

TASMANIAN SECTION

The Tasmanian Ski Council

The first meeting of the Council was held at the Springs Hotel in May, 1934. It then consisted of Messrs. Stackhouse, Hall and McKinlay from the Northern Tasmanian Alpine Club, and Messrs. Hutchison, Smith and Chapman from the Ski Club of Tasmania, all members being present at the meeting. The principal business was the detailed arrangement of the proposed State meeting, which was to have been held at National Park at the end of August. With the help of the S.C.G.B. and N.S.W. handbooks, rules were devised for the running of the meeting, and an ambitious list of competitions was set out.



The Ridge of Mt. Field West, National Park. V. C. Smith.

Again, however, fortune was against us, and yet another year has been added to the list of those during which no formal inter-club races could be held in Tasmania. The S.C.T. was to be responsible for the running of the meeting, but, after making arrangements and sending up stores to the Club Hut at Twilight Tarn, an advance party found that scarcity of snow made the holding of any serious races impossible, and the northern competitors were reluctantly put off. This action, as it proved, was fully justified, as the party that stayed at the hut watched the snow dwindling to a few drifts. Tasmanian ski-runners have every cause to complain at their luck, since, just when every effort is being made to place competitive ski-ing on a sound basis, they have experienced a run of bad seasons which must be quite unprecedented.

The King Williams in Spring

By D. L. Anderson.

If anything could look more ridiculous than a skier carrying ski through town, it was those cyclists pushing their bikes through six inches of snow. We

had driven up to Lake St. Clair the night before, to take advantage of a late-season fall, and were standing on the crest of the west coast road, where it crosses Mount Arrowsmith. This was the Centenary road race in all its glory, and they looked extremely fed up, even omitting to make humorous remarks about our ski.

After ski-joring out behind the car, we pushed rather drearily off over the plain, a mixture of button-grass and snow, arriving at the foot of the main ridge some half hour before mid-day. The ascent providing no difficulties, as Mr. Smythe would say, of a technical nature, we arrived at the summit about half an hour later. Here there were drifts, plainly distinguishable by having no grass showing through them, and the afternoon was spent in practice. Running down, I wondered if the marks of my steel edges on the rocks might be mistaken by some geologist of the future for glacial scratches.

The next day we decided to do Mount King William. Directly after you leave the road there is rather a foul piece of bush, but most of the ascent (some



D. L. Anderson.

Looking South, down the King William Range.

2,000 ft.) is made through a burnt-out valley, standing dry timber, which is just thick enough to stop you in mid-run, and just too close to turn through. However, it is not far, and we soon pierced the mist between two of the north peaks, and ran down into a well-filled valley beyond.

The north King Williams are beautiful ski-ing country for those who like short fast runs. For miles, the crest is indented on the east side by a series of little basins, giving a sharp little run on almost any gradient, and an up-hill out-run if necessary. There are 15 miles of this range, of which only the north fringe has been skied, and I should think the south end is much better than the north. Snow, of course, is not reliable, but after a decent season the Williams carry big drifts right into the new year.

After lunch we ran joyfully about in our valley, finding excuse after excuse for lack of skill. The flat at the bottom was cram full of sticky snow; the sides were festooned with breakable crust. We left about 3.30, to try conclusions with the valley, and reached the road about dusk.

One of the pleasant features of Tasmanian ski-ing is that there is generally snow somewhere. Some falls occur on the northern mountains, some on the southern, and some on the central. Barring the walk at the end, it is only a matter of a few hours journey in a car, to find whatever there is. For those who are prepared to risk the lack of good snow conditions, there is something very attractive about our rugged mountains and infinite variation of scenery. Come to Tasmania, where men are men and skiers wear shin-pads.

The Ski Club of Tasmania

1934 completes the eighth year of the club's history, and, while snow conditions were below average, and, indeed, left much to be desired, the progress of the sport has been important. Briefly, there was a snow drought throughout the winter and early spring, good falls not coming until the end of September. At that time, excellent snow was available throughout most of the State's skiing mountains. On the Watcher, in fact, large drifts remained until the end of October.

The indefinite postponement of the eagerly awaited State Championships was a severe blow, and several members again visited the Mainland and New Zealand in search of competitive ski-ing. In this connection, one of the most pleasant features of the year's sport was the success of Miss McAulay and Mr. Anderson, Miss McAulay winning the Women's Championship of the Ski Club of Australia, and Mr. Anderson winning the Mount Buller Championship.

In anticipation of the Tasmanian meeting at Twilight Tarn, the committee decided that it would be expedient to instal a stove in the main room of the Club Hut. This work was carried out and should prove a great acquisition to comfort.

Following on a change of governmental policy in June, two important snow roads have been put in hand, the long delayed road to Lake Fenton, and a road to the summit of Mt. Wellington. The Fenton road is now formed for rather more than half the distance, and it is anticipated that it will be ready for use in the 1936 season, reducing the time to the hut by some two hours. The Mount Wellington road is also about half finished, and, even as it is, should prove a boon to skiers in the avoidance of climbing. Yet a further help in transport is a new road to the shore of Lake St. Clair. This should materially help any parties who wish to pioneer the many adjacent snow mountains. In connection with pioneering, it is of interest to note that a summer trip indicated the existence of excellent conditions in the vicinity of Mounts Ossa and Pelion East.



V. C. Smith.

Near Twisted Tarn, National Park.

During the year the club sustained the loss of one of its oldest and best friends by the death of Mr. William Belcher, the National Park ranger. Few



K. Col, National Park.

V. C. Smith.

members are without obligation to Mr. Belcher, whose kindly personality, interest, and ever-ready help made him an intimate friend of all ski-runners.

The annual meeting was held at Highfield Hotel on March 6th, preceded, as usual, by the club dinner. The following officers were elected for the year 1935: President, H. R. Hutchison; vice-president, V. C. Smith; honorary secretary and treasurer, D. L. Anderson; committee, G. T. F. Chapman, W. T. A. Crookall, J. J. Edwards, E. Ward, Miss N. L. Hutchison, and Professor A. L. McAulay.

The Northern Tasmanian Alpine Club

Although the snowfalls were even lighter last season than during the two previous winters, Ben Lomond carried ski-ing snow for three months and members skied without interruption during this period. The superiority of Ben Lomond over other snowfields in poor seasons has been very noticeable during the past three winters and is undoubtedly due to the fact that the mountain has ski-ing slopes at and above the 5,000 ft. level. Most of last year's ski-ing was provided by the Legge Tor runs, about two miles from the Chalet, although, for a period, quite good conditions prevailed on the Borrowdale slopes and a certain amount of practice was had near the Chalet.

In spite of the lack of snow, the enthusiasm of the members remained as strong as ever. Parties visited the Chalet every week-end during the snow season. Further attention was given to practice, and those members who skied last year considerably improved their running and turning technique. The Chalet now comprises a living room, kitchen and women's room, and is large enough for parties of twenty or more. At no time during last year was this accommodation over-taxed.

A number of trips to other mountain areas was made by members during the past year. Two parties visited Cradle Mountain last winter, and several parties have made trips to this mountain during the summer and at Easter. Several mountain camping trips were also undertaken by members after the snow season. During the year a certain amount of work was carried out at Ben

Lomond. Minor improvements to the Chalet have been effected, and a new track has been made from the Chalet to the top of the mountain. This track provides a shorter and better graded route to the Tor. From the top of this new track stakes and cairns have been erected as far as the base of the Tor.

The present membership of the club is sixty-five and there is every prospect of this number being greatly increased during the forthcoming season.

At the fifth annual meeting of the club, held in May last, the following officers were elected: President, C. F. Monds; vice-presidents, C. K. Stackhouse and G. E. Perrin; captain, F. Smithies; committee, I. D. Carr, G. Hutton, H. L. von See, W. F. Mitchell, and G. C. McKinlay; honorary treasurer, S. V. Tilley; honorary secretary, R. G. Hall (Commonwealth Bank Chambers, Launceston); the delegates to the Tasmanian Ski Council are: F. Smithies, G. C. McKinlay, and R. G. Hall (the latter also delegate to the A.N.S.F.).

R. G. Hall, Honorary Secretary.

Tasmania University Ski Club

The activities of the Tasmania University Ski Club were rather limited during the 1934 season. An expedition was made to the National Park in the August vacation. The snow consisted of about three drifts. The largest had a descent of approximately 200 ft. There were also several day expeditions to Mount Wellington, which had a moderate fall towards the end of September. The club has become affiliated to the Tasmania University Union, falling into line with the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne.

R. Hutchison, Honorary Secretary.

Black Bluff Ski Club

This club, formerly known as the North-Western Alpine Club, is experiencing a wave of enthusiasm and activity which gives great promise for the forthcoming season. Membership is larger than it has ever been and all members are taking great interest, both in the affairs of the club and the sport of skiing. It is expected and hoped that conditions will be better on Black Bluff than they were last year, when there was very little snow. The track to the top of the Bluff has been considerably improved. A fair amount of money has been spent on cutting and draining and, as a consequence, the climb is not nearly so arduous as formerly.

Interest is now concentrated on the erection of a hut near the top of the mountain. A party of club members went up early in May to select a site and explore the possibilities of securing timber within easy reach. A spot, happily known as "Boozers' Rest," about fifteen minutes from the top, was chosen for the hut and work has commenced on its construction.

A meeting of the club, at which there was a good attendance of members and others, was held recently and the officers for the year were elected, and ways and means of raising funds discussed. The officers and committee elected were: President, Mr. G. P. Taylor; secretary, Mr. G. Cruikshank; committee, Messrs. G. S. Copeland, C. Doyle, A. D. N. Keene, H. Biddle, E. A. Brumby, L. E. Booth, E. Dickinson, and R. Bonney.