her eyes on the prize; more ski titles and medals. The mountains are in her sight and she aims to furnish their clear groomed snow with pencil carved lines. Her mind, like her ski, is on edge, as she charges forward into another race for England.

Find out more at www.jowilloughby.com
A DAY TO REMEMBER AT THE ALL ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIPS

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unassailable first run lead and then proceed to demolish what was left on run 2. Indeed with substantial numbers of the male racers failing to learn from each other’s failures and eliminating themselves with suicidal race lines Molloy will rarely have had it go quite so straight forward. Granted James Greenwood and Andrew Davies combined their speed and talent with experience and intelligence to mount credible challenges to the home racer but they were amongst a genuine minority on a frustrating day for male racing.

In the categories Declan Huppach claimed the honours in chi 1 with William Fenley and Thomas Rascagneres in 2nd & 3rd. An impressive 13th overall from Jordan Fellows proved too good for the rest of chi 2 category with Thomas Richardson and William Wheeler joining him on the podium. In the junior 1 category Christopher Corr’s excellent 9th overall was enough to secure victory although James Gibb and Matthew Martin pushed him close. James Mozol continued from page 16

joined Michael Molloy & Andrew Davies on the junior 2 podium whilst Harry Hornsby and Andrew Leeson joined James Greenwood in the senior category. Joint 14th overall was plenty enough to secure the masters win for Rob Hales with Andrew Hjort and Paul Bunton claiming the minor podium places.

In the mini event scheduled for the first time between Saturday’s first run victories from Olivia Mitchell and Toby Case identified themselves as future racers to keep an eye upon. There were podium positions for Lauren Vale, Georgia Key in the girls event and from Aaron Trongh and Oliver Wekks in the boys race.

The day belonged to Michael Molloy and Sego Fairweather however. Not since 2004 had Fairweather contested the All England Championships but seven years later she raised the bar and again proved that was still very much the lady to beat. The event was sponsored by Aosta Valley, Ski Solutions, Aosta Valley Race Academy & Ski Bartlett

SNOWSPORT ENGLAND
ON SNOW NORDIC SKILLS & MULTI ACTIVITY WEEK
KVITAVATN, RJUKAN, NORWAY 25 March – 1 April 2012

WHO IS THE COURSE FOR?
• Cross-country skiers who wish to improve their skills, whether their interests are in touring, racing or freeheel downhill. They will need to be able to ski at a minimum standard of improver/intermediate level.
• Alpine skiers who wish to improve their downhill skills by converting to freeheel downhill/telemark skiing. A minimum standard of basic parallel turns on most blue runs on alpine/telemark equipment is required.
• Those wishing to be assessed for Snowsport England Skills Awards.
• If there is sufficient demand there will be a separate group for members of the Snowsport England Coaching Scheme who wish to be trained and assessed for, or revalidate, an award.

COURSE CONTENT
Each morning will be devoted to skills training in groups of similar ability. The XC groups will concentrate on classic and skating techniques while the freeheel downhill groups will develop skills leading up to and including telemark turns. The afternoons will be more varied. Participants may decide to remain on the slopes, for more informal coaching, putting into practice the skills they have learned in the morning sessions. There will also be opportunities for one to one tuition, to try out other skiing disciplines and to participate in optional activities such as fun races and ski tours. A full evening programme includes talks about ski waxing, presentations/films/videos on skiing, mountaineering, and other outdoor related topics.

COACHES
We are very fortunate in having a team of top coaches lined up for the week at Kvitaatvan, lead by Snowsport England Senior Tutors Patrick Winterton and Andy Stewart.
All three of our freeheel/telemark coaches, Chris Stewart, Andy Stewart and Ian Johnston have the BASI level 3 telemark coaching award. Chris Stewart is the current British Telemark Champion.
All three of our cross country coaches are Snowsport England Senior Tutors. Patrick Winterton and Mike Dixon are regular commentators on biathlon and cross country skiing for Eurosport. Alan Eason is ski school director and head instructor at Australia’s largest cross country ski resort, Lake Mountain. This winter Alan will be running an SSE early season on snow week see www.totallynordic.co.uk for details.

COACHES COSTS
Coaching costs are £300 for 6 days coaching. (plus £20 supplement if you are not a member of a Snowsport England affiliated club). There will be a £40 discount for juniors (under age 18). Payment can be made by cheque or credit card.

VENUE
We stay at the hospitable Kvitåvatn Fjellstoge, which is dominated by Gausta (1883 m), the highest mountain in southern Norway. There are excellent ski tracks following the rolling terrain. Nearby are the downhill slopes. Self service meal arrangements include Norwegian style breakfast buffet (where you make your own packed lunch) and full evening meal.

TRAVEL
Participants make their own travel arrangements. For further information contact the organiser
Wendy McRae
T: 01274 670071 E: wendy@royds.org.uk

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A POWER MONKEY EXTREME
DONATED BY FIREBOX.COM

This handy gadget provides hours of extra power for portable devices, so whether it’s an iPhone, iPad, laptop, PSP, GPS, or MP3 player never have a flat battery again. All you have to do to win, is answer this question....

What is the name of this product?
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Complete your name and address details below and send your entry to: Power Monkey Competition, The Pisté magazine, 27 Norwich Road, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 8BX. Get your entry to us by 20th December 2011.

Answer........................................ Name........................................
Address........................................... Address...........................................
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The winner will be the first correct entry picked from all entries received.
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