

The Bulletin

RUAPEHU SKI CLUB

Volume 86, No. 2

June 2021



Upper Tama Lake view, as seen on an RSC summer walk. Photo: Catherine Gafa.



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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Kia ora koutou, hello everyone.

While in late summer and autumn we don't tend to think about snow sports, behind the scenes it's a busy time for your Committee.

We have our work party season, and it has been fantastic to see how many members have been to a weekend to help with the maintenance and improvement of our buildings.

Once again thanks are due to Vice-Presidents Carl Burling and Nils Johannessen for their tireless efforts in organising and running our work party seasons. We still have two work parties to go, so if you haven't done one yet this year please consider going along.

In March we started preparing for our AGM, work that continues through until June, and April saw nominations for Committee being sought. And all the way through there are the many tasks needing to be done to keep the Club running smoothly.

One such task this year has been a project to migrate our financial processes fully to Xero. In the past payments would first be noted in our Booking System, and then passed to our accounting application.

Now they will go into Xero, and then relevant information will be passed to the Booking System. This has been a big undertaking and I would especially like to thank Past Presidents John Payne and Richard Nelson for leading and implementing this significant update to our systems.

The implementation of any new system can mean some errors creep in. If you notice something seemingly wrong with your details, or you didn't receive your (or a family member's) subscription notice last month please do let us know,

but also please be understanding.

The Australian and Cook Islands travel bubbles opening are hopefully a sign of the start of a slow return to 'normal'.

I took the opportunity in early May to visit my daughter and her family, including my young grandson, in Brisbane.

It was an emotional reunion! I'm thrilled that grandson and parents will also be visiting me in a few months and that I'll be able to take him to the mountain to experience snow for the first time.

This alone will make 2021 the most exciting year for me on Ruapehu since I first took my daughter there, many years ago.

Many of you in the Club who are grandparents will also be looking forward to your grandchildren hitting that magical age when you can finally take them to stay in the Club. I look forward to seeing you there!

In the meantime, Committee continues to work on our RSC 2030 vision. We recently sent members an invitation to complete the first of several membership surveys which will help us shape this vision.

Thank you to everyone who participated, for those who haven't done the survey yet you'll get another chance as we will soon invite you all to complete our second survey on winter bookings. Please do take this opportunity to help shape the future of our Club.

The ski season will be upon us before we know it, but before then we have our AGM coming, on June 30th at the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron. I do hope you can join us.

Noho ora mai.

Stay well, look after yourselves.

Phill Thomass
RSC President



Skiing above the Waterfalls at Whakapapa. Our ancestors called this slope the Cinder Track.

THROUGH THE LODGE WINDOW

Happy Valley is scheduled to open on June 5th.

The Sky Waka gondola reopens on June 5th.

The main runs at **Whakapapa and Turoa** will open on July 3rd, snowfall permitting.

RSC bunk bookings opened on May 1st, so pay your subs and send in your bunk bookings.

The Sky Waka gondola at Whakapapa was recently closed for five days to allow its main haul rope to be extended by 2 metres after two years of operation.

A new lift cable can shorten after its first two years. An expert wire rope splicer came to Ruapehu from Italy to oversee the work.

*Getting new ropes are the **Double Happy chairlift** (Happy Valley), the **Knoll T-Bar** and the **High Noon** six-seater express at Turoa.*

Mountain Air, which ran scenic flights at Ruapehu, ceased operations permanently from March 29th, due to Covid-19.

The company was established in 1988 by

Keith and Robyn McKenzie and purchased by Bhrent and Kathy Guy in 2007.

As well as scenic flights it has taken charters, hunting trips and survey flights, plus gas sampling flights for GNS and assisting with kiwi and bat tracking for DOC.

A conservationist and keenly interested in the natural and geological values of the Tongariro area, Bhrent Guy said DOC and GNS would probably have to use aircraft from Rotorua in future.

Following the period of heightened activity in December 2020, volcanic activity at Mt Ruapehu has since remained at a low level with gas emissions, lake chemistry and volcanic tremor all within typical ranges.

Crater Lake (Te Wai ā-moe) temperature by April was around 40 °C. The Volcanic Alert Level at Mt Ruapehu remained at Level 1.

DOC in April offered to sell **Kaimanawa wild horses** to avoid a mass cull. Approx 130 were sold.

With the cancellation of the 2020 muster due to Covid-19, the herd in the Kaimanawa Ranges near Ruapehu had grown to more

**THE
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(inc) Founded 1913

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Chalet Officer: Nils Johannessen
Turoa Officer: Donald Webster
Heritage Fund Guardians: Robin Dallas, Richard Nelson, Bernard Smith, Phill Thomass
Fund Treasurer: Mike Wardle
Glacier Hut Custodian: Bernard Smith

than the limit of 300 which allows for the horses in the herd to maintain best condition.

The horses can be used many forms of equestrian events and with sympathetic handling can make a successful transition to domestic life.

Conservation Minister Kiritapu Allan has been diagnosed with stage three cervical cancer and has stepped aside from her ministerial duties while undergoing treatment.

The acting Conservation Minister is Ayesha Verrall.

Ruapehu has been one of five volcanoes studied by a US team who say ground temperatures can rise ahead of eruptions.

The team from Fairbanks (Alaska) has spent the past five years analysing ground radiant temperatures around the volcanoes before eruptions.

It says ground temperatures around the volcanoes increased notably in the years leading up to eruptions, a finding that could inform efforts to monitor volcanoes and forecast eruptions.

The five volcanoes were Redoubt, Alaska (2009); Calbuco, Chile (2015); Pico do Fogo, Cape Verde (2014); Ontake, Japan (2007 and 2014); and Ruapehu, New Zealand (2006 and 2007).

Sjors Coporaal won the annual Goat run from Whakapapa to Turoa for the eighth time, taking 1 hour 54 minutes 41 seconds. .

The first woman home was Sabrina Grogan in 2:29:29.

There were 750 runners taking part and 1000 spectators lined the route to the finish line at the base of the Turoa Ski Area.

The deadline for the September Bulletin will be **Friday August 20th.**

All items should be with the Editor by then.

THE BULLETIN

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HOUSE COMMITTEE COOKS FOR 2021

We are relieved to announce that the members do not have to cook their own meals this season.

Donna and Mike are returning and while we were very sad to lose Jimmi to other obligations, we welcome Benjamin Somerville and Stephanie Wilson as a couple to the Lodge.

They love the mountains and are enthusiastically anticipating looking after us all over the winter.

There is no chef employed for the Hut again in these uncertain times.

The Hut will serve again as overflow accommodation as needed with catering organised from the Lodge.

The summer has seen members working hard to make the buildings comfortable for 2021.

Let's hope the weather, snow and that unmentionable word cooperate.

Marion Quinn

SKI ACTIVITIES 2021

It's looking like we are getting back to some normality for this ski season. We're starting to get ready, and hoping the snow will come early this year.

Unfortunately we have been unable to host a Swiss ski instructor, due to various reasons including border closures and quarantine availability.

RAL will be short on instructors again this year, so if you haven't already booked in for The Academy or any lessons, now would be a good time to do so.

School Holidays

If you are booked in for the school holidays and would like lessons, please

contact RAL directly to arrange these.

We will still have 4pm races, prizegiving and Skit night. We're presently looking for volunteers to help organise these activities, so if you are interested please contact the Office.

Interclub Races, including our Haensli Cup Race

The races are booked in and planning by ourselves and the other clubs is well underway.

The race dates are as follows: -

Christiania Derby July 31st.

Haensli Cup August 14th.

Rangatira Trophy August 28th.

Tongariro Juniors September 4th.

Ngauruhoe Trophy September 18th.

There will be no contingency dates for these races. If you are interested in racing in any of these races please contact Carl Burling - carlburling99@gmail.com.

Haensli Cup

Planning is underway to contact our regular sponsors and to organise a poster for our race.

If anyone knows of anyone new who would like to sponsor our race by donating products for our spot prizes, please let me know by emailing me at cathgaf@hotmail.com

The Haensli Cup is a huge undertaking which requires many hands to make it successful.

If you are able to help with any part of the race please let me know.

Club Champs

These will be held September 25th. So dust off your race suits. More information will be available closer to the date.

**Catherine Gafa
Club Captain**

SKI SEASON 2021

RAL says all lifts at Tūroa and Whakapapa will be operating this season, barring any Covid-19 measures.

“Tūroa and Whakapapa have been a hive of activity this summer, with the team working hard to complete large maintenance projects,” RAL said.

As of late April there were only 657 season passes left, with the company deciding to limit the total number sold, in an effort to improve the customer experience for skiers and boarders.

By that time the Snow Factory machine at Whakapapa had already generated quite a big mountain of new snow in Happy Valley.

A car parking booking system will be in place again for part of the 2021 snow season at Whakapapa and Tūroa, the Ruapehu Bulletin reported in April.

RAL says that DOC has accepted their suggestion that Bookable Parking should run for only six weekends in 2021 between July 31st and September 5th.

Season pass holders and life pass holders do not have to book a parking space.

RAL’s website and updates closer to winter will cover more details on how this will work.”

Ski clubs and skifield operators around New Zealand breathed a sigh of relief on April 19th when the border with Australia was opened for the first time in more than a year.

Flights took off from Auckland, Sydney and Melbourne, followed by flights from Wellington, Queenstown, Christchurch and Brisbane.

This meant that ski tourists from overseas who were absent in NZ last year could now come here, and skifields could bring in vital overseas staff.

Some New Zealand skifields successfully offered to train essential staff for free (no cost) in order to maintain full facilities for 2021.

The Covid-19 pandemic by May had worldwide killed 3 million people but in NZ only 26 people had died, most of them elderly folk who passed away in the early stages of the virus.

Mt Hutt is scheduled to open on June 11th and Cardrona on June 12th.

Coronet Peak will open on June 19th, followed by The Remarkables and Treble Cone on June 26th.

The European music festival Snowboxx will launch in Otago this winter in collaboration with Rhythm & Alps. The lineup will be 100 percent Aotearoa.

This will be the first southern hemisphere edition of Europe’s biggest winter music festival and will be held at Cardrona and Treble Cone on September 7-14.

The European event is held annually in Avoriaz (France) and is famous for its slope-side parties and performances including sledge races.

Rental car shortages could see prices rise for Kiwi holidaymakers this ski season

Heavily-reduced rental car fleets, the return of international tourists and a total lack of new cars for rental companies to buy is likely to lead to shortages and big price hikes, industry players said.

On the Anzac holiday the price of a hatchback jumped from an average post-Covid cost of \$65 per day for a five-day rental to \$90 per day.

Ski season rates for the same type of car were already around \$95 per day and likely to increase to well over \$100 as the season gets closer.



A recent photo of Bruce Millar at Coronet Peak.



Bruce outside the 1936 RSC Hut in approx 1950.

BRUCE MILLAR

In the March Bulletin we reported the passing of RSC member Bruce Millar aged 84.

We have had a nice note from Bruce Millar aged 77 to say he is still with us.

Our apologies Bruce.

Bruce recalls that he and I go back along way as we were the youngest kids on the slopes in 1950s.

He remembers the WW2 six-wheel drive vehicles called Goats which drove us up the mountain

He recalls his father and other members giving the detainees from the prisons who were road workers smokes outside Salt Hut at lunchtime.

AG

WILDWIRE WANAKA

Further to our photo on page 28 of the Stairway to Heaven, this is to advise that New Zealand has a cable wire climbing facility.

Wildwire Wanaka's easiest climb costs \$199 for three hours.

Its hardest ladder is called Lord of the Rungs. It costs \$599 for seven hours and 450 metres of climbing.

This is the world's only wire climb across a waterfall.

CROSSING NOVEL

US author Sonia Shah's new book "Adventures with Miso: New Zealand" is a courageous tale of a pig's big adventure on the Tongariro Alpine Crossing.

Sonia Shah is an avid traveller who has travelled to more than 10 countries and various states with her beloved Miso the piggy.

The adventurous tale reminds the reader to keep moving forward through the difficulties that are faced as the outcome is always worth it.

FMC IS OPPOSED

Federated Mountain Clubs (FMC) says RAL's parking system for platinum season pass holders and life members is at odds with legislation which governs the national parks and disadvantages other mountain users, like trampers.

FMC president Jan Finlayson said: "Mt Ruapehu is in Tongariro National Park. It is public land and the National Parks Act is strongly public-spirited.

"Concessions are allowed but commercial tourist activity has to come second to conservation and recreation."

The RAL parking offer was an effective privatisation of a public good, and it would run roughshod over the public

spirit of the legislation.

DOC's Tongariro operations manager Connie Norgate said she was comfortable with RAL's system.

"The Department of Conservation gave approval for Ruapehu Alpine Lifts Ltd to continue to implement bookable parking for 2021 as a way to manage visitor numbers and impacts at peak times."

GLACIERS MELTING

New Zealand's glaciers are now melting seven times faster than they were 20 years ago, a new global study has revealed.

The French study, published in science journal Nature, used high-resolution satellite and aerial images to measure the decline of nearly all the world's glaciers.

New Zealand's glaciers lost an average of 1.5 metres of thickness each year between 2015 and 2019, nearly seven times higher than the level disappearing between 2000 and 2004.

FOLDING SKIS

Elan skis of Slovenia are marketing what they say is the world's first folding high-performance all-mountain ski.

There have been folding skis before but this is said to be the first that performs to a high level.

Elan says the secret of the Voyager is an advanced four-axis mechanism that bonds and seals the ski together at the folding joint. It combines with a carbon-reinforced fusion plate serves as a load-bearing platform for support.

There are dedicated left and right skis. Sizes are 160cm, 166cm and 172cm.

Voyager skis, bindings, adjustable length poles and custom bag cost 1500 euros (\$NZ2500).



Upper: The RSC Hut last summer. **Lower:** A working party has a break on the Lodge balcony. Photos: Lauren Bruce.



An RSC walking trip on the Tongariro Alpine Crossing. Photos: David Macmillan.



Upper: An RSC summer walking activity. Photo: Catherine Gafa. **Lower:** An RSC party en route to the Bridge to Nowhere. Photo from Will Geddes.

BILL CHRYSTALL: Just as this Bulletin was going to print we learned of the death of ex-President Bill Chrystall aged 87. We offer our condolences to Elizabeth and their family. An obituary will be published in our next issue.



A snowboard giant slalom for the Whakapapa Cup.



New Zealand's premier cycle tour company. Based in Queenstown, we run top quality, vehicle-supported cycle tours on the best trails in the South Island including the Alps 2 Ocean, Around the Mountains and West Coast Wilderness trails. Golf and Yoga cycle tour options available! Owned by a long standing member of the Ruapehu Ski Club. Group discounts available!

Check out our website at www.escapebycycle.com

COVID-19 ISSUES

From the FIS President

Here we all stand at the end of a marathon. The 2020-21 season was like none we have ever experienced in the history of FIS.

Was it challenging? Absolutely. But at the end of the season, we can look back and say that we are still standing. And that alone is a major success.

When the season opened at the end of last October in Soelden, no one knew quite what to expect.

With the world changing in virtually on a daily basis, we did not know if major sports events would be able to be staged for the next five months.

We did not know what travel and event restrictions would be put into place. And we did not know how quickly or slowly the Covid-19 pandemic would spread.

Nevertheless, we spent a busy summer planning for what could not be planned.

Working together with all of our stakeholders, we developed a safety concept and event model that held up through the entire five months.

Naturally, much like the pandemic, the model was constantly evolving and a tremendous amount of flexibility was required from the entire ski family.

In the end, we were able to carry out more than 300 World Cup competitions across all of our disciplines.

Naturally, we had some cancellations, but we also saw the willingness of everyone to work together to reschedule lost events to help ensure nearly full calendars.

I would like to say thank you to each and every individual that worked on every level at all of our events during the last season.

From our world championships to FIS-level events, it took working together as a team to make it to the finish line of the season.

Of course, there will be ongoing consequences due to the pandemic.

The financial implications for many stakeholders will have long-lasting effects and we must continue to come together as a family to support one another.

There is also still much uncertainty surrounding the sport industry and the winter tourism branch.

We can only hope that soon the world can start to return to some level of normalcy so the recovery process can begin.

Regardless of what the next months bring, I assure you that the end of the last season marks the start of the next season and FIS has already started preparing for the upcoming 2021-22 Olympic season.

We will work tirelessly again to ensure that FIS will be ready to bring our sport to the world again next winter and to get our industry back up to full strength as quickly as possible.

Gian Franco Kasper

Aspen Skiing said the Covid-19 pandemic hit Colorado ski areas harder than anticipated in the 2020-21 season.

Aspen said it expected business to be down by 20 percent in 2020-21, but in fact it was more than that.

International tourism was limited to visitors from Mexico and a handful of folks from various countries with second homes who were riding out the pandemic in the US.

The usual skiers from Australia, New Zealand and Brazil did not arrive.

Real estate agents selling chalets in Victoria (Australia) ski resorts say they have seen prices jump by 30 percent in the past nine months alone, as people who would normally travel overseas snap up accommodation on the slopes.

John Castran at Mount Buller said his company has sold 10 years' worth of real estate in one year. Many people are now working "at home" from their holiday properties in the ski towns.



Upper: Cardrona skifield in Otago. **Lower:** The Remarkables skifield at Queenstown.



Upper: The new skifield traverse. **Lower:** A Turk hut on the Traverse

TRAVERSE NOW OPEN

The five-day Mahu Whenua Traverse, a 50km ski route across the Harris Mountains between the Treble Cone and Coronet Peak skifields in Otago, is now open.

The traverse is described as a hard slog over undulating terrain with some steep climbs.

Expedition members stay in five small huts, built using plastic water tanks as a

shell, which were placed along the route last spring.

The “Turk” huts were designed by Arrowtown adventurer Erik Bradshaw who founded the Mountain Turk Club to build them and manage their use for winter skitouring and summer tramping.

The Mountain Turk Club is an incorporated society and members donate their time or funds to help construct the huts and get them installed in the mountains.

RSC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 2021	5	Happy Valley snow season opens
	30	RSC AGM at RNZYS (Westhaven) Auckland
	12-13	Working parties
July 2021	3	Ski season opens at Whakapapa and Turoa
	3-4	Working parties (Cooks Weekend)
	10-25	School holidays
	31	Christie Derby
Aug 2021	16-20	Club Week
	14	Haensli Cup
	28	Rangatira Trophy
Sept 2021	4	Tongariro Juniors
	18	Ngauruhoe Trophy
	25	RSC Club champs
Oct 2021	2-17	School holidays
	25	Ski season closes at Ruapehu

NEW MEMBERS

We wish a warm welcome to the following new members:

Seniors.

Jo Blowfield (Auckland).
 Ambrose Blowfield (Auckland).
 Sue Dick (Napier).
 Ngaere Duff (Auckland).

Juniors:

Kate Berriman (Auckland).
 Luke Berriman (Auckland).
 Arabella Blowfield (Auckland).
 Asia-Rose Blowfield (Auckland).
 Nicholson Finn (Rotorua).
 Marc Stewart (Auckland).

THREE SLALOM TIES

Three times in 10 years the New Zealand women's slalom championship resulted in a tie for first place.

The first two such ties were timed to one tenth of a second. By the time of the third race, timing had been extended to one-hundredth of a second.

So no more ties. Nope. Once again the title resulted in a tie.

The first tie was in 1965 at Coronet Peak when Kathy Guy (NZ) and Judy Forras (Australia) dead heated. Judy was here with the Aussie interdominion team.

Robyn Willis (Canterbury) and Bronwyn John (Taranaki) then tied at Whakapapa in 1971.

Finally Moea Armstrong (Taranaki) and Linda Nelson (Canterbury) tied at Coronet Peak in 1974 despite timing to one-hundredth of a second now being in place,

OBITUARY

NATALIE BLYTH

We have another death of an ex-Club member to record. Natalie Blyth wife of Gordon Blyth has died at Taranaki Base Hospital after a long illness.

School holiday groups in the 1980s will remember her as a total live wire behind some wonderful skits, often based on the Royal Family.

The family with two good skiing kids, Johy and Alex, always stayed in the Hut, but her fun was shared with the Lodge and the Whanganui brigade.



Upper: A skilift installation crew at Whakapapa. **Lower:** The NZ Special Olympics team at Turoa. Photos: RAL.



Upper: RAL staff manhandling a new cable for the High Noon Express at Turoa. Photo: RAL. **Lower:** RSC truck weekend grocery supplies arrive at Whakapapa. Photo: Liza Fitzsimmons.



LandSAR search dogs are the only dogs allowed in the Tongariro National Park, for their highly specialised skills. They are an invaluable member of an avalanche search party.

THE DESCENT

When you push yourself off the top, ski boots tightly fastened, you will experience a thrill you have never known.

You understand the danger you are stepping into. You think of all the injuries you've heard about from those who have done this before.

Maybe you should have hired an instructor to help you get through this first time, but it's too late for second thoughts now.

You are gaining speed by the second. You no longer feel the cold. The chill up your back is from the rush of adrenaline. All your senses are at their peak.

You know that if you reach the bottom without falling you will enjoy a moment of personal triumph that will make all the expense and discomfort worthwhile.

You start feeling as though you're losing control but then you see the bottom is near. One last, supreme effort to stay on your feet and — suddenly — you've made it!

Now as you stand at the bottom and look up through the eyes of experience you know that soon you must face this challenge again.

To master the stairs in the Lodge while wearing your ski boots is an accomplishment you will never forget.



Upper: The Chutes above the High Traverse at Whakapapa. They are steep and narrow, and strictly for experts only. **Lower:** The Terraces slopes just above the Waterfall at Whakapapa. Photos: Alan Graham.

SOUND OF REMUERA

It is little known that Baroness Maria Von Trapp whose life was honoured in the stage and film epic *The Sound of Music* visited Remuera in May 1955.

Maria, accompanied by her step children Agathe (Leisl in the film), Maria (Louisa) and Hedwig (Brigitte) stayed for 10 days at the Baradene Convent in Remuera.

Meanwhile Werner (Kurt), younger brother Johannes and the group's priest and musical director Father Franz Wasner stayed at the Franciscan priory in Hillsborough.

The Trapp Family Singers (they had dropped the Von) were booked to stay in a hotel, but it was sub-standard and Bishop Liston quickly rehoused the women at Baradene.

The troupe sang masses plus a concert, four years before *The Sound of Music* by Rodgers and Hammerstein first hit the stage.

They mostly sang classical music by Mozart, Hayden and Bach, as well as a few folk songs.

Maria gave Baradene a signed copy of her book, which was rare as she signed very few copies.

While here Maria took a keen interest in Maori dance and song. She especially liked the poi dance.

SKI LIFTS IN NZ

NORTH ISLAND.

Snowplaner: Two platter lifts.

Whakapapa: One gondola, four chairs, three T-bars, two magic carpets.

Turoa: Five chairs, two platters, one magic carpet.

Tukino: Two rope tows, cat skiing.

Manganui: Three rope tows, one T-bar.

Old tow sites:

The Ski Slope (Albany): one handle lift.

North Egmont and Dawson Falls: rope tows.

Rangiwahia (Ruahines): rope tow.

SOUTH ISLAND.

Rainbow: One T-bar, one platter, one rope tow, one magic carpet.

Hanmer Springs: One Pomalift, one rope tow, one learner tow.

Mount Lyford: One T-bar, two platters, one rope tow, one learner tow.

Temple Basin: Three rope tows.

Broken River: Two rope tows, one access tow, two learner tows.

Mount Cheeseman: Two T-bars, learner tow.

Porters: One chair, three T-bars, one platter, magic carpet.

Mount Olympus: Four rope tows.

Mount Hutt: Three chairs, magic carpet.

Mt Potts (Erewhon): Four rope tows now removed. Cat skiing.

Alpura Peaks: Groomer skiing.

Fox Peak: Four rope tows, one platter.

Mount Dobson: One chair, one T-bar, one platter.

Roundhill: One T-bar, one super-steep rope tow, two learner lifts.

Ohau: One chair, one platter, one snow mat.

Awakino: Three rope tows.

Treble Cone: Two chairs, one platter, magic carpet.

Cardrona: Two chondolas (chairs and gondola cabins), two chairs, learner carpet.

Coronet Peak: Three chairs, one T-bar, two magic carpets.

The Remarkables: Four chairs, three magic carpets.

Invincible: One rope tow.

Old tow sites:

Mount Robert: Three rope tows.

Ball Glacier: two rope tows.

Danseys Pass: rope row.

Lees Valley: rope tow.

Kelly Range: rope tow.

Kakanui Mountains: rope tow.

Rock and Pillar: rope tow.

Garston: rope tow.

Mount Luxmore: rope tow.



The world's first chairlift was the Proctor Lift at Sun Valley (Idaho, US).

THE FIRST CHAIRLIFT

The world's first ski chairlift was designed by a US railroad company. It was based on conveyor belts used to load bananas onto ships.

The device was part of a plan to boost passenger rail traffic in the American west.

Inspired by US railroad owner Averell Harriman who built the Sun Valley ski resort in Idaho, the lift opened in December 1936.

The original Proctor lift at Sun Valley transported skiers in chairs suspended 20 feet off the ground, for 1100 metres and gained 350 metres in elevation.

The first US ski area opened in 1915 in Steamboat Springs (Colorado) followed by 20 others throughout New England, the Pacific Northwest and California.

The first US surface lift was a steam-powered toboggan built in Truckee

(California) in 1920 and adopted by skiers.

Canadian skier Alex Foster built the first working model of the rope tow in 1931 at Shawbridge (Quebec).

Meanwhile, in Europe, Swiss ski mountaineer and mechanical engineer Ernst Constam invented the world's first J-bar in 1934, followed by the two-passenger T-bar in 1935.

James Curran, a 33-year-old licensed engineer and bridge engineer, designed the world's first chairlift for Sun Valley, drawing inspiration from conveyor belts used to load bananas onto ships in Central America.

Curran died in 1968 at the age of 64.

The engineer never profited from his invention but in 2001 he was inducted into the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame, 32 years after Harriman also had the honour.

ZOI IS WORLD CHAMP

Zoi Sadowski-Synnott (NZ) leapt from last to first to defend her snowboard world championship slopestyle title at Aspen-Buttermilk (Colorado).

The 20-year-old from Wanaka was well out of medal contention after crashing in her first two runs but held her nerve during her final attempt to produce a winning score of 85.95.

Olympic champion **Jamie Anderson (US)** was second with 81.10 and **Tess Coady (Australia)** was third with 78.13

Zoi also won the title last year when she was given a wildcard entry after Anderson withdrew because of injury.

“I fell on those first two runs and I was pretty bummed but I knew if I landed my run I would have a good chance of taking the top spot,” Sadowski-Synnott said.

“It was all up to me. I knew I could do those tricks.”

Zoi signalled that she was setting up for a high score with a technical rail run at the top of the course before lacing together a stylish switch back 900, frontside 720 and backside double 1080 on the jumps.

Cool Wakushima (NZ) aged 18 was eighth in the snowboard slopestyle with 67.81, her career best result. She was born in Japan and moved to NZ when she was nine.

Marcus Kleveland (Norway) won the men’s event with 90.00.

*** Events in the world snowboard champs were moved from China to Rogla (Slovenia), Aspen (Colorado) and Almaty (Kazakhstan) because of Covid-19.

ZOI WINS SILVER

Zoi Sadowski-Synnott (NZ) won the silver medal in her second world championship event, the big air.

Zoi led after two jumps but **Laurie Blouin (Canada)** made the winning jump

at her third attempt, and won the gold medal with 177.75 points.

Sadowski-Synnott scored 176.75 points for second and **Miyobi Onitsuka (Japan)** was third with 174.75.

Cool Wakushima (NZ) was eliminated in the heats and was awarded 13th place.

Blouin previously won a gold medal in slopestyle at the 2017 world championships and won a silver medal in slopestyle at the 2018 Winter Olympics.

Zoi this time had the chance to win her second gold medal of the week when, with at least a silver guaranteed, she was last to jump and could head off Blouin.

She went for a big trick for a big score, but fell as she landed and did not score for that jump. Each rider counted their two best jumps from three attempts.

*** **Mark McMorris (Canada)** won the men’s snowboard big air.

*** **Chloe Kim (US)**, the Olympic champion, won the women’s snowboard halfpipe.

NICO IS WORLD CHAMP

Nico Porteous (NZ) from Wanaka won the gold medal in the freeski halfpipe world championship at Aspen-Buttermilk (Colorado).

Nico scored 94.50 to head off silver medallist Simon D’Artois (Canada) on 91.25 and bronze medallist Birk Irving (US) on 89.75.

Porteous overcame a broken foot to win the freeski halfpipe at the same venue he won an X-Games gold medal less than two months earlier.

The 19-year-old landed a new trick combination of back-to-back left and right 1620s to post the highest score of 94.50 in his first run.

“I went through a crazy high at the X-Games with the result there, then two days later breaking my foot, I kind of went in a low period and was stuck at home for

month and couldn't do anything," Porteous said.

*** **Ailing Eileen Gu (China)** aged 17 won gold medals in both the women's ski halfpipe and the women's ski slopestyle. She also won a bronze medal in the big air.

*** The freeski park and pipe events were moved to Aspen (Colorado). They were originally scheduled for Zhangjiakuo (China) and were moved because of Covid-19.

Finn Bilous (NZ) came ninth in the men's freeski slopestyle.

Margaux Hackett (NZ) was eliminated in the heats of the women's ski slopestyle and was awarded 12th place. She was eliminated in the heats of the big air and given 19th place.

Ben Harrington (NZ), Gustav Legnavsky (NZ) and Miguel Porteous (NZ) were eliminated in the heats of the men's ski halfpipe.

Luca Harrington (NZ) and Ben Barclay (NZ) were eliminated in the heats of the men's ski slopestyle.

Finn Bilous (NZ) in 23rd place, **Ben Barclay and Luca Harrington** were eliminated in heats of the men's freestyle big air.

Anja Barugh (NZ) and Chloe McMillan (NZ) were eliminated in the heats of the women's ski halfpipe.

AUSSIE GOLD MEDAL

Australia won a gold medal in world championship skiing when **Laura Peel** won the aerials championship after pulling off a jump she had used only once before in competition.

Peel is the one of four Australians to win the aerials gold medal. The others are Kirstie Marshall, Jacqui Cooper and Alisa Camplin.

Scotty James (Australia) won a silver medal in the freeski halfpipe.

Matt Graham (Australia) won a silver medal in the men's dual moguls.

FOUR X-C GOLDS

Therese Johaug (Norway) won four gold medals at the world cross-country skiing championships in Oberstdorf (Germany).

Johaug, 32, won the 30km, 10km, skiathlon and relay gold medals. This gave her 14 career world titles.

Johannes Hoesflot Klaebo (Norway) aged 24 won three gold medals in the men's events. He also finished first in the 50km race while bidding for his fourth gold, but was disqualified for obstruction.

WOMEN WON THE MONEY

Women were the top three prize money earners on alpine skiing's World Cup circuit this season, according to the International Ski Federation (FIS).

Lara Gut-Behrami (Switzerland), winner of the alpine women's World Cup super-g title, was the highest prize earner of the season, with 485,000 Swiss francs (\$NZ730,000).

Petra Vlhova (Slovakia), who edged Gut-Behrami for the women's overall title, got 444,000 Swiss francs (\$668,000).

Mikaela Shiffrin (US) won the most valuable women's race, a night slalom at Flachau (Austria) that paid 63,000 Swiss francs (\$95,000). In total she won 411,000 Swiss francs (\$619,000).

Alexis Pinturault (France) was the men's overall World Cup champion and its highest earner with 379,000 Swiss francs (\$570,500).

The most valuable World Cup race is the fearsome Hahnenkamm men's downhill at Kitzbühel (Austria). It paid 87,500 Swiss francs (\$131,700) to the winner Beat Feuz (Switzerland).



Alice Robinson from Queenstown races to win the gold medal in an alpine skiing World Cup giant slalom race at Lenzerheide (Switzerland) in March.

ALICE WINS AGAIN

Alice Robinson (NZ) won the gold medal in the final giant slalom race of the alpine World Cup skiing season at Lenzerheide (Switzerland).

It was her third career win and only the eighth skiing World Cup win by a New Zealander.

Fourth after the first run of the giant slalom, Alice sped to victory on the second run.

Her total time was 2.19.48. **Mikaela Shiffrin (US)** was second with 2.19.76 and **Meta Hrovat (Slovenia)** was third with 2.19.96.

Commentators said it was a steep and very ice giant slalom course.

Robinson now looks forward to the 2022 Olympic Winter Games at Beijing.

At 19 she is five years younger than her main rivals and has made a fine start to her career.

Alice Robinson (NZ) earlier won second place in an alpine skiing World Cup giant

slalom at Jasna (Slovakia).

Alice was seventh after the first run but she won the second run to finish just 0.16 seconds overall behind the home-town winner **Petra Vlhova (Slovakia)**.

It was an emotional success for Vlhova on the mountain where she learned to ski. She is the first person from her country to score a win in the 54 year-old history of the World Cup.

Alice Robinson (NZ) had her career best result in her backup discipline when she came 10th in an alpine skiing World Cup super-g race at Val di Fassa (Italy).

The race was won by **Frederica Brignone (Italy)** who just beat the world giant slalom champion **Lara Gut-Behrami (Swiss)**.

Alice said she hopes to contest the super-g at the Winter Olympics next year, as well as her main event the giant slalom.

Alice has done some high speed downhill training this year, adding a third event to her ability.

ALPINE CUP WINNERS

Winners of the alpine skiing World Cups for 2020-21 are:

WOMEN

Petra Vhlova (Slovakia)	1416
Lara Gut-Behrami (Swiss)	1256
Michelle Gisin (Swiss)	1130

MEN

Alexis Pinturault (France)	1260
Marco Odermatt (Swiss)	1093
Marco Schwartz (Austria)	814

NICO IS THIRD

Nico Porteous (NZ) won a bronze medal in a freeski halfpipe World Cup event at Aspen (Colorado).

Brendan Mackay (Canada) won and **David Wise (US)** was second.

Nico's brother **Miguel Porteous** came fifth and **Gustav Legnavsky (NZ)** was 12th.

SNOW WORLD CUPS

World Cups for the various disciplines of snowboarding and skiing are awarded on the basis of points won during a series of events during the season.

They are separate from the world championships reported on the previous two pages and those champs do not count toward World Cup points.

World Cups are awarded for alpine skiing, snowboarding, freeskiing in several forms, ski jumping, cross-country, speed skiing, telemarking, ski mountaineering and grass skiing.

The overall winner of a contest (eg alpine, freeski, jumping) wins a large crystal globe. The winner of a single discipline (eg slalom, halfpipe, large hill) wins a small crystal globe.

SLOPESTYLE FINALS

Finn Bilous (NZ) was seventh in the final freeskiing slopestyle World Cup competition of the season, held at Silvaplana (Switzerland).

Margaux Hackett (NZ) was eighth in the women's freeski slopestyle at Silvaplana.

Cool Wakushima (NZ) was seventh in the women's snowboard slopestyle.

SS VERSUS BIG AIR

These are both events contested by freestyle skiers and snowboarders at the Winter Olympics and the Winter X-Games.

The difference is that in slopestyle the competitors have to perform six or seven activities whereas in big air there is just one large jump.

Big air is an extreme version of slopestyle. Competitors perform complex tricks in the air, aiming to attain sizable height and distance as well, all while securing a clean landing.

In slopestyle they run down three rails before doing a series of jumps.

Many top skiers and snowboarders such as New Zealand stars Zoi Sadowski-Synnott, Tiarn Collins, Cool Wakushima and Margaux Hackett contest both disciplines.

AUSSIE WORLD CUP

Matt Graham (Australia) won the World Cup for freeskiing moguls (bumps). Graham finished the season with a total of 289 points.

Benjamin Cavet (France) was second with 271 and **Ludvig Fjallstrom (Sweden)** was third with 258 points.

In moguls skiing, competitors ski down a 200 metre field of bumps or moguls and are judged on time, style and two jumps.



Retired Austrian skiing superstar Marcel Hirscher is keeping busy. Upper: Marcel freeskiing at Bad Gastein (Austria). Lower: Marcel climbing the 43 metre Stairway to Heaven at Donnerkogel (Austria).



Upper: A stream near Lake Surprise, off the Turoa road, as seen on an RSC walking trip. Photo: Catherine Gafa. **Lower:** A view from the Ruapehu summit. Photo: Chris St Cartmail.

ACROSS THE SKIING WORLD

The Willows Quad chairlift, a major development, is under construction in the Soho area at Cardrona Alpine Resort in Otago.

It will provide access to 65ha of intermediate-level terrain from winter 2021 and is the first new major lift-accessed terrain to open in New Zealand since 2012.

The new lift is the refurbished former McDougall's Quad, from Cardrona. Further lifts are planned, including the main Soho express chairlift.

The Willows basin is named after the cult classic film *Willow* as some of it was filmed in the area.

Work is well under way at Mt Hutt on construction of New Zealand's first eight-seater chairlift.

It will replace the 30 year-old Exhibition Quad. The lift towers were all in place by April and the drive station soon followed.

Theodore Sharp (Ted) Ligety at age 36 has announced his retirement from alpine ski racing after a fine career in which he won two Olympic gold medals and five gold medals at the world championships.

Ligety (US) at his peak was almost an unstoppable force.

He raced several times in New Zealand. Off the snow he founded a company named Shred Optics which produces ski goggles, sunglasses and helmets.

Garett Shore has been appointed as the chief operating officer of Snow Sports NZ.

He lives in Wanaka and has been heavily involved in the snow sports industry for 29 years, the majority of which has been spent developing his own company Rookie Academy, a successful ski and snowboard training company.

Garett has represented New Zealand on the international stage as a member of

the NZSIA Interski Team at three Interski Congresses.

Mihael Voga (Slovenia) was the winner of the inaugural FIS E-sports alpine world skiing championship.

More than 1100 competitors from 50 countries competed for the chance to be declared the first champion.

The series had stops in Lake Louise, St Moritz, Adelboden, Wengen, Schladming, Garmisch and Zagreb, plus the finals at Cortina d'Ampezzo.

Swiss Olympic medallist and world champion skier Wendy Holdener has tested positive to Covid-19.

Holdener, who won gold, silver and bronze medals at the 2018 Winter Olympics in South Korea, tested positive along with trainer Klaus Mayrhofer.

Famed Italian snowboarder Luca Pandolfi died in an avalanche at the Gran San Bernardo Valley.

Pandolfi, aged 47, is remembered as a freeride champion, guide and visionary.

Over the past 30 years, Pandolfi built a résumé that included everything from winning freeride competitions to riding in a trilogy of backcountry snowboard films.

He was an experienced mountaineer with numerous notable descents in the Himalaya, the Andes and all across the Alps.

Julie Pomagalski, a former Olympic snowboarder from France, died in an avalanche in the Swiss Alps. She was 40.

Pomagalski competed in the parallel giant slalom at the Winter Olympics in 2002 and 2006. She won a gold medal in the snowboard cross world championships in 1999.

She was the granddaughter of Jean Pomagalski who invented the first ski lift in 1934 and founded the Poma brand in 1947.

After months of pressure **Mt Hutt** has

taken a Nazi officer's name from a ski run and a restaurant. A plaque bearing his name will continue to be on display.

Willi Huber, a pioneer of Mt Hutt, died in August last year, aged 97. It was stated that the Austrian was a decorated officer of the German army.

Initially Mt Hutt said the names would only be changed if evidence linked Huber to war crimes. But his name has now been removed from the skifield's trail map and the restaurant has been renamed Ōpuke Kai.

Huber was imprisoned in a US prisoner-of-war camp after the war. He arrived in New Zealand in 1953.

Qantas has announced three new routes to the Australian skifields for the coming season.

It will fly from both Sydney and Brisbane to Cooma for the NSW skifields, and from Sydney to Albury for the Victorian skifields.

Flights will use 72-seater Q400 turboprop aircraft, an extended version of the Q300 flying around NZ.

The International Ski Federation (FIS) has signed a long-term extension to its partnership with **Swiss watch brand Longines**. The partnership will now run through the 2025-26 season.

Longines will provide advanced timing and data handling technology for the alpine ski World Cup and the alpine ski world championships.

The company has been involved in alpine skiing since 1924 when it timed a military race in its home town Saint-Imier. Its watches have often been used in NZ ski racing.

Vail Resorts said an Epic ski pass will cost 20 percent less next season.

An Epic Pass that covers 70 resorts worldwide, including Vail and Whistler Blackcomb, is now \$783, down from \$979 last season. The more restrictive Epic Local Pass costs \$583.

Petr Kellner, a billionaire and the richest man in the Czech Republic, was one of five people killed when a helicopter carrying guides and guests on a heliskiing excursion crashed in Alaska.

The pilot was killed but one skier survived. The group was aiming to ski in an area of steep and remote terrain within the Chugach Mountains near Knik Glacier.

Greg Harms, aged 52, a longtime ski pro at Aspen Mountain and world-renowned heli-ski guide, also died in the accident.

Eva-Maria Brem (Austria) has announced her retirement from alpine skiing at the age of 32.

She won three World Cup ski races in a 14 year career. Brem won a world team championship gold medal in 2015.

Italian skier Martina Valmassoi, 31, has broken the women's 24-hour uphill ski record.

She skied for 23 hours and 44 minutes and climbed 17,645 metres on Monte Agudo in the Italian Dolomites.

The ski mountaineering racer and mountain runner began at 5 pm and skied up and down the 725m hill 25 times. During the night she used a headlamp and skied with a friend.

Grace Staberg, aged 19, skied up Copper Mountain (US) more than 21 times in one day, totalling 17,115 metres and falling just shy of the world record set a month earlier in Europe.

Argentinian football legend Lionel Messi has bought the Hotel MiM Baquiera, located next to the lifts at Spain's largest winter resort in the heart of the Pyrenees.

The four-star hotel with 141 rooms has opened in a stunning location at the bottom of ski slopes and near the gondola lift.

It includes a spa, an indoor swimming pool, a fitness centre and mountain guide services.



CLUB ITEMS & SERVICES FOR SALE

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

Website: www.rsc.org.nz

email: admin@rsc.org.nz

Lockers

Lockers are available for hire in the Hut at Turoa and occasionally in the Lodge.

email - admin@rsc.org.nz to find out what is available.

Annual Locker Rental Rates- applicable from when you are allocated a locker-

Ski- \$57.50

Gear \$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

Two working parties.

Senior joining fee \$199

Junior joining fee \$99

Annual senior subs \$269.00 incl GST (\$233.91 plus GST)

Annual junior subs \$98 incl GST (\$85.22 plus GST)

ACCOMMODATION FEES (Effective May 1st 2021)

Members Senior	18 years and over	\$55
Members Teen	14-17 years	\$48
Members Junior	13 years and under	\$37
Members' children	7 years and under	\$29
Non-members	14 years and over	\$101
Non-members	13 years and under	\$68
Life Members		\$0
School group children		\$68
School group parents		\$90

Off season rates (Chalet and Turoa) 2020/2021 summer

Members Senior and Junior \$28

Non-members Senior and Junior \$33