

Ottawa Ski Club News

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY THE OTTAWA SKI CLUB
CIRCULATION 2200 COPIES

Last week-end. A wash-out! So the programme will be carried over to this week-end. There will be the usual preliminary race starting from Wrightville at 2.45, for boys and girls, seniors, juniors and novices. **On Thursday** (Feb. 3) Night hike to Chaudiere Club as usual. They say the trail has been greatly improved. The hostesses will be Mrs. Leslie Davies and Mrs. Geo. Purvis.—On Saturday the Dome hill Juniors will be taught by Douglas Coleman and B. Plisk will hold a class for seniors.—On Sunday, (Feb 6) inauguration of the new wing at Camp Fortune; special excursion to the East Side Lodge by Old Chelsea. Collection at Camp Fortune for Joe Laverdure's son. **Club race for Seniors and Juniors at Camp Fortune, starting at 11.30 a.m.**

Next Week-end Conditions.—Should be very good even if no snow should fall in the meantime. The warm rain of Sunday has left the snow honeycombed, thought fairly well packed, and one may go almost anywhere through the bush or fields. Do not follow the old tracks however as they are hard and icy. But there will surely be a snow fall before Saturday. Just those members in arrears who are holding up the storm as usual. Let them pay quickly at any of the following places: Miss Ashfield, 150 Third Avenue; Holbrook's (above McGiffin's) Sparks St.; Byshe's, 223 Bank St.; Dominion Bank, Royal Bank, Bank of Toronto, (Union Station).

A blessing in disguise.—It was an off week-end, bad for everybody except the dealers in wax, but not without compensations: the melting snow gave a new lease of life to our spring, which was getting rather low at Camp Fortune, and the enforced rest gave Ye Editor a chance to taste deep of that never failing spring of pleasure and knowledge "The Canadian Ski Annual", the 1926 edition of which has just been received from the headquarters of the Association. The Annual has been steadily improving from year to year and the present issue is a credit to the Editor, President Douglas, who deserves the warmest praise. In addition to concise but bright reports from the Clubs affiliated with the Association, there is a series of highly interesting and useful articles, among which the following are deserving of special mention: "A London Letter" by Arnold Lunn; "My Ski Trip to Norway" by Leonard Leehan, giving a splendid account of the amazing skill and still more wonderful hospitality of the Norwegians. "Ski-ing in Switzerland" by H. T. Cliff; "Considerations about Downhill Ski-running" by Walter Amstutz; "Colonel Bilgeri's coaching methods for beginners" by G. C. Howell ((Every member of the O. S. C. should read this article). "The Blue Spruce," by Winnifred Sanford; "Slalom racing" by Arnold Lunn; "The Book Review" by C. E. Durand. There are also a couple of stories written in a humorous vein by members of your Club, which modesty forbids us to praise, but which we hope you will find enjoyable. "The Canyon Trail" by Pres. C. E. Mortureux, and "Gatineau Glories" by G. H. Hambleton. The illustrations are magnificent. Only a limited number of copies of this book are available at **25c each for our members.** The regular value is \$1.50. If you wish to have a copy reserved for you, please phone at **once** to Miss Muriel Whally (R. 4372) or to Miss McIntyre (Q. 1037) or call at Holbrook's office (above McGiffin's, Sparks St.) or at Byshe's (223 Bank St.) First come, first served' You may at the same time get back copies of the years 1925 and 1924 for the same amount (25c).

What about the old trails? The over crowded conditions at Camp Fortune on the average week-end led many of our members to get there by the shortest possible route—Kingsmere or Old Chelsea—so as to make sure of a seat and a frying

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pan. There is no occasion for such a rush now. With the new wing providing accommodation for 250 more people, every one should find a seat as well as cooking space, and the old trails from the railway should again become popular. We would suggest therefore that you make your trips a little longer by starting from Chelsea, Tenaga, Kirk's Ferry or Cascades. The trail through the fields from Chelsea to the beginning of the Canyon is a bit flat but it is soon over; there are two splendid trails from Kirk's Ferry: "McAllister's" and "Cooper's", and the Cascade trail is far famed. There is a bit of climbing in all these trails, but then, whoever heard of a good hill that required no climbing? Dunlop's road is a bit hard, but there is no necessity to stay on it, and good trails may be made on either side of it. You can leave it anyway by taking to the left a third of the way up. (See the red, white and black sign).

And what about the new ones? Our friend and good scout Louis Grimes has been at work here with his little axe and has cut down the length of the trail from Old Chelsea to the East Side Lodge by at least a couple of miles. He has also cut out McAllister's icy slopes, and made a wonderful descent from the top of the ridge into Kirk's Ferry. It is only a short distance from there to the East Side Lodge.. (Cross the river, follow the shore on the other side as far as the first road going up—about a quarter mile from point of crossing—go about three hundred yards up this road, turn to the right and shoot down to the falls, then climb to the lodge gradually—there will be bunting there next Sunday). This trail is safe and extremely pleasant.—Our friend Jack Bourgault has also a new trail from Kingsmere down, which he thinks is a dandy. The procedure is as follows: Turn to left on first road you come to after crossing Kingsmere Lake, continue fifty yards on road, going east, go through first opening to the right, leading to cottage. Swing left of cottage, commend your soul to God and follow tracks.

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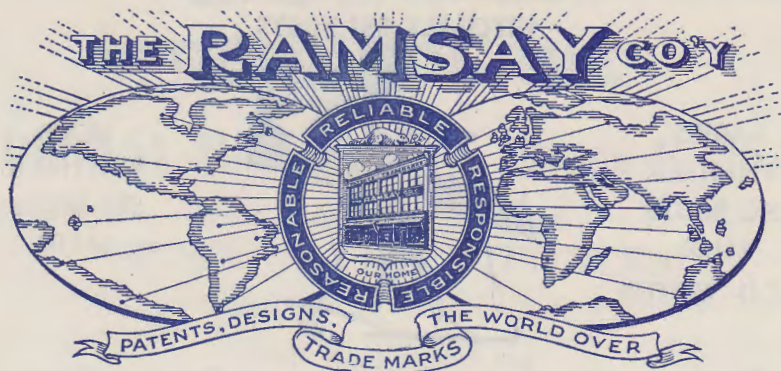
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Have you any money to invest?—Do you think this Club has a chance of enduring? If so let us know if you would be willing to purchase a few of our 6 p.c. Treasury notes, in case we should need money at the end of the winter. We have spent over \$4000 on capital account this year (Enlarging Dome Hill Lodge and Camp Fortune). In addition we have purchased Dome Hill, and some seventy acres around Camp Fortune. Money is required to finance these deals. What about taking a life-membership (\$50). They will not stay long at that price and this is a great opportunity. Twenty life memberships would help up a whole lot!

Tid-bits. A young man, who just woke up from his hibernation sleep, called Ye Editor the other to find out if the Dome Hill Lodge was open during the week. (Yes, the Dome Hill Lodge is open every day of the week and every hour of the day, from 11 a.m. to 10.30 p.m.; there is a resident caretaker, and meals can be had there at any time. If you are going there for an evening, and your party numbers more than ten, write to "The Caretaker, Ottawa Ski Club Lodge, Ironsides, Que." and mail your letter before 1 p.m. at Central Post Office.)—Mabel wants to know if she could take ten years to pay a \$50 life membership. (Better make it sixty years, Mabel, and then you will get a life membership for nothing. Our members become automatically life members when they are eighty years of age, provided they have paid up fees for sixty continuous years. I presume you are twenty.)—The loss of a good many badges has been reported, and a good many more will be lost, if our members persist in tying theirs with a pin, instead of sewing them on their shirts or sweaters.—"I went to Sigurd Lockeberg for one of those fifty pairs of free skis that he is advertising" says Mabel "and he laughed at me. He says only the fittings are free. What good are fittings without skis?" (Take legal action Mabel. If you were the first caller, as I am sure you were, he has to give you fifty pairs of skis for nothing. We have read his ad. Get a good lawyer,



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though!)—A number of Dome Hill Juniors who claim they sleep with the circular under their pillow (Puts you to sleep, does it?) object to being called "Tots" when half a dozen of them could "eat a pie on the top of Mrs. Semple's head." (Objection noted, and pie-eating capacity under difficulties duly recorded. Ye Editor will show more respect in the future; meanwhile Miss Ashfield will bill you for Senior fees, if you will kindly send names and addresses.)—Only one response has been received to the call for subscriptions, and from a girl! Please wake up.—Some one wrote to a contemporary, inquiring how the influenza epidemic which is now ravaging the Old World, could be warded off. (Here is our never failing recipe: get out and ski, not only on Saturdays but on Sundays, and every other day that you can. Keep out in the open).

PUT ON THE BRAKES

By OUR SKI EXPERT.

"You must have been very brave to take that hill", said she to the young man who was lying on a hospital bed with a badly sprained knee.

The remark was tactful. Some one else might have said "You must have been very foolish." He had been brave undoubtedly. The hill was icy and there was a wicked turn near the bottom. Had he been alone and no one in sight, he might have walked or crawled down, and thus would have been spared for many more happy week-ends. But there were John and Dick behind, waiting for him to go on He should have checked, but the trouble was, he did not know just how to do it. He had read, of course, as most of us have, in learned text books, descriptions of "stemming" and snow ploughing, but had never bothered practising the same, and now, when there was instant need for something of the sort, he could only recall hazy notions. Dick was beginning to ask if "it was for to-day," so he took the plunge, left the track at the turn, crashed into the crust, and now he lay here

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Far from us the idea of trying to develop a generation of "speed funklers", of people who are forever braking and checking on all slopes, as though their bones were so brittle that they could not stand a tumble, but there are times and circumstances where braking and checking at least for a few seconds, are necessary, and we do not think we exaggerate when we say that the skiers who attempt the steep wooded hills of the Gatineau without any knowledge of the art of controlling their skis have hardly more justification than a non swimmer would have of taking a header into deep water. The wonder is that the list of week-end accidents is not much longer than it is. Our friend Leehan, of the Montreal Ski Club, who was in Norway last year, made some interesting comparisons, which he resumes as follows in the Canadian Ski Annual:

"After ski-ing in Norway for over a month, and making careful observations, we decided that the average Canadian skier will take much greater chances than the Norwegian of the same ability. If the average Norwegian skier were to watch the people ski-ing in Mount Royal on a Sunday afternoon, he would think that everybody has suddenly gone crazy. The way they shoot across in front of each other and in and out among the trees is unheard of in Norway . . . This does not apply however to their star cross-country men, who take the wildest chances imaginable to gain a few seconds. I remember one day seeing T. Haug, one of their greatest, in a race. He was coming down the side of a mountain, through the trees, at terrific speed. Ahead of him was a right angle turn. Instead of checking his speed, he took a flying jump turn, landed on one foot, and shot away out of sight."

The trouble with us is that after taking a couple of trips from Camp Fortune down, we think we are star skiers, and take chances without any knowledge of the first rudiments of ski-ing. The only stop we have practised is the "sitting down" stop—often the most dangerous of all.

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Checking the speed, so as to keep the skis under control at all times, may be done (1) by the proper use of sticks, or poles (2) by stemming (3) by snow ploughing. It am quite aware that the latter two, viz. stemming and snow ploughing, are not always practical on our narrow bush trails, but there are many open spaces in the bush beside the trail, and if people were more efficient in the art of controlling their skis, there would be more individual tracks. Old timers, who dragged the single stout pole in the earlies '05—that absurd looking "Drum Major's Wand", as a Toronto Editor called it who had probably seen it in a museum of antiquities, have always regretted that it should have been discarded for the present light bamboo sticks. But the bamboo sticks have more strength in them than it appears, and when used properly they may be relied upon to brake in a very efficient manner.

Most people who try to brake with their poles let them drag behind and lean back on them. That is the wrong way. In the first place, the sticks, being at an acute angle with the snow, have very little braking efficiency; in the second place, you will be almost sure to tear off one or both rings if the process is long continued; in the third place, by leaning back on your sticks, you have already lost your balance and will probably not recover it, to say nothing of the fact that "braking" in this manner is very painful.

Let us quote Richardson here: "For braking, hold the sticks together, and keep them as far forward and as upright as possible The position assumed for this should be such that the balance of the skier is not disturbed A way which is specially useful is to rest the sticks against the shins", the points near the heel of the boot. "The lower arm holding the skis (which is the right arm if the sticks are held on the right side) is supported against one of the thighs. The upper arm is held high up. Leverage is thus obtained and the sticks prevented from dragging behind."

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Let us now quote from an article on "Colonel Bilgeri's coaching methods" (Can Ski Annual) a very good description of "stemming" which is at the foundation of all turns and swings:

"First take the weight off that ski which is to produce the stemming action. To do this, push the hips slightly over to the opposite side. Then move the heel and point of the stemming ski outward, and let it slide forward and sideways on the snow, with the knee slightly bent. The ankle joint is kept quite straight, so that the ski lies on its inner edge during the movement. The other ski, with its surface flat carries the whole weight of the body, **which must be perpendicular to it** so that the stemming ski can be disturbed or raised without disturbing the body or the balance. The lifting of the stemming ski is a good test of the distribution of the weight. The knee of the weighted leg must be bent, and **the more this knee is bent, the more effectual stemming will be.**"

Enough for to-day. Practise stemming as much as you can this week. When you have mastered it, the rest will come easy.

A SUSPENDED SENTENCE

By an OLD TIMER.

When I look back over a mis-spent youth and remember that in the winter of 1905-6 I bought what passed in those days for a pair of skis, being made by a Toronto boatbuilder according to his conception of the pattern provided by the then Norwegian Consul, and that with the aid of no little ingenuity and a couple of pieces of cane, several blocks of wood, stove bolts and sundry skate straps I fashioned what I fondly imagined was a likeness to a Norwegian ski harness and that more than once I successfully descended the Old Toboggan Slide in the Second Rosedale Ravine and that I once went over a mile without the cane breaking behind the heel on these wierd contraptions and that with that early experience I was in a position to realize the possibilities of ski-ing as a winter sport but hadn't enough sense and gave it up and wasted twenty perfectly good Canadian winters

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reading futile fiction and trying to learn the rudiments of what some people call a game, bridge, when I might have been qualifying as a has-been skier instead of a never-was like I am now when I am old enough to know better than to go ski-ing across the country with a lot of kids young enough to be my grandchildren, some of them, thinking that I am taking up ski-ing seriously when no one that watches me sees anything serious about it, and when I take my own children out ski-ing with a sort of idea in my head that I am looking after them when in reality they are bored with my style and speed and are worrying whether or not they will be able to get the Old Man home all in one piece and when they get so far ahead of me sometimes that they get their ears frozen waiting for me to catch up and when I seldom get close enough to them to recognize any of them even with a strong pair of binoculars and when the youngest of them, in front of all the crowd at Ironsides says, out loud." Well so long Dad, we'll wait for you at the car," and disappears in a cloud of snow and when young bobbed-haired bandits that I was buying dolls for yesterday pass me on the trail as if I was chained to a stump and deep down in my heart I know that the frailest of them, disregarding all preconceived ideas of the physical superiority of the male could pin my shoulders to the mat, catch as catch can, no holds barred in thirty seconds and when I arrive home at night and totter up the steps wishing I had taken advantage of the Calder Act, while the going was good and during the first part of the following week, each time I gently lower my aching frame into a chair and laboriously raise it and straighten it out again, and finally on Saturday night in spite of all the good resolutions I have made earlier in the week to cut it out and act my age when I find myself oiling up the square-toed boots and trying to make up my mind whether it is to be Camp Fortune, Tenaga or perhaps a fling at that West-side Lodge they all talk about—at these times I realize that a man is a fool to put off ski-ing until after he is past middle age.

(Ye Editor was as breathless after reading the above as if he had been riding the Canyon from top to bottom without a fall. He tried his best to insert a period somewhere but could not see any place where it would fit, except at the end.)

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We are not so fast as we think we are.—Some one was asking some time ago in this Circular at what speed a ski runner may travel down a steep slope. The following clipping from the "The Annual" may be of interest in this connection:

"In the last issue of the "British Ski Year Book" there is an interesting account of the speed of an expert ski-runner. Various guesses have been made from time to time as to the speeds attained in ski-ing. Last winter an attempt was made to estimate the speed at which a ski-runner travels down a steep slope. A starting mark was placed near the top of what is known as Lone Tree Slope at Murren, and a measured distance of about seventy-five metres down the steep slope marked out by flags. The observers, with carefully synchronized stop watches stationed at the pair of flags, did the timing. Watler Amstutz, a famous runner, was chosen for the experiment and made a flying start, but probably did not attain his maximum speed until twenty metres below the first flag, and probably began to decrease some distance before he passed the finishing flags. Two descents were made and the result arrived at agreed very closely. The snow was about average fast, but not particularly keen. The average speed worked out just a shade under forty miles per hour, from which it seems a fair deduction that ski-runners might conceivably touch fifty miles an hour under exceptional circumstances."

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Edition No. 7

Ottawa Ski Club News

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