

# *The Bulletin*

## **RUAPEHU SKI CLUB**

Volume 87, No. 2

June 2022



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*Taking the fast way home at Mt Ruapehu. Photo: RAL.*

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Kia ora koutou, hello everyone.

The ski season is nearly here! And unlike the last two years we have every expectation of being open and hopefully having a great season. Hut devotees will be pleased to know that we will have all buildings open with four cooks employed.

Although there are currently reports of increased thermal activity with Crater Lake hotter than in many years, we have been through these cycles many times before, and the skifields are well outside the danger range if something did happen.

I have been on the mountain through four eruptions over the years including a lahar that came down the other side of the ridge behind the Lodge and out over Skippers, destroying RAL buildings in the process.

Since then the crater rim has been altered to help direct future events to travel down the southern side of the Mountain, as happened with the last lahar in 2007.

But it's more likely that Ruapehu will settle down again in the coming weeks, fingers crossed!

Committee and Club members have been busy on work parties, getting our buildings ready for winter, a huge round of thanks to everyone who has attended them this year.

While we managed to end last year in a generally financially neutral position, this was only achieved by Committee's hard work and by severely curtailing our maintenance programmes and budgets (as we did in the previous year).

This means that your efforts on work parties have been even more important, nor can we delay returning to our full maintenance programme any longer.

As we approach the AGM and the election of the 2022 Committee I'd like to let you all know that I am stepping down as President.

Although I could have done one more year in the position, for me it is a good time to step back after 18 years on Committee in a wide variety of roles.

While I have not achieved everything I hoped to when I became President, I don't think any President ever does. With the proposals we will bring to the AGM around possible changes to streamline the constitution and work we have done over the last two years, I think Committee will have the tools needed to meet the many challenges facing us now.

As I step down I feel the same sense of indebtedness to the Club as I had when I first put my hand up for Committee.

RSC has given me so much over the years that I will always feel that debt. I think all clubs give us experiences we can carry through life – teaching us the value of co-operation, shared values and responsibility, the pleasure in seeing others' learning and enjoyment as well as our own. RSC has certainly done that for me.

I've found my time as President immensely rewarding in spite of the challenges, as indeed I have found all my time on Committee.

I have got to know and work with so many wonderful people over the years, and always new people keep stepping up to help shape and steer the Club.

Thank you RSC, past and present Committee and Club members alike, for everything you have given me.

Noho ora mai

**Phill Thomass**  
**RSC President**



*Painting the RSC Hut during a 2022 working party. Photo: Chris Woudenberg*

## **THROUGH THE LODGE WINDOW**

**Happy Valley** is due to open on June 23rd. **Whakapapa's** upper mountain is scheduled to open on July 8th.

**Turoa** will follow on June 9th.

*An RAL day pass on weekdays this year will cost \$84 (adult) or \$54 (youth aged 5-17).*

*A weekend day pass will cost \$149 (adult) or \$99 (youth).*

*A weekend pass will cost (\$249 adult) or \$149 (youth).*

**RAL started its snowmaking in Happy Valley in mid-April, a month earlier than previous years.**

The Snow Factory has capacity to produce up to 200 cubic metres of snow a day and as an all-weather system will run daily in the lead up to winter.

**Feb-March saw a fabulous six weeks for NZ skiers and snowboarders.**

*Three medals (two gold) at the Olympics.*

*Four medals (one gold) at the Paralympics.*

*Four medals (two gold) at the world junior ski and snowboard champs.*

**Historic sites in and around Tongariro National Park are to be restored by Ngāti Tūwharetoa hapū as part of a new Jobs for Nature project.**

The sites include the Opōtaka pā site on the banks of Rotoaira and Te Pōrere Redoubt near Ruapehu, both culturally and historically significant to the Tūwharetoa hapū Ngāti Hikairo and listed by Culture and Heritage NZ.

Conservation Minister Kiri Allan announced half a million dollars of Jobs for Nature funding for the project which marries tikanga, Te Ao Māori and mātauranga Māori with western science and environmental and conservations tools.

**Ohakune Disc Golf** is now open and is a fun alternative activity on non-ski days.

*It is set in the Mangawhero Terrace domain, along the Mangawhero River; between town and the junction, with mountain views.*

*Discs are available for purchase or hire. The 9 hole disc golf course has a simple*

**THE  
RUAPEHU SKI CLUB**

**(inc) Founded 1913**

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**President:** Phill Thomass  
**Vice-Presidents:** Carl Burling,  
 Liza Fitzsimmons, Damon Forsyth,  
 Marion Quinn, Donald Webster  
**Secretary:**  
**Treasurer:** Sonia Quinn  
**Immediate Past President:**  
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**Captain:** Catherine Gafa  
**Vice-Captain:** Paula Cooper  
**Committee:** Adrian Adriaansen,  
 Ron Bonfrer, Heather Chao,  
 Sam Hood, Richard Horton,  
 Simon Hunt, John Payne  
**Patron:** Peter Brady  
**Patroness:** Barbara Scelly  
**Auditors:** Hart and Co  
**Admin Officer:** Ceana Priest  
**Lodge Officer:** Carl Burling  
**Hut Officer:** Simon Hunt  
**Chalet Officer:** Ron Bonfrer  
**Turoa Officer:** Donald Webster  
**Heritage Fund Guardians:** Robin  
 Dallas, Richard Nelson, Bernard  
 Smith, Phill Thomass  
**Fund Treasurer:** Mike Wardle  
**Glacier Hut Custodian:**  
 Bernard Smith

*layout with different options available for kids, adults and pros.*

**The Department of Conservation** is to spend \$467,000 on a project to remove wilding pines from the Tongariro National Park, Erua, Rangataua and Tongariro conservation areas.

“If left unchecked, wilding pines would infest the sensitive landscape of the Tongariro region and crowd out the fragile plant life there,” DOC said.

The work is being undertaken by local contractors and DOC staff.

***Derek Andrews aged 81** has finally quit after climbing Taranaki Maunga 870 times.*

*A meticulous record keeper, has kept details of every climb in his log book.*

*In 2008, he completed a summit every day for 18 days straight.*

*Once, he had to dodge behind a boulder as a one-metre-wide rock came rolling across the track.*

*His last climb took him 4 hours 39 minutes, a little longer than the 3 hours it had taken him in the past.*

**Glenbrook Vintage Railway** has launched its Discover Ruapehu Rail Tours where travellers can board in Auckland or Hamilton and take in the spectacular sights of the central North Island.

The three-day, two-night tour down the Main Trunk Line takes in the internationally renowned Makatote Viaduct (built in 1905) and the Raurimu Spiral.

Visitors can choose from multiple packages to any three destinations in Ruapehu including Taumarunui, National Park and Ōhākune, or create a completely customisable package catering to their specific interests, occasions, or seasonal.

*The deadline for the September Bulletin will be **Friday August 19th.***

*All items should be with the Editor in Wellington by that date.*

**THE BULLETIN**

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## WINTER OFFICE HOURS

With bookings ramping up ahead of the ski season, the RSC Office is moving to winter hours.

They are Monday to Friday 9am to 4.30pm.

M: 027 808 2163

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## AUTUMN BOOKINGS

There's still plenty to do at the mountain before winter arrives.

The Chalet and Turoa are the perfect base for biking adventures on The Old Coach Road and The Bridge to Nowhere or spend a weekend ticking off family-friendly walks near Whakapapa Village.

CP

## WORKING PARTY DATES

Members and prospective members are invited to attend RSC working parties on the following dates:

June 18-19.

July 2-3 (Cooks' weekend - by invitation only).

## COOKS FOR 2022

The House Committee has been busy recently organizing the bulk food drop for the Easter work party. Job done, grateful thanks to all who took part.

Our current task list in conjunction with the building officers is preparing

all four buildings for the ski season. With four chefs!

Lodge: Te Itirawa Nepia.

Hut: Stephanie Wilson.

Chalet: Donna O'Hanlon.

Turoa: Mike Anderson.

Welcome to Te and good to have you back Mike, Donna and Stephanie.

May we just remind our members that Covid has not actually gone away and our communal living on the mountain calls for vigilance.

We are all desperate to ski again, but if you are unwell, please do not visit.

MLQ

## ERUPTION DANGER

With Crater Lake (Te Wai ā-moe) heating up to 41 degrees the news media has raised the possibility of an eruption.

The volcanologists say one is possible and Ruapehu can erupt at any time, but any big activity would probably be preceded by small bursts.

RSC Lodge and Hut are 4km from the crater and are safe from mud flows.

Meanwhile, if out and about, minimise time in valleys and rivers that are known lahar paths.

Cross potential lahar paths quickly.

Minimise time in the 3 km Summit Hazard Zone

Do not enter the 2 km Exclusion Zone.

AG

## **ERUPTION FINE**

A company charged in the wake of the Whakaari/White Island eruption, Inflite Charters, has been fined \$227,500 and ordered to pay prosecution costs of \$40,000.

The company pleaded guilty to one charge. Judge Evengelos Thomas said Inflite “failed to ensure reasonably practicable steps were taken to ensure safety of tourists to Whakaari/White Island”.

He said they “failed to monitor and review known hazards” after a GNS alert, failed to implement an adequate risk assessment and “failed to ensure risk information was available to clients”.

The 2019 eruption took place while 47 people were on the island, leaving 22 dead and the survivors had severe or critical injuries.

The event led to WorkSafe filing numerous charges against a total of 13 individuals and organisations. Most other cases have yet to be heard.

## **CHARGES DISMISSED**

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has won an appeal and charges against it in relation to the 2019 Whakaari/White Island volcanic eruption have been dismissed.

During submissions to Judge Evengelos Thomas, defence lawyer Victoria Casey QC successfully argued that the application of section 36(2) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 would lead to “absurd” outcomes.

The judge said NEMA did not carry out any work physically on Whakaari, it did not send workers to Whakaari and it never placed any person on Whakaari.

The charges were laid by WorkSafe which said NEMA failed to take measures to eliminate or reduce the likelihood of exposing individuals to a risk of death or serious injury from volcanic activity.

Of the 13 defendants originally charged, the remaining 11 individuals and organisations have all lodged pleas of not guilty ahead of a lengthy trial which is set to begin in July 2023.

## **TUROA CHARGES LAID**

WorkSafe has filed charges against two companies for their role in a 2018 bus crash that killed an 11-year-old near Tūroa skifield.

RAL which operated the bus has been charged in relation to two breaches of the Health and Safety at Work Act, while Vehicle Testing New Zealand (VTNZ) has been charged, relating to its Certificate of Fitness process.

RAL chief executive Jono Dean said the company has co-operated fully with both the coronial inquest and the WorkSafe investigation.

Dean added that the company has been instrumental in forming the Alpine Code of Practice to reduce risks for passenger transport in an alpine environment.

## **GEOFF HILL**

Geoffrey William Hill who was the RSC Auditor in 1973-79 has died, aged 94.

Geoff was heavily involved with RSC for many years as Auditor and was busy with the building of the Chalet amongst other services.

We offer the Club’s condolences to his family.

## TUROA FOR SALE?

A planned \$40 million redevelopment plan for Tūroa skifield is on hold, and an option that may be considered for Ruapehu Alpine Lifts is to sell Turoa.

Reasons for this are the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has led to an increase in debt, plus a write-down of the value of the Tūroa lifts and the lack of success in the sale of part of RAL to raise capital.

RAL chairman Geoff Taylor said in a note to shareholders that key issues include the importance of growing the summer sightseeing market on the Sky Waka and the benefits of reducing crowds in the peak winter periods to improve the guest experience.

One of the other major decisions from a strategy review was to place the current Tūroa development plan (approx \$40 million of lift and infrastructure investment) on hold, and RAL will now seek advice on alternative approaches, including the potential to extend the life of the existing lifts.

Taylor said RAL has commissioned an external review of the remaining life of two key assets in the Parklane and Movenpick lifts, which are 43 and 33 years old.

This will enable an informed judgement on current safety, the costs to maintain appropriately and the potential to extend the life of the lifts versus replacement.

While the company has committed bank funding for the coming season, the sale of Turoa is an option for 2023.

Taylor said the RAL board is looking to broaden its skillsets and will begin with an external recruitment process for new board members with specific skills in the engineering, infrastructure and legal areas.

Candidates will need to demonstrate an understanding of, or have experience

within the ski industry, connection to the local area and tikanga Māori values.

\*\*\* Turoa skifield in its modern form was opened in 1987 by a prominent Auckland based industrial company AHI, with two triple chairlifts, the Parklane and the Giant.

It went through several owners and at one time was listed on the Stock Exchange, before being purchased by RAL in 2000.

## URNS FOR TENANTS

This year RAL has launched a new initiative called Turns for Tenants.

If you can house RAL employees by renting a unit, a guest house, an extra bedroom or an entire house, you could be eligible to receive your choice of one of the following incentives (1 per property):

- 1x anytime season pass for yourself or somebody else.
- A refund on 1x already purchased season pass.
- 4x anytime day passes for use this winter.
- A \$500 food and beverage voucher to be used on mountain this winter.
- A \$500 voucher to use in RAL retail stores.

RAL does not have limitations on how far away a rental can be, but says that if your rental is further than a 45 minute drive, you may find that employees are not interested in commuting that far.

If a tenant proves unsuitable due to their behaviour or a failure to pay their rent, the landlord may terminate the lease without losing the incentive package.

If the landlord chooses to terminate the agreement for their own reasons not related to the tenant, the incentive package will be revoked.



**Upper:** A new fridge arrives for Glacier Hut. (Actually it is for the Lodge). Photo: Chris Woudenberg. **Lower:** Members carry the fridge into the Lodge. Photo: Catherine Gafa.





*This image of Crater Lake (Te Wai ā-moe) was taken from an observation flight on May 3rd when steam clouds could be seen. The lake temperature was 39°C. Photo: GNS Science*

## **CRATER LAKE HEATS UP**

A heating phase started at Mt Ruapehu in March when the Crater Lake (Te Wai ā-moe) temperature reached 32°C. It was up to 41°C by mid-May.

Geonet said this temperature rise was accompanied by strong levels of volcanic tremor and the volcanic alert level at Mt Ruapehu was raised to level 2 in response to these changes.

Steam was seen coming from the crater.

GNS Science volcanologist Brad Scott was quoted in mid-April as saying that while the most likely outcome was no eruption, there was still a chance one could occur, on a similar scale to the last eruption in 2007.

Such an eruption would most likely only follow a sequence of smaller eruptions.

**RAL posted a notice saying it was**

**keeping a watchful eye on the volcanic unrest.**

“The current volcanic alert level 2 sets a 2km precautionary exclusion area around the crater of Mt Ruapehu. The majority of our facilities, and all our summer facilities, sit at least 3km from the crater.

“This means our summer season is able to continue to operate as normal and all guests are safe, provided they follow DOC’s guidance on the 2km precautionary exclusion area.

“In terms of the winter ahead, the only facility within the current 2km radius is Tūroa’s High Noon Express, which we have planned to open by end of July.”

RAL said it will continue to collaborate with GNS and DOC, and to act on their advice.

**Meanwhile RAL posted daily advice that people riding the Sky Waka gondola under alert level 2 do not attempt the Skyline Walk.**



*RSC folk riding the Old Coach Road bike track as part of RSC summer activities.  
Photos: Ceana Priest.*



**Upper:** Skiers at Ruapehu in September. **Lower:** Riding the beginner carpet at Turoa. Photos: RAL.

## WINTER PARA GAMES

NZ entered a team of three athletes, all in alpine ski racing, at the 2022 Winter Paralympics in Beijing.

They won four medals (one gold, one silver, two bronze).

The star of the show was Jesper Pedersen (Norway) who won four gold medals and one silver. He was beaten only by Corey Peters (NZ).

\*\*\* Para in Paralympics stands for parallel. The Games are run parallel to the general Olympics.

In para skiing there are three disciplines: sitting, standing and visually impaired. In each of them there is an adjustment mechanism which allows for varying degrees of disability.

Visually impaired skiers follow a guide who talks to them by way of microphones and speakers in their helmets.

\*\*\* The six Winter Paralympic sports are alpine skiing, biathlon, cross-country skiing, para ice hockey, snowboarding and wheelchair curling.

## COREY WINS GOLD

**Corey Peters (NZ)** won the gold medal in the men's sitting downhill ski event.

He set the fastest time of 1 minute 16.73 seconds from bib No 5 and was never headed. Jesper Pedersen (Norway) was second and Morii Taiki (Japan) was third.

The gold completed the perfect set of Winter Paralympic medals for Peters, now aged 38, as he won silver in Sochi in 2014 and bronze four years later in PyeongChang.

"I risked everything on that run – it was probably the run of my life," he said.

Peters, from Taranaki, sustained a crushed spinal cord at a motocross event at Taupo in 2009. He crashed twice in his training runs in Beijing but found his best form when it mattered.

## SILVER FOR COREY

**Corey Peters (NZ)** won a silver medal in the men's sitting super-g when he made a modest start but came home fast to lose the race by just 0.47 seconds.

The winner was Jesper Petersen (Norway) while Morii Taiki (Japan) was third.

Corey Peters now has four Winter Paralympic medals.

**Aaron Ewen (NZ)** came home strongly to make the top 10 in a field of 28 skiers.

## ADAM WINS BRONZE

Adam Hall (NZ) won the bronze medal in the alpine skiing super combined standing event at the Beijing 2022 Winter Paralympics.

Hall was 15th following the high speed super-g run but he is a slalom specialist and produced a stunning run in the slalom to make the podium.

The race was won by Arthur Bauchet (France) with Santeri Kiiven (Finland) second.

Hall, originally from Dunedin but now from Wanaka, is 34 and was competing in his fifth Paralympics. He has spina bifida which results in a loss of muscle power.

## ADAM SECOND BRONZE

**Adam Hall (NZ)** was unable to defend the standing slalom title he won at the two previous Paralympics, but skied brilliantly to take the bronze medal, just 0.06 seconds off second place.

The winner was Arthur Bauchet (France) with Liang Jingyj (China) second. There were 57 starters in this race. Adam now has five Paralympic medals.

**Aaron Ewen (NZ)** came ninth in the sitting slalom, making two steady runs down a very icy course.

It was his second top-10 result at Beijing.

## NZ PARA RESULTS

**Adam Hall** (standing):  
19th in downhill.  
21st in super-g.  
BRONZE MEDAL in super combined.  
BRONZE MEDAL in slalom.

**Corey Peters** (sitting):  
GOLD MEDAL in downhill.  
SILVER MEDAL in super-g.  
DNF in GS.

**Aaron Ewen** (sitting):  
11th in downhill.  
9th in super-g.  
DNF in super combined.  
DNF in GS.  
9th in slalom.

## X-COUNTRY LEGEND

Brian McKeever (Canada) won his 16th career Winter Paralympics gold medal. He has 20 medals overall.

The 42-year-old skier competes in vision impaired cross-country races.

Beijing was his sixth Games and he has not lost an individual race at a Paralympics since 2006.

## CHINESE NO 1

The host national China won 61 medals including 18 gold medals at the 2022 Winter Paralympics.

Ukraine won 11 gold medals and Canada won 8.

New Zealand with four medals came 15th on the medals table.

## WANAKA FILM STUDIO

A \$280 million plan to build the country's first purpose-built large-scale film studio complex near Wanaka has the green light.

The complex by Silverlight Studios will include 10 sound stages, production

facilities and the backlots of Venice, a medieval village, Paris and New York all set around an artificial lake.

In addition to being a working film set, it will include a film school and operate as a tourist destination.



Adam Hall



Corey Peters

## TWO JUNIOR CHAMPIONS GUSTAV WINS GOLD

Gustav Legnavsky (NZ) aged 16 from Wānaka won the freeski halfpipe gold medal at the world junior championships in Leysin (Switzerland).

He took the lead with a first run of 94.25 and then made a second run featuring three different double corks which scored 96.00.

Fin Melville Ives (NZ) was seventh. His twin brother Cam Melville Ives was seventh in the snowboard halfpipe.

Gustav is coached by his father Peter Legnavsky, a former professional moguls skier from Slovakia.

His mother Bridget has a high profile in NZ snow sports an executive of Cardrona and Treble Cone. He aims to play rugby when he gets home.

## RUBY WINS GOLD

Ruby Andrews (NZ) from Queenstown won the freeski slopestyle gold medal at the junior world championships in Leysin (Switzerland).

Ruby, aged 17, is making a comeback after two years out with a knee injury.

She was awarded 85.40 by the judges for her first run and her score remained untouchable for the remainder of the event.

Andrews likes to compete in three events: slopestyle, big air and halfpipe.

Snow Sport NZ high performance development coach Hamish McDougall said: “She’s charging towards the hardest and scariest level in the female arena with bravery and determination.”

## TWO SILVER MEDALS

Wānaka athletes Cam Melville Ives (15) and Luca Harrington (18) won silver medals in snowboard slopestyle and freeski big air respectively at the world junior championships.

Melville Ives landed a personal best competition run, lacing together a front 1080 and back-to-back 1260s on the jumps.

Harrington laid down a triple 1620 with a safety grab and a huge switch double 1800 with a tail grab.

Dane Menzies (NZ) was 16th in the snowboard slopestyle. Fin Melville Ives (NZ) was 12th in the freeski big air and Harper Souness (NZ) was 16th in the same event.

Dane Menzies (NZ) was fourth in the snowboard big air. Txema Mazet Brown (NZ) was eighth. There were 60 starters.

Harper Souness (NZ) was fifth in the freeski slopestyle. Luca Harrington (NZ) was 13th.



Ruby Andrews

## JESS WINS FREERIDE

Jess Hotter (NZ) overcome a final-round disaster to make history in claiming the skiing freeride World Tour title.

The 28-year-old from Ohakune is the first Kiwi to take out the overall title since the extreme ski event began in 2008.

That was despite a crash at the fifth and last stop at Verbier (Switzerland).

Freeride, which is not an Olympic event, involves the skier or snowboarder choosing their own line down steep and challenging terrain.

Hedvig Wessel (Norway) was second in the tour standings and Olivia McNeil (Canada) was third.

Earlier, Jess Hotter scored her second win this season on the freeride world tour, with a fine performance on a demanding course at Fieberbrunn (Austria).

Hotter started out as a standard ski racer. At age 14 she discovered this other form of skiing and got the bug.

“Skiing is one of those things when you can always go back to basics, and that’s skiing properly, making nice turns and carving on the slopes. Ruapehu has some amazing terrain.”

## TIARN WINS FIS GLOBE

Tiarn Collins has become the first New Zealander to claim a FIS snowboard Crystal Globe.

Collins aged 22 from Queenstown finished seventh at the final World Cup slopestyle of the season at Silvaplana (Switzerland) but his results from previous events meant he had enough points to secure the overall title for the 2021-22 season.

He won the gold medal in the second to last event of the season, the Spindleruv Mlyn (Czech) slopestyle World Cup. This was the second victory of his career.

Collins finished with 236 seasonwide points, 55 points ahead of second place Leon Vockensperger (Germany) with Mons Roisland (Norway) third.

## ZOI WINS IN CANADA

Kiwi snowboarding star Zoi Sadowski-Synnott followed up her Olympic gold medal with a win on a Natural Selection Tour event in Canada.

Sadowski-Synnott topped qualifying which involved 14 of the world’s best snowboarders, and then produced the best run of the day in her final run, scoring 90.

This competition was unusual for Zoi. First, it was freeride whereas she normally rides “park and pipe”. Secondly, it was run on a knockout basis.

\*\*\*\* Zoi was third in the final event of the tour, in Alaska in April. She was going well but then had a crash at speed and lost to Hana Beaman (US).

## WORLD CUP SKIING

**Alice Robinson (NZ)** had a disappointing alpine World Cup skiing season and never really recovered from Covid-19 in December, nor from equipment issues.

She came 18th in a World Cup super-g at Courchevel (France). This was an invitation race for the world’s best alpine skiers.

Alice is substantially younger than her main rivals and has plenty of time to bounce back.

**Margaux Hackett (NZ)** came 11th in a freeski World Cup slopestyle event at Silvaplana (Switzerland).

**Nico Porteous (NZ)** has had knee surgery and will be off his skis until January.

## MORE OLYMPIC MEDALS

NZ Chef de mission Marty Toomey has “no doubt” Nico Porteous and Zoi Sadowski-Synnott’s gold medals at the Beijing Olympic Winter Games will inspire a generation, and he predicts more Kiwis will make the podium in 2026.

Sadowski-Synnott (women’s snowboard slopestyle) and Porteous (men’s freeski halfpipe) won the nation’s first Winter Olympic titles. Zoi also snared a silver medal in the big air.

“I have no doubt it will inspire kids,” Toomey said. “It was the way they went about doing what they do, and the others also left their bodies on the line. Kids will look at that and say I’d love to do that one day.”

Toomey is confident the latest success will attract more funding to the sport.

“I think it should give confidence to sponsors and funders to jump behind Snow Sports NZ. They’ve done a great job to get to here, and there are athletes coming through.

“Now the pipeline has started, I have no doubt that when it comes to Milano in 2026 there will be more Kiwis on the podium.”

\*\*\* NZ finished 17th on the medals table at Beijing, ahead of both Australia and Gt Britain.

On a count of medals per population NZ finished second, a long way behind Norway who with a population of 6 million won 37 medals.

\*\*\* The next Olympic Winter Games will be held in 2026 at Milan and Cortina d’Ampezzo (Italy). The latter is the site of the ski chase which opens the James Bond (Roger Moore) movie *For Your Eyes Only*.

\*\*\* Cities which have lodged an interest in hosting the Olympic Winter Games in 2030 are Sapporo, (Japan),

Salt Lake City (Utah, US), Vancouver (Canada) and Barcelona (Spain).

## OLYMPIC TOURISM BOOST

Fuelled by the Beijing Winter Olympics, the popularity of snow sports is surging in China and it could be creating a massive business opportunity for New Zealand.

Jerry Clode, a leading expert in Chinese consumer culture, said Kiwis need to capitalise on the Chinese Government’s desire to create a strong sports nation, and start positioning itself as the preferred ski location.

“The promotion of sports in China has not been focused on money for medals. Instead, it has been seen as context to help Chinese individuals and families become more active,” said Clode.

Xinhua news reported that as of January 2022, China surpassed its national goal of having 300 million winter sports participants.

In 2002, China only had 130 ski resorts, yet in 2022 the nation reached 804 ski resorts. This does not include China’s 45 dry slopes.

Some 25 million Chinese hit mountain slopes and indoor skiing venues in the recent winter season. Many of them could visit NZ once our borders reopen.

Aileen Gu, who won three skiing medals for China at Beijing, has become a role model for young Chinese, and during the Games she passionately shared her close connection with NZ.

She has trained at Cardrona during northern hemisphere summers since she was 10.

Alongside being a champion athlete at 18, Gu is also bilingual, a model and an elite student.



## RSC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 2022	15	RSC AGM at Auckland
	23	Ski season opens (Happy Valley)
	18-19	Working parties
July 2022	8	Whakapapa ski season opens (upper mountain).
	9	Turoa opens
	9-24	School holidays
Aug 2022	13	Christiania Derby
	15-19	Club Week
	20	Haensli Cup
	29-Sept 1	NIPS week one Years 1-6
Sept 2022	3	Rangatira Trophy
	12-15	NIPS week two Years 7-8
	17	Ngauruhoe Trophy
	19-20	NI secondary school champs
Oct 2022	1	RSC Club Champs
	1-6	School holidays

## FIONA IS NOMINATED

Former RSC member Fiona Stevens is among 23 people nominated for the election of 18 members of the council of the Zurich-based FIS which is the international body for skiing and snowboarding.

Fiona (nee Johnson) represented NZ in alpine skiing at the Olympic Winter Games in 1980, finishing 30th in the GS.

She is the co-founder of Snowvision which is a charitable trust supporting NZ snow sports.

The FIS Council, which has a two-year term 2022-24, will consist of 21 members including the FIS President, the 18 elected members and two athlete representatives.

The athletes are Hannah Kearney (US, freestyle skiing) and Martti Jylha (Finland, cross-country skiing).

The current FIS President is Johan Eliasch (Sweden) who will run unopposed in the upcoming elections. The term for the FIS President runs from 2022 to 2026.

## NEW MEMBERS

RSC welcomes the following new members:

### Senior

Royce Lovelock (Wellington)  
Finn Sigglekow (Palmerston North)  
Justyna Bain (Auckland)

### Junior

Amarliya Jones (Pukemoremore)  
Thomas Caldwell (Porirua)  
William Caldwell (Porirua)  
Mia Bain (Auckland)

### Summer

Jonathan Drake (Auckland)



**Upper:** NZ alpine skier Alice Robinson warms up with a handstand. Photo: Alice's website. **Lower:** Snowboard cross is always popular at the Winter Olympics. Photo: FIS.



**Upper:** A camp during exploration in Antarctica in 1961. Photo: Peter Otway **Lower:** RAL staff practising a chairlift evacuation. Photo: Andy Hoyle

## PANDEMIC ISSUES

The reopening of the NZ border from April has been welcomed as a life saving boon by skifield operators.

The border reopening is a silver lining to the blizzard of bad news that has hit ski resorts over the past two years.

The news allows both the arrival of international ski and snowboard customers plus the chance of entry for vital skifield staff including instructors and mechanical folk such as groomer drivers.

“Australia makes up about 40 percent of the visitation into Queenstown during ski season,” said NZ Ski chief executive Paul Anderson.

“While it has been supported by strong domestic support, the area’s winter hospitality and tourism has historically relied on inbound travellers.

“The big change is the removal of the self-isolation component. That makes it more realistic to travel for a ski holiday,” he said.

NZ skifields were given a lift by a Government decision in mid-April to allow 275 skilled workers to enter the country ahead of the winter season.

Tourism Minister Stuart Nash said “We have made an exception to usual border rules so the ski industry can recruit much-needed snow sports instructors, ski patrol and safety specialists, snow grooming and snowmaking machinery operators, and ski lift and snow sport technicians.”

“A lift technician needs a trade specific-qualification in mechanical or electrical engineering, or a specialisation in aerial ropeway machinery.

“They need at least two years’ relevant post-qualification work experience, and be specialised as either a cable splicer, diesel mechanic, ropeway lift mechanic or electrician.”

Nash said Kiwis fill the majority of skifield and snow sport roles, but there were not enough locals with the required skills, certification or experience to meet seasonal short-term needs.

Earlier ski industry chiefs said in NZ was running out of time to fill 250 specialist roles before hordes of Australians hit the winter slopes.

If the ski areas could not get the staff they needed, terrain might be closed off, and the worst-case scenario was some smaller skifields not being able to open.

Indications were that there were strong bookings coming from Australia and operators were hopeful of a busy New Zealand season.

By mid-May there had been 1 million reported cases of Covid-19 in New Zealand and 900 deaths of people who died with the virus.

Most of deaths were elderly folk who were also suffering from other medical histories.

The Ministry of Health said the collective response of New Zealanders had helped keep case numbers low while Covid-19 ran rampant overseas.

Worldwide there had been 525 million cases and 7.4 million deaths.

**Thirty ski resorts in Japan** have either been forced into bankruptcy or suspended operations over the past two years since the worldwide spread of Covid-19.

Ski slopes this year were in good condition thanks to heavy snow. Even so, many ski resorts struggled to stay open amid the emergency measures.

Overseas tourists were largely absent and locals were reluctant to travel far from home.

The operator of the Tenzan ski resort filed for bankruptcy proceedings.



**Upper:** RSC members walking to Waihohonu Hut. You could drive along this track in the 1920s but today there are many washouts. Photo: Tim Sharp. **Lower:** RSC members on a cycling trip to the Bridge to Nowhere. Photo: Alastair Stewart.



**RUAPEHU  
SKI CLUB**

**WINTER  
PARTY  
17 AUGUST**

**80S**

**SAVE THE DATES:  
THE LODGE I HUT FLAT**

**MEMBERS' CLUB WEEK  
15 - 19 AUGUST 22**



An RSC summer activities team took on the Tongariro Alpine Crossing. Photos: Sonia Quinn.

## TRAGIC SKI RACE

The Last Race is a new Czech film about a tragic 50km ski race in 1913 in which skiing pioneers and friends Bohumil Hanč and Václav Vrbata died in a blizzard on a mountain ridge.

It was the beginning of skiing in the Giant Mountains and there were two national communities, Czechs and Germans.

They had their own skiing clubs, but they never competed with each other because of national rivalry.

In this race in 1913 they decided to compete together for the first time to see who was better on skis.

The race started in sunny weather at 8°C and all six competitors started in shirts without jackets, hats and gloves. Then after an hour conditions suddenly deteriorated. Four men survived but the friends died.

The film follows the course of the race.

## FIRST DESCENT

British American US alpinist Adrian Ballinger completed the first recorded ski descent from the true summit of 27,766-foot Makalu, the world's fifth-highest mountain.

Ballinger, along with his climbing partners Dorji Sonam Sherpa and Pasang Sherpa, reached the summit amid whiteout conditions.

The journey included a mix of skiing, traversing, and rappelling. As Ballinger skied from the summit in the whiteout, he dropped into a dangerous section called the French Couloir and followed a steep line down to the top of a 180-

foot sheer rock face, where he had to fix a rope, remove his skis, and rappel.

“Skiing has always been my deepest passion as a human since I was a kid,” he said. “And then I have this talent and career of climbing 8000-metre peaks. The combination of the two was really natural for me.”

Ballinger's successful skiing of Makalu leaves just one of the world's 14 peaks above 8,000 metres without a successful ski descent: 28,169-foot Kanchenjunga.

## HIGHEST SKI LIFT

Gulmarg in India is said to be the world's highest ski altitude with a Poma gondola reaching 3950 metres (12,960 feet). Riding the gondola you are likely to be observed by monkeys in the trees.

Nearby is the Gulmarg Golf Club whose greens at 2650 metres are the highest in the golfing world. The course was built in 1911 by Colonel Chamberlain who also invented snooker.

The first-ever India Winter Games were held recently at Gulmarg and attracted 900 participants for the 5-day event.

The highest ski or snowboard places in the world used to be Jade Dragon Snow Mountain (China) at 4700 metres and Chacaltaya Ski Resort (Bolivia) at 5375 metres, but today they have both been abandoned.

\*\*\* The world's lowest ski resort may be Yawgoo Valley in Rhode Island (US) which has a base elevation of 23 metres.



## DOWNHILL DEMISE

The Downhill Ski Club on the National Downhill at Whakapapa is no more.

The club lodge on the mountain is locked and left to the liquidators to deal with.

After the access was cut with the removal of the National Chair it put the operation of the lodge into doubt.

There is no formed track and it takes 1.5 hours to walk over very rocky ground. Here is some info from the club's web site.

### Our Story

The Downhill Ski Club was founded by members of the Professional Club in Auckland in the early 1960s.

The lodge was built above McMillan corner on the National Downhill slope, the area to the west of the Top o' the Bruce which got its name after the national downhill championships were held there in 1932.

A 1000 metre rope tow was installed by Jimmy John and Roy Turner of Ski Services on the National Downhill in 1960.

In 1965 the Tongariro National Park Board gave Jimmy John permission to replace his tow with a T-bar and also permitted RAL to install an access chairlift and a Poma lift to the west of the area where the quad chair is now.

In 1975 RAL bought John's National Downhill operation. Until that time the club had bought power from Ski Services Ltd. The club installed its own Lister 3 cylinder generator.

The lodge had the highest swimming pool in the country and a diesel fired boiler was used to heat both domestic and pool water.

The pool was decommissioned in 1973 due to the oil crisis and a floor was built over it turning it into a games room with a pool table and table tennis table. The pool still exists and is used to store fire wood today.

Debentures were raised in the early 1980s to fund a major revamp of the lodge. The bedrooms were rebuilt, the kitchen was moved, new couches were purchased and the lodge was fully carpeted.

The drying room was enlarged and a new ski workshop created. All the windows were repositioned and replaced, the building was re-clad and given a new roof.

In 1989 the club purchased a second lodge in National Park. This allowed members to ski Turoa more easily and avoid the late night tramp into the Ruapehu lodge on Friday nights. Over the years the National Park lodge has been extensively enlarged and renovated.

In 1994 the West Ridge Quad and the Far West T-bar were electrified and the Ruapehu lodge was connected to the national grid. Now the generator is only used for backup power.

In 2008 it was used for three days after a digger at the Far West Quad destroyed the main power cable.

In October 2006 the National Parks Act came into effect and black water (sewage), even if treated was no longer allowed to be discharged anywhere in a National Park.

Due to the distance from Iwikau village DOC decided it was impractical to connect the Downhill Ski Club to the new sewer line.

As a result the Downhill Ski Club and two other clubs were given a five year extension to sort out an alternative. The club installed an incinerating toilet in the 2012 ski season.

After years of trying to hand control of the Whakapapa lodge to anyone who would take it the club decided to relinquish its licence to occupy the site.

The site has to be cleared so the club decided to wind up with the proceeds of its assets going to DOC to pay for demolition.

The club went into liquidation 29th November 2021.



World skiing stars: Beat Feux and Marco Odermatt. Photos: FIS.



World skiing stars: Lara Gut-Behrami and Mikaela Shiffrin. Photos: FIS.

## SKI TEST PASSES

A veteran member has emailed to ask (politely) why his name was not among the list of Q2 test passes in 1958 as printed in the March Bulletin.

The answer is that the list was solely for Q2 in 1958 and not for any other test or any other year.

I advised my friend that he passed Q2 in 1954 and T2 in 1958.

I have a complete list of RSC test passes from 1934 until the tests were abolished in 1978.

If anyone in the Club wants to know if and when they passed tests, they are welcome to email me ([alanjograham@xtra.co.nz](mailto:alanjograham@xtra.co.nz)).

**Alan Graham**

## HEARD OF JUNGHOLZ?

There is a most unusual ski town called Jungholz which is part of Austria but has no road connecting it to Austria, and most people think it is part of Germany.

The locals speak with a German accent and until the euro was adopted, they used the German mark. The town has a population of 300.

Jungholz is connected to the rest of Austria by a single point, which is the summit of the mountain Sargschrofen (1636 metres).

The anomaly dates back to 1342 when a German farmer sold the land to an Austrian businessman.

The town has ski lifts including a T-bar and two quad chairlifts, and from the top of the skifield you can see the whole of Jungholz. Most staff drive 20km to work, either from Germany or Austria.

In 1868, a state treaty between Austria and Bavaria enveloped the town into the German economic area. This lasted for 100 years until the European Union came along.

Most townsfolk were born in Germany (since the nearest Austrian hospital is too far away) but everyone gets an Austrian passport. Food and drink come from Germany, while telephone and internet are from Austria.

They use doctors and dentists in Germany because there are none in Jungholz, and children go to a German secondary school.

Jungholz was once a tax haven and had the highest density of banks in the world, giving German investors lucrative tax benefits.

It became a sort of Alpine Wild West, and cars were arriving in the dead of night with suitcases full of cash, handcuffed to bagmen waiting for the three banks to open.

This ended in 2014 when EU demanded greater levels of transparency. Billions of euros vanished almost overnight and the banking exodus began, with tourism filling the void.

## VOLCANIC RECORD

Nasa has confirmed that the January eruption of Hunga Tonga spewed ash 38 miles (61 kilometres) high into the atmosphere.

That figure sets a world record and indicates that volcanic material made it into the third layer of Earth's atmosphere, the mesosphere.

The agency said the plume surpassed what many volcanologists and atmospheric scientists had known to be physically feasible.

The eruption of Hunga Tonga produced a tsunami that devastated parts of Tonga and reached the US Pacific coastline, as well as parts of NZ.

Sound from the volcano's explosive eruption was heard more than 8000 kilometres away in Alaska.



**Upper:** RSC buildings at Whakapapa. **Lower:** Members enjoy a summer lunch at Waihohonu Hut where RSC was founded in 1913. Photos: Catherine Gafa.

## ACROSS THE SKIING WORLD

US company Zoa has unveiled a tiny ski rope tow motor that you can take anywhere.

The motor is just 30cm long and with 300 metres of parachute cord it can tow you up a hill.

First you skin, snowshoe, or hike the cord up to the top of the run and tie it to a fence, an anchor or a rock.

Then you ski down the hill, paying out your cord. At the bottom hit the Go button and you are in business.

***The dolaGon is a driverless car-like vehicle that can be driven anywhere to become a ski lift.***

*The brainchild of New York orthopedic surgeon Dr Seth Neubardt and mechanical engineer Logan Bannon, it goes to the top of a slope where skiers disembark and instruct it to meet them at the bottom.*

*The dolaGon carries six and uses GPS, Lidar and radar to navigate off-road terrain and avoid obstacles. It has four snowcat-like treads instead of wheels to traverse the snow.*

A Canterbury company wants to build ski accommodation on a remote, high-altitude slope as climate change puts increasing pressure on the snow sports industry.

Alpine Huts has applied to DOC to build a permanent eight-person hut in the Mt Potts Conservation area. Mt Potts (previously Erehwon) was abandoned as a skifield in 2014.

In its application Alpine Huts said demand for ski touring and on-mountain accommodation is growing.

Mt Potts was the site of Edoras in the The Lord of the Rings movies.

***Why do many snowboarders, even at the Olympic Winter Games, wear mittens rather than gloves?***

*Skiers need to wear fingered gloves to obtain a good grip on their ski poles.*

*As snowboarders do not use poles, they can use mittens which allow for shared heat between the fingers and are warmer*

*than gloves.*

An NZ skier riding a chairlift at **Snowbird in Utah (US)** videoed the moment two US army Blackhawk helicopters crashed onto the snow.

The helicopters were on a mountain training exercise when one lost power and crashed. The other following close behind was hit by debris and also crashed.

Skiers raced to rescue the two crews but no one was seriously hurt. Billy Halloran's video was seen around the world.

***Rossignol has created a ski which is more than 75 percent recyclable.***

*It has done it in two ways: one, by using fewer raw materials, and two, by making sure the ski's recyclable components are 100 percent recyclable.*

*The recyclable parts of the ski are aluminium 35 percent recyclable, wood 35 percent recyclable and steel 7 percent recyclable. Other ski makers and Burton snowboards have previously recycled some parts but not to the extent offered by Rosignol.*

**Coronet Peak skifield in Otago** is to celebrate its 75th anniversary in August with a five-day party.

Its operator NZSki is planning a celebration featuring throwback events, parties and tributes to mark the occasion.

“Our hope is that this anniversary will be an epic celebration, while also providing a boost for the local hospitality, events and tourism industries that have felt the full impact of border closures,” ski area manager Nigel Kerr said.

***Dario Cologna (Switzerland)***, a legend of cross-country ski racing, has retired from the sport aged 36.

*During 16 seasons of racing he won four Olympic gold medals, 73 World Cup podiums for 26 wins and four overall World Cup titles. He won the Tour de Ski four times.*

**A team from the University of Canterbury** designed the sit ski that NZ skier Corey Peters used to win two medals

(one gold) at the Winter Paralympics in Beijing.

They spent a year improving the aerodynamic design of the ski by incorporating a Kamm tail, an innovative rear design feature to minimise aerodynamic drag.

Engineering technicians were involved with 3D scanning and printing, machining, fabrication and wind tunnel operation for the project.

*Charlotte Kalla, who holds Sweden's female record of nine Olympic Games medals, has retired from cross-country skiing.*

*Kalla, a 34-year-old from Tarendo, a small village situated above the Arctic Circle with a population of less than 500, won four Olympic gold medals.*

*In 2014, she made up a 25-second deficit on the anchor leg of a relay to lead Sweden to its first gold in the event, edging Finland by a half a second.*

**Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman** has announced plans for the kingdom's first ski resort which expects to attract 700,000 visitors by 2030.

The super-project, called Trojena, is part of a planned \$US500 billion city-state that will cover 10,000 square miles.

Bin Salman said of the ambitious endeavour: "It will redefine mountain tourism for the world by creating a place based on the principles of ecotourism."

*Vail Resorts has entered into an agreement to purchase a 55 percent majority stake in Andermatt-Sedrun Sport AG from Andermatt Swiss Alps AG, marking the company's first strategic investment in a ski resort in Europe.*

*The SkiArena Andermatt-Sedrun offers over 75 miles of varied terrain and a top elevation of 9842 feet across the mountains of Andermatt, Sedrun and Gemsstock, with connected access to Disentis which is owned independently.*

A New Zealander who plummeted almost 5 metres down a hidden crevasse while

snowboarding off-piste and alone at Zermatt in Switzerland said his phone with just 3 percent battery power saved his life.

Tim Blakey, 41, a London based physio, was snowboarding alone when he suddenly fell through a metre-wide crevasse. His fall was only stopped when he landed on a fragile snow bridge.

His emergency call gave Tim's location and alerted ski patrollers who organised a rescue helicopter. Tim said he won't be snowboarding solo anymore.

*A new 36-bunk hut has been added to the **Snow Farm** cross-country skifield near Wanaka, and it will be mainly used by school parties.*

*The Pisa Alpine Charitable Trust has designed its Musterer's Hut to be a skifield classroom and to free up space in three other outback huts.*

*The Musterer's Hut is 4.5km from the skifield base. It is in two sections, one sleeping 12 and one 24, and each section is self-sufficient.*

**Prince William and Kate the Duchess of Cambridge** took their children on a skiing holiday at Courchevel (France) during Easter holidays.

They stayed at chalet owned by a family friend valued at \$5 million. George and Charlotte had private ski lessons and practiced their French

Charlotte was racing down the mountain by the end of the holiday. George was slightly more cautious.

*Junior Bounous aged 96 clocked up 96 days on the US ski slopes in the recent winter.*

*Bounous hit the target in April at Snowbird resort which he helped set up more than 50 years ago. A legend in US skiing, Junior learned to ski on his family's fruit farm.*

*His list of accomplishments includes movies, magazine covers, gelande championships, national titles, Olympic trials, the US National Ski Hall of Fame and carrying the Olympic torch.*



## CLUB ITEMS & SERVICES FOR SALE

RSC Administration Office, P.O. Box 8064, Symonds Street, Auckland 1150

Website: [www.rsc.org.nz](http://www.rsc.org.nz)

email: [admin@rsc.org.nz](mailto:admin@rsc.org.nz)

### Lockers

Ski and gear lockers are available in the Hut, Lodge and Turoa buildings.

Please email [admin@rsc.org.nz](mailto:admin@rsc.org.nz) for current availability.

### Annual Locker Rental Rates:

Charged at the date of allocation.

Ski Locker        \$57.50

Gear Locker      \$28.75

### Club Items

(Add \$3 for each order to be posted)

Name Badge (free to new members)    \$12

\*\*\*\*\*

## PHONE NUMBERS

RSC Office        09-377-3856

Lodge             07-892-3824

Hut                07-892-3822

Chalet            07-892-3823

Turoa             06-385-8767

## NEW MEMBERS COSTS

Attend two working parties.

Senior joining fee                        \$199

Junior joining fee                         \$99

Annual senior subscription            \$269

Annual junior subscription             \$98

## ACCOMMODATION FEES (Effective May 1st 2022)

### Winter 2022

Senior member	18 years and over	\$58
Teen member	14 - 17 years	\$50
Junior member	13 years and under	\$38
Member's child	7 years and under	\$30
Senior non-member	14 years and over	\$106
Junior non-member	13 years and under	\$71
Life members		\$0
School group children		\$68
School group adults		\$90

### Summer 2022-23

Senior members	\$30
Junior members	\$20
Senior non-members	\$35
Junior non-members	\$25

Note: Ages apply from January 1st 2022