

The Summit Record, 1930

One of the inevitable results of the extremely bad weather conditions of 1930 was that for a great portion of the season attempts on the Summit record were impossible. During several weeks of our all-too-short ski-ing season there was practically no snow for the first 4½ miles of the trip from the Hotel, while conditions further up were extremely icy and uncomfortable.

As a result, the season produced only one attempt on the present record of 6 hours 9 minutes, established in 1929 by Mr. R. Gelling, of the Millions Ski Club. That attempt was an extremely good one, in that it was made by two junior members of the K.A.C., Messrs. T. Speet and H. G. Lamble. Lamble and Speet made an unfortunate error in starting at 3.40 a.m., a time which meant that the return journey must be made when the sun had affected snow conditions and made the running difficult and tiring. Though the record was not broken, the time was the best for the season, and makes Messrs. Speet and Lamble the holders of the Summit Trophy for 1930. Both are to be congratulated on a fine effort, which, a few years ago, would have broken the existing record. This race against time is one of the finest Dauerlaufs in the world, and it is to be hoped that continual attempts on it will be made, whether the record is broken or not. It must be remembered that the Trophy is awarded for the best time for each year; this should not be overshadowed by the interest shown in the breaking of the record. The Summit Trophy is not intended to be the property of the man whose record is the best at any particular time. It is awarded from season to season.

An account of the trip by the winners for 1930 follows:—

A JUNIOR ATTEMPT.

By Theodore Speet and George Lamble.

It was, from the commencement of the season, one of our greatest ambitions to see how long it would take us to ski from the Hotel to the Summit and back. But, hindered by the lack of good snow last year for this type of ski-ing we had to "put off" these good intentions until the middle of August, when we decided to do as best we could under the conditions available.

Whilst we were nervously discussing, one night, the manner in which we would undertake the run, Mr. P. W. Pearson suggested that we should go on the following morning to the Summit and back and attempt the record

for the season. This was seconded by Mr. Speet and others present. Paralysed by the sudden decision and the fear of the 35 miles of ski-ing before us, it was difficult at first to consent, but eagerness compelled us to make the contract.

Sleep was far beyond both of us that night, as we were both too taken up with high ideas of how we would and how we would not manage this run. We went to bed



G. LAMBLE AND T. SPEET
On Return from Summit Record, 1930. at Hotel Kosciusko.

just on 8.30 p.m., and, instead of being 7 hours later, 3.30 a.m., seemed like 7 days, and we were both so warm with excitement that only sheets were needed on our beds. However, 3.30 a.m., found us both sipping hot cocoa and chewing biscuits in silence (deep and earnest concentration precluding conversation) until the time came when we had to wake Mr. Pearson, who had kindly consented to time us out.

At 3.39 a.m. we were both, with well-waxed skis on, waiting for the Secretary of the Alpine Club, who was

shivering in a thick dressing gown, to say the word "Go"; and at 3.40 a.m. two enthusiastic skiers were climbing up the road to Dainer's Gap.

The air was crisp, and we were both feeling fresh and capable. Although the light was not quite as good as might have been expected, our well-waxed skis were a large factor in helping us to make the Chalet by 5.50 a.m. (2 hours 10 minutes). A very acceptable cup of coffee and light refreshments were awaiting us both, and 10 minutes were taken here, relishing a "snack," and at the same time putting plenty of climbing wax on our skis before attempting the climb of over 1,300 feet to the Summit.

From the Chalet to the Summit the snow was inclined to be a little soft, but, although this was a slight hindrance to a quick run from the top of Mt. Stilwell to the bottom of the Snowy Valley, it was a great help in climbing. Whilst we were in the valley of the Snowy the sun began to rise above the ranges behind us, and with all its splendour throw its gentle rays upon the Summit alone, leaving the surrounding peaks in morning shadow, and veiling our destination first in a gown of bright orange, and then slowly changing to yellow. A more beautiful sight I never yet have witnessed. We were both going well here and were putting as much effort into the climb as possible. We reached Seaman Hut in four hours, and at 7.55 were fastening a nickel match box around the pole at the Summit as a proof that we had accomplished the full journey. (This match box was afterwards returned to the Hotel by the Secretary of the Millions Ski Club, Mr. Philip Moses).

The run back from the Summit was really wonderful; there was no exertion needed, and we had plenty of enjoyable runs back to the Chalet, which we reached at 8.45 a.m. (5 hours, 5 minutes).

Unfortunately we did not feel fit to go on without a little breakfast, as the sun was very hot and the snow very slow and much more effort was being needed. However, we had accomplished the trip from the Hotel to the Summit and back to the Chalet in 5 hours 5 minutes, which was not only an encouragement to us, but also a very big surprise. We intended stopping at the Chalet just to have a quick breakfast and to put some running wax on our skis for the run home, but, alas! we were there for 40 minutes, and at 9.25 we started out again for the Hotel. It was on our way home that we discovered that we should have left the Hotel earlier, as the snow was becoming dreadfully slow and our progress was, as a result, also slackening.

Just before the climb to Dainer's Gap we were met by

a party of the Millions Ski Club, one of whom, Mr. Colin Gilder, kindly greeted us with two cordial bottles and gave us quick instructions not to stop but to sip the contents as we were going along. Being very thirsty I swallowed all mine and both by smell, and, still more, by effect, discovered that I had drunk wine, and my feelings were being roused to that pitch where I was unable to keep my mind on ski-ing at all; at any rate, we both reached Dainer's Gap in a bath of perspiration, and the snow was by this time so wet and slow that it took us 12 minutes to reach the Hotel from that point. On returning we were officially timed by Mr. Pearson and Mr. McNiven, the time being 11.55 a.m. (8 hours 5 minutes). We both had a wonderful experience, and certainly intend to improve this time next year.

We would like to thank Mr. P. W. Pearson for all the trouble he went to in timing us, and also giving us useful advice.

AN AERIAL MAP OF THE SNOWFIELDS.

During last spring an attempt was made again to bring into prominence the need for a map. Several so-called maps exist, but on examination they are one and all hopelessly inaccurate, incomplete and misleading. The Government Tourist Bureau was interviewed on this subject, and the point was stressed that, although the Safety Rules formulated by the Council and published at the Hotel state that a map is an essential for every touring party, yet there is no map obtainable. A party who relied upon the one at present on sale would be extremely fortunate if it ever returned.

The quickest, cheapest and most accurate method of mapping to-day is the aerial method. In an endeavour to get things moving, the Australian Air Force was approached, through the kind offices of Commander Gifford, and were most favourably inclined towards the project. Unfortunately, lack of funds was, as usual, the determining factor, and the proposal was regretfully refused. It is extremely doubtful whether the sum of money required to cover the out of pocket expenses of the Air Force in this matter would be a large one, and might very rapidly be repaid by the sale of the resulting map. If the Tourist Bureau could come to some arrangement with the Air Force and obtain estimates of expenses from them, the Clubs would probably contribute some proportion of the cost. It is certainly not too strong to say that if there is another ski-ing fatality during the coming season, the underlying cause will be the lack of an authoritative map.