

The Summit Trophy

In order to stimulate cross-country skiing and encourage exploration of the higher Alps in Australia, Mr. Arthur Davies and Dr. Herbert H. Schlink presented a trophy for annual competition to the Kosciusko Alpine Club in 1913.

The donors attached the following conditions:—

1. The trophy to be called "The Summit of Australia Trophy."
2. The trophy to be a challenge trophy and competed for annually.
3. The race to be from the Hotel Kosciusko to the summit of Mount Kosciusko and back to the hotel.
4. The race to be completed in one day, otherwise no award to be made.
5. The race to be run under the auspices of the Kosciusko Alpine Club.
6. The race to be open to all-comers and not restricted to members of the Kosciusko Alpine Club.
7. The trophy to be always kept in the charge of the Kosciusko Alpine Club, either at the Hotel Kosciusko or in Sydney.
8. In the event of the Club becoming defunct the trophy to be handed back to the donors if they so request.

The race entailed travelling from the hotel to the summit of Mount Kosciusko and back, a distance of 34 miles through uninhabited country.

The first race was held during July, 1914, and there were about a dozen entries, but only three started. Their experience showed that the journey was not without danger, as they got separated and lost in the fog for three hours on the summit. Fortunately the competitors had previously agreed not to leave the Snowy Valley without each other. Dr. Shorney, of Adelaide, was the first man of the weary trio to reach the hotel, at 10.15 p.m. The party not having had their ski off since 7 a.m. that morning were entitled to their weary and dishevelled appearance. Dr. Shorney is therefore the first winner of the event. It is interesting to record that none of the competitors was capable of stooping to take their ski off after their 15½ hours' effort. The experience of the journey convinced all that until there were enough interested skiers stationed as judges at the summit and Betts's

Camp, as well as at intervals along the route, it would be hazardous to continue an individual competitive event, and so the race developed into a kind of team competition in which parties of two or three attempted to reduce the record each year.



Photograph of the handsome Trophy by the well-known sports sculptor Movio, of London, presented by Dr. Schlink for the Summit Competition. Bronze replicas are being given by Dr. Schlink each year to the record holders.

In the early years it was difficult to induce runners to undergo the hardships of the journey, but gradually as the time became reduced, year by year, and especially after Miss Margaret Allen and Miss Doris Pitt helped to reduce it, more interest was taken in the event. In proof thereof last season eight attempts were made on different days to reduce the record by single individuals, as well as parties.

The event is now well established, is keenly contested each year and has attained the object for which the trophy was presented, viz.: an awakening of interest in the higher Alps and the opening up of the whole of the Munniong Ranges. When more huts are built and there are enough enthusiastic course stewards to reside in them no doubt the competition will again develop into an individual competitive event and be held on a definite date and so afford equal snow conditions for all aspirants. The day is not so far distant when it will become a real race rather than a team record breaking event.

LAST SEASON'S COMPETITIONS FOR THE TROPHY.

There has been discussion for a long time as to whether nine hours could be beaten for the run to the summit and back. Although there was someone each year to make a non-stop run and claim the trophy for a period, the record for the trip had stood for four years at 9 hours 46 minutes. During last winter season there were a number of assaults made on the high tops, and the time has now been cut down to 8 hours 10 minutes.

The first runner to attempt the task was Mr. H. Kienzle, of the K.A.C. As soon as he arrived at Kosciusko he went off to Betts's Camp with two companions, and stayed there for a week to prepare himself for the task. While he was there, however, he sprained an ankle and returned to the hotel after laying up for a while with the joint looking far from healthy. He was determined to go for the trophy and, after resting a few days set off, but found himself still a victim to circumstances and had to turn back at a point about a mile beyond Charlotte's Pass owing to poor visibility and bad snow conditions. A few days later he set off again and succeeded in registering the good figures of 8 hours 56 minutes—a fine performance, which looked as though it would take no end of beating.

When Mr. Kienzle had returned to Sydney, Messrs. Arnold Moulden and Bill Gordon, members of the Ski Club of Australia and both experienced in long distance touring, set off and succeeded in clipping a few minutes off the time established by the previous record-beater. Mr. Kienzle then returned to Kosciusko, but after waiting for some days he could not get favorable conditions for the trip, and so had to return to Sydney leaving the record to Messrs. Moulden and Gordon.

This was not the last of the attempts for the year, for on August

10 Mr. Moulden again started off with Dr. Ashleigh Davy, who had held the record for four years, as a companion. These two runners succeeded in accomplishing the trip in 8 hours 10 minutes. Mr. Moulden subsequently expressed the opinion that it would perhaps be years before any runner had such wonderful conditions as it was their luck to experience on this run. This may be quite a correct forecast; but, conditions and all other matters considered, the performance of these two well known enthusiasts was a brilliant one, and they are deserving of all praise. The discussion will now centre, not on nine hours, but on eight. How long will it be before it is broken?

STILL PIONEERING MOTORING.

The Editor met one of the popular Balmain Bros., of Cooma and Bega, a few days ago, in Sydney, and was rather surprised to learn that they are still pioneering motoring routes in the south-eastern corner of the State. They have linked up with the Victorian services, so that it is now possible to travel from Sydney to Melbourne by the Prince's Highway by public service vehicle. Balmain Bros. and Kosciusko go together. The firm have been associated for so long with the snow service that every ski-runner has come to believe that they are part of it. They have done a great deal for the happiness and comfort of visitors to the snow, and the resources of the firm seem to be illimitable. On one occasion they moved 90 members of the Millions Club with their baggage from the Hotel Kosciusko to Cooma in one trip. Balmain's cars will show the visitor to the State all of the Monaro which a car can reach. And those who know it will say there is no more beautiful or interesting stretch of territory in the Commonwealth.