

# The Liftline

Newsletter of the Champaign Ski Club

Vol. 34 No. 10 March 2005

## March

- 4 First Friday Happy Hour
- 18 St. Patrick's Day Party
- 20 Big White trip leaves

## April

- 1 First Friday Happy Hour
- 22 Year End Awards Party

## What's new . . . .

Trips have been full and running smoothly. Inside are trip reports from Innsbruck, Austria, and Granite Peak, Wisconsin. The Copper trip left on February 17, and the last trip, Big White, leaves on March 20. Soon enough, it will be time to think about summer trips.

Our St. Patrick's Day Party, at Steve Maloney's house in Champaign, will feature Mulligan Stew. With possible origins in hobo camps in the early 1900s, Mulligan Stew is often compared to Burgoo. Here is the term used in a 1914 *Saturday Evening Post* article: "It was a mulligan. Everything was in that stew—meat, potatoes, onions, bread—an appetizing hodgepodge." So bring something for the stew pot, and taste for yourself on Friday, March 18.

Telluride's *Mountainfilm on Tour*, which features the best films from America's premier festival of mountain, adventure, cultural, and environmental film and video, is coming to town on March 14. This year's program will include "an exciting evening of entertainment, inspiration, and earth-shattering views of life and how we live it."

The club will wind up the ski season with our annual Year End Awards Party on Friday, April 22, at the V.F.W. Hall in Champaign, site of this year's trip sign-ups. It will feature food, live entertainment, awards, and elections for next season's board members—always a good time.

Don't forget to come to our First Friday Happy Hours. On the first Friday of every month, they never stop. ♦♦



## **MOUNTAINFILM ON TOUR**

Monday, March 14  
7 pm  
Savoy 16 Theater  
Rt. 45, Savoy

Tickets are \$10, available at Champaign Surplus, Prairielands Council, or at the door. All proceeds benefit Prairielands Council, Boy Scouts of America Campership program.

For more information, call 356.4703 and visit [www.mountainfilm.org](http://www.mountainfilm.org).

## Trip report

# Austria

Innsbruck, Austria, January 14–22

by Denny Coleman, trip leader



Denny Coleman sports a traditional Tyrolean hat



Innsbruck



Tony Curcio

IT WAS A COLD WINTER EVENING, the guests were all leaving, O'Leary was closing the bar. . . . Oops, wrong song. Actually, it was a cold winter day, but the bar was just opening (on the bus, that is). Friday afternoon, January 14, was the beginning of our trip to Austria. Everyone was on time except for the bus, which was only a few minutes late, and we left WildCountry's parking lot right on schedule. Even though we had fifty people on the trip, the bus had lots of space because Teri Mahony (our daughter) and Leslie Nichols (Jim and Linda Ayers's daughter) were to meet up with us in Munich, and 11 others met us in Chicago. Dan and Somer Lyons (Phil Johnson's daughter) flew in from Reno, Mark Broeren (Gwen's brother) flew in from Denver, LeAnn and Andy Nash (Andy is Eileen's nephew) flew in from Tulsa, Trudy and Jed Drewiske and Steve Krause (Margaret's son) already live in the Chicago area, and Debbie Walters, Tony Curcio, and Martha Osterhoff drove to Chicago on their own (do you think maybe they didn't like our company?).

Everyone was in "great spirits" on the bus thanks to all of the leftovers from the Instructional Clinics trip. We had a little snap quiz on the bus to see if anyone had actually figured out what continent we were going to (or even cared) and to see if everyone was prepared for a visit to a German-speaking country. Quite surprisingly, everyone was quite proficient at saying "bier," but they had a little trouble with "fünf." It was very easy to tell who had learned their entire German vocabulary from listening to Wayne Newton records.

Everyone who was supposed to meet us in Chicago did so, although there were a few anxious moments when we learned that LeAnn and Andy's flight had been delayed. They did arrive in time. Our Scandinavian Airlines flight out of Chicago left at 10:30 pm. We were all seated in the same general area in the plane, and everyone had their own monitor, in the seat back in front of them, on which to watch one of several movies, a constantly updating map of where we were, or the picture from a camera in the nose of the plane. Of course at midnight over northern Canada, you don't see much unless you get lucky and catch Santa sneaking in from a night out at the pub. Most of us slept, on and off, between being awakened and fed every few hours, until we landed in Copenhagen, Denmark, at about 1:30 pm (6:30 am our time). After a short layover in Copenhagen, we boarded our plane for Munich, Germany.

WE ARRIVED ON TIME in Munich and after clearing customs (handing your passport to an agent and letting him stamp it), we were met by Teri and Leslie who had arrived early that morning and had spent the day checking out Munich. We were also met by our travel guide, Brigitte Schauer (pronounced Bri-jeeta, Bri-geeta, Bri-jita, or Bri-jit, or something like that, but she answered to all of our

mispronunciations). She directed us to our waiting bus and became an instant friend of everyone. Although the name might make you think of a young French model, Brigitte is closer in age to those of us “more experienced” members of the club. In fact, we noticed Milt Forsberg spending an “unusually” long time “quizzing her” about side trips and other Austrian information. I didn’t realize that he was so interested in Austrian culture. But I digress.

The trip south from Munich to Innsbruck was a little more than two hours. We immediately discovered a very nice practice in Europe of which we made good use. The bus drivers sell beer and pop on the bus at a dollar a bottle (normally 1 Euro each, about \$1.30, but since most of us did not have Euros, he accepted \$1 per bottle). Unfortunately, it was dark most of the way so we did not get to see the beautiful mountain valley we were entering until the next day. Our bus dropped us off right at the door of the Sailer Hotel in downtown Innsbruck. Innsbruck is a town about the size of Champaign-Urbana, but with more topography within a couple of miles than we have in our whole state. The keys to our rooms were waiting for us and once we had dropped off our luggage, dinner was waiting for us in our private dining room. This room was ours for the week, for both breakfast and dinner. We were given a very traditional and tasty welcome to Austria: Wiener Schnitzel (fried veal cutlet). Although we had been traveling for many hours (20 to be exact), everyone was in good spirits. But once we got food in our bellies, plus a few beers and wines, we faded fast, so our first night in Austria ended fairly early.

Before our arrival there had been some confusion as to the rating of our hotel. Some web sites classified it as 4-star and others as 3-star. It turns out that both were right. It is a very old building by American standards but practically new by European standards, and it had been partially remodeled from the top floor down. Consequently, those of us on the fourth and fifth floors were definitely 4-star, with spacious rooms and bathrooms and even a bidet (one of those funny little toilets/foot washers with no cover). But those on the lower floors that had not been remodeled were not quite so lucky. I had insisted on having rooms with two beds for those who did not want to share one bed (I’m not telling any names). Well, there were two beds all right, twin-size, but they were right next to each other, in a common frame, and they could not be separated. We suggested that those people who felt uncomfortable with this situation store their skis between the two mattresses. That would certainly discourage anyone who got “aggressive” or amorous in his or her sleep.

Mark Broeren thought that he had an even more serious problem. He came to me in the lobby and said that there was no bathroom in the room that he and Jed Dreweske were sharing, nor was there a community bathroom on their floor. When we confronted the desk clerk he indicated that all of their rooms had bathrooms, we just needed to look harder. It turned out that there was a large full-length mirror in their room that was actually a sliding door, hiding the bathroom. We were all much relieved to learn that Mark and Jed would be able to shower after all.



*Sailer Hotel*



*Terry Klintworth and Carole Kaufman*



*Greg Crawford*



*Swarovski factory*



*Swarovski museum*



*Martha Osterhoff in the Swarovski museum*

Because of the timing of our flight over (the red-eye special), most of us got a good night's sleep Saturday night and had very little jet lag. We awoke Sunday morning to a very nice breakfast in our private dining room. In addition to the traditional European breakfast of hard rolls, cold cuts, cheese, soft-boiled eggs, cereal, yogurt, and fruit, we also had scrambled eggs and bacon. I think this was something special just for us because it seemed to take them a couple days to figure out how to cook the scrambled eggs right, but we certainly did appreciate their efforts to please us.

Although there were a few "hard core" who immediately headed for the slopes to ski, most of us took it easy on Sunday and took a tour with Brigitte. We were picked up in the very comfortable bus that had brought us from Munich the day before, and our first stop was the Swarovski Crystal World. Although we did not actually get to see them making the crystal, their museum was fascinating. From the outside, it looked like a large mound of dirt with a face on one end, spewing water out of its mouth (rather like some club members after Margaritaville), but the inside was a fascinating display of mirrors, crystals, and art work. And of course at the exit there was a well stocked gift shop that would allow you to help support the local economy.

After leaving the crystal factory, we were given a narrated tour of the city with a stop at the base of their newly constructed ski jump (you gotta be nuts to ski down something like that) and a beautiful view of the city. After heading back down the side of the mountain we made a stop at a beautiful baroque church, climbed up to the viewing tower on top of their very modern Rathaus (city hall), and ended up in the middle of the older part of the city, which was only a few blocks from our hotel. Here again, we were given the opportunity to shop (our American dollars aren't worth much anymore, but they like them anyway). Several, including my wife and daughter, did their best to help support the local jewelry maker who had made the necklace Brigitte had been wearing. Michael Clary and I, with a little encouragement from Dana and Teri, bought traditional Tyrolean hats. Mine was particularly noteworthy because it has a big cock feather on one side. I'm not sure why the girls were so impressed with that particular hat.

Sunday night we were rejoined by those who had gone skiing and learned that skiing at the lower elevations had been less than impressive due to an unusually warm winter in Europe and well below average snowfall. I guess if you didn't mind a few rocks and a little ice, it wasn't bad skiing. At the advice of Sunday's skiers, on Monday most of us took the bus to the Stubai Glacier, which is high enough to have snow year round. It was an absolutely beautiful day with bright sunshine and blue skies. The Alps are always spectacular, but on a day like that, they are breathtaking. Although there wasn't any powder, the runs were well-groomed, and everyone had a great day. The ride up the gondola and the view from the top of the chair lift alone would have made the one-hour bus ride well worth it.

Some people didn't even try to ski on Monday (or any other day for that matter) but instead chose to enjoy the beauty of the countryside. Milt Forsberg, and Dave and Nancy Sutton took a street car and then a train and then a gondola to a "red only" (equivalent of our double blacks) ski area on the other side of the valley. They didn't ski, but based on Milt's pictures, they certainly saw some beautiful scenery. Another group, including Chris Wise, Vicky Allen, Terry Klintworth, and Carol Kaufman, took the train up to Munich and then to the Dachau Concentration Camp, only to find that Dachau was closed on Mondays. But they did experience traveling on the train system on their own, which they found to be very easy. Monday night was another excellent dinner in our private dining hall. A few people, including the Clarys and the Nashes, checked out the nightlife in Innsbruck and brought back stories about an Italian restaurant with very low ceilings and wine in "unmarked" bottles. Sure sounds like a nice place to me!

After Monday evening's dinner, several of us met up with Brigitte again to take a horse-drawn sleigh ride up the side of the mountain. It was a beautiful evening to be out, and we ended up in a restaurant with some very interesting "warm up drinks." One was called "hunters tea"—both would knock your socks off. We had a hard time leaving the restaurant because Dana found a puppy to cuddle. I don't really believe what they told me about her French-kissing a poodle. Needless to say the bus ride back to Innsbruck was very festive, especially when the driver cranked up the American sing-along music.

Tuesday was a travel day for most of us. Approximately 35 of us boarded a bus to travel back north to Germany to see Neuschwanstein, the Bavarian castle that was the inspiration for the Disney Castle. The bus can't take you all the way to the top, but you can either walk or take a horse-drawn carriage. After Brigitte's comments about how any skier should be able to walk up, no one had the courage to take the carriage, but by the time we got to the top, I think there were a few who wished they had embarrassed themselves. The castle, which is only about 150 years old (practically new by European standards), was spectacular. It's hard to imagine how such a large structure could have been built in such an inaccessible place entirely by horse and human power. This place is what used to be called a "film burner" but now should probably be referred to as a "pixel burner." Unfortunately, all of the pictures are from the outside because they do not allow taking pictures on the inside, which is also spectacular with gold-plated furniture and beautiful wood and tile.

The ride through the southern German countryside was beautiful, with all the small villages and integrated house-shed-barn complexes. We made a short visit for lunch and a little shopping in Oberammergau, which is famous for the Passion Play that has been performed every ten years for the last 600 years (yup, you heard me right, ever since the plague hit in the 1300s). The town is also famous for its wood carvers and painters, and the colorfully painted scenes on the outside of the buildings are beautiful.



*Neuschwanstein*



*Walking to the castle*



*Nordpark*



St. Anton



St. Anton



Venice

Wednesday was a ski day for most and a heavy-duty shopping day for some. The bus picked us up at the hotel early in the morning and took us to St. Anton, about an hour away. St. Anton is a huge ski complex with several base villages and more than 80 lifts (some are T-bars). Unlike earlier in the week, when there was not enough snow, on this day, there was too much. Although the “experts” among us thought it was great, we intermediates were definitely challenged. The slopes were very crowded and moguls were quickly formed. That wouldn’t have been too bad if they had been visible, but frequently it was whiteout conditions. Don Charlton agreed with us that “skiing by Braille” is not all its cracked up to be. Gee, I forgot to ask Frank Arnold how he liked it. That should have been right down his alley.

Most of those who didn’t ski on Wednesday went “power shopping” in Vepitino Italy with Brigitte. I know that Susie Nash came back with an arm load, and Linda Johnson became a fashion model at dinner showing off her new “Italian Leather” coat. Very nice Linda, but where is Phil’s Italian Leather coat?

I’m not sure which day it was, but Teri Mahony and our niece Susie Nash were watching a fashion show on TV in their room one evening, in German, when suddenly it switched all by itself (or so I am told) to a hard-core porno movie. Although they could not understand a word that was said, they waited patiently for more than an hour for the fashion show to come back on. They must really be interested in high fashion. Sorry girls, I guess you will just have to go back to Europe again to find out if you are “dressing right.”

Thursday started about 5 am for those who traveled by bus to Venice. Actually, Italy is only a short distance from Innsbruck, the first mountain pass to the south. We stopped for breakfast at an Italian truck stop, which in itself was an interesting experience. Ask someone about the “efficiency” of the Italian truck stops. After a couple more hours on the bus, traveling through mile after mile of vineyards, I realized why the Italians are as “happy” as they are. After transferring to a boat for the last few miles, we arrived in Venice at 10:00 am. I was surprised to learn that Venice is not a city with a lot of dug canals but is actually located several miles off shore, in the Mediterranean, and is built on stilts and sandbars.

Our first visit in Venice was to the Morano Glass Factory, where we watched highly skilled glass blowers transform molten blobs into pieces of art. Of course, they had a gift shop where we were “allowed” to purchase souvenirs. They start by showing you the \$5,000 decanter set so that everything else seems cheap. Just so that those who went to Vepitino couldn’t get ahead of us, several of us made donations to the local economy buy purchasing Morano glass.

Next was lunch at an Italian restaurant (are you surprised?), followed by some free time to wander around Venice and check out the hundreds of small stores, mostly selling the same thing. But you can’t go to Venice and not ride on a gondola, so that was next on our agenda. Each boat held about six people, plus the gondolier, and

came with a bottle of champagne. We thought that was very appropriate and didn't hesitate to share it. The ride took us through the canals and gave a very different perspective of the city than what you see on foot. After a little more time to shop, we boarded our boat back to the mainland. We thought everyone was aboard but as we shoved off, we noticed Debbie Walters and Tony Curcio walking up to the dock. It was a close vote, but we did decide to go back and get them before starting our trip back to Innsbruck.

On Friday morning, we awoke to rain in the lower elevations and what looked likely to be whiteout conditions in the higher elevations. Although some headed out for another day of skiing at St. Anton, most decided to be tourists again. My family and the Clarys took a bus to the local castle and a relatively small and unknown museum, where we saw dozens of suits of armor in all shapes and sizes. Also on display were lots of medieval weapons. Wow, what gruesome tools. The thought of men actually fighting each other with them makes you realize how lucky we are to be alive now and not 500 years ago.

After an excellent lunch in the castle, we took the bus back down to the valley and stopped at the Grassmayer Bell Factory. This is an active bell factory that still makes brass bells of all shapes and sizes, from the little "tinkle-tinkle" bells you use to summon your maid (you have one of those don't you?) up to 6-ft diameter church bells. We were lucky enough to be there on a day when they were actually going to pour some bells. Although the ladies decided that they would rather head back to town for some more shopping, Mike and Andy and I hung around to watch the fireworks. As the time for the pour approached, a crowd of several dozen people collected, including the Bürgermeister (mayor) and a priest to bless the bells. Pouring the molten brass into the molds it was pretty spectacular. We were surprised that we were allowed to be as close as we were to the action. At one point we even had to back up because the red-hot, splashing metal got a little too close for comfort. The consensus was that OSHA is definitely not active in Austria. After the bells were poured it was time to celebrate, and they passed out small pieces of cake and shots of Schnapps. Austrian Schnapps is not like the sugary liquids that we are familiar with at home. Teri bought a bottle of what she thought was peach Schnapps (skier's cough syrup), but those who sampled her bottle disagreed as to whether it tasted more like tequila or turpentine.

Friday night Greg and Lynn Crawford and Jim and Linda Ayers were invited to go sledding by a friend who lives in Innsbruck. Unfortunately, the rain prevented the sledding but I understand took a very "invigorating" walk up the side of the mountain to a nice local restaurant. The rest of us had our "last supper" at the Sailer Hotel. After dinner they brought out pitchers of beer and wine, and we were blessed with a performance by "Michael The Magnificent" (aka Michael Clary). For those of you who have not seen Michael perform, he is a very accomplished magician. With Gwen Broeren and Susie Nash as willing volunteers, he baffled us all with the "migrating wedding ring" trick. Actually, Michael was a little tame



*Murano glass blower*



*Debbie Walters tempted by Murano glass*



*Casting a bell at Grassmayer Bell Factory*



*Wine tasting at Vipiteno*



*Near the new ski jump in Innsbruck*



*Italian pastry shop*

this time, as he allowed the volunteers to leave with all of their clothing. After a few awards for those who deserved “special recognition” (come to the Awards Party next month to learn more), it was time to call it a night. We ordered a 3:30 am wake up call to get us back to Munich for our flight home. That was true for all but Dave and Nancy Sutton, who had arranged to stay over for a few days in Munich. They decided it was easier to sleep in for a few more hours and take the train than to ride with us.

Except for having to wake up so early, our trip home was off to a good start. We made it to the airport in Munich with plenty of time to spare and said good-bye to Leslie Nichols and Teri Mahony, who had different flights home, and to our new friend Brigitte. Although she was really under no obligation to do so, she got up early too and rode to Munich with us just to make sure that we all got off okay.

The beginning of the trip home went fine for most but not necessarily for all. Andy Nash made a lunge to catch a luggage cart that was rolling away from him and managed to “blow out” the crotch of his jeans. Off course he got a great deal of sympathy from the rest of us, as soon as we quit laughing and pointing him out to everyone we knew. LeAnn took him to a store to buy some new pants, but he decided that paying \$100 for a pair of corduroys that didn’t fit was more painful than walking around in a “Michael Jackson pose.”

The flight from Munich to Copenhagen was smooth with a very scenic landing (ask to see Milt’s pictures). We had a few hours to kill so, while Eileen went with the Clary’s to get a tax refund (like in Canada, certain sales taxes are refundable when you leave the European Union), I decided to have a beer with a few of the others. A half hour later Tony Curcio found me, after searching half the restaurants in this very large airport, to tell me that Eileen had gone out of the secure area of the airport to get her refund, and they wouldn’t let her back in. It turned out that I had the boarding passes, and they wouldn’t let her come back in through security without one. So I had to go “bail her out.” She was waiting with the guard when I got there and when I walked up to them, I asked “Who are you?” She didn’t seem to think that it was as funny as I did. But they did let her back in. Part of our group left us in Copenhagen, as Martha Osterhoff and Dawn Davis had arranged to stay a few days in Denmark to visit a friend.

Our flight was about an hour late coming into Chicago, which was extremely lucky because many flights were cancelled due to bad weather. Everyone made it through customs without incident, and our trusty bus driver, Mark, was waiting for us. But it turned out that they had switched buses on him that morning, and all of our beer and pop, which he had loaded onto the bus the day before, had been sent out with someone else. Mark knew that this would be a thirsty crowd, so he took care of us. While waiting for our plane to land, he went out and bought plenty of refreshments for the ride



*The group at Swarovski Crystal World*

home. Even though we had been traveling for many hours, the bus ride home was festive until everyone went to sleep.

Overall, I think everyone will agree that the trip was a success. Once again, we lucked out and had no serious injuries on the slopes. Gwen Broeren did twist her knee one day, but not enough to keep her from skiing. Our most serious injury actually occurred in the hotel. Dawn Davis fell on the step coming out of the ski-storage room and sprained her ankle. It did necessitate a trip to the emergency room for an x-ray, but it didn't slow her down much the rest of the week.

A few notes about skiing in Europe: Most of us went to Austria with the preconceived notion that the people on the slopes would be very rude, that the slopes would be poorly marked, and that there would be very little grooming. We found all of these to be untrue around Innsbruck. Because the lift lines are not as organized as they are in the U.S., you do have to work your way to the front, but the people were not rude or pushy. The runs were exceptionally well marked with flags along the sides. The grooming at Stubai was fine, and I think it would have been fine at St. Anton had they not been buried under all the new snow. I would not hesitate to go back to Austria to ski. The people there were fantastic. In many ways it is a much more open and trusting environment than ours. Try checking into a hotel here or take a tour without paying in advance or having a credit card on file. Most of us had completed several tours before being asked to pay, and nobody had to sign any contracts or liability waivers. Do you think maybe they don't have as many attorneys over there? (Oops, sorry Gwen.) I thought it was a great trip, and my biggest regret is that more of you couldn't have been with us. Next time we have one of these trips, get to the sign-up meeting early, and fight your way to the front of the line. ♦♦



*Flight from Munich to Copenhagen*



*Sleepy time at the airport*

### **For those of you who didn't get mentioned**

in the trip report, sorry! Next time do something embarrassing, and you will get included. Even though they didn't necessarily do anything embarrassing, I would like to acknowledge the other new members on the trip that were not previously mentioned. They were Don Charlton's friend Jim (aka Dick) Smith, and Ed Krol's friend Dick Harris. We are glad you joined us and hope you will come back on future trips and other ski club events. Thanks to everyone on the trip for making my job easy.

—Denny

## Trip report

# Granite Peak, Wisconsin

February 4–6, 2005

by Chris Haydel, trip leader, and Jessica Blaine



THE GRANITE PEAK TRIP may have had the most interesting start of the year. We had one full bus, but two buses showed up at 3:30 pm. First, we had to return to WildCountry to pick up Brandy's skis, and then we toured a bit through Champaign to pick up homework for one of the kids. Finally, we made it out of town!

Milt Forsberg kept the kids (and some adults) occupied with magic and puzzle games. I've always enjoyed the games on the bus and decided to have a bunch of them. We had quite a competitive group, especially when we tried to get four-of-a-kind in cards. Then we had each half of the bus compete against the other half in a quick game of Scattergories, with the winning half getting Champaign Ski Club huggies. After a timed test on candy bar clues, the Reifstecks and Jannusches had a good supply of candy bars. Did they ever share? Ballots for movies were collected, and *50 First Dates* was the first feature of the trip. At this time everyone with a gambling streak began to guess the arrival time of the bus, and Bruce Kelle took home the loot. Saturday was a bright sunshiny day. Kids and adults took lots of lessons.



After skiing, there was a great hot tub, kiddie pool with whale slide, and cold drinks to enjoy. In the evening, 17 pizzas were devoured along with salad and a surprise birthday cake for my mom. One of the biggest memories of this trip will be Mark the bus



(BOTTOM THREE) MILT FORSBERG



driver's hot sauce. Some tried it and cried for hours. Some didn't but came in contact with it and had swollen lips and burning skin. Beware of friends bearing hot sauce! I have some more if anyone wants to experiment.

Sunday provided us with quite a challenge . . . rain. Surprisingly enough, almost half the trippers made it to the slopes on the first bus run. The kids weren't going to let a little rain dampen their vacation. Mark ran a second bus at 10 am, and the hotel let the wimps stay behind until 2 pm. The rain had stopped when the bus got there and didn't start again until the Illini game (good excuse, huh, Scott?). We had almost a full day of skiing although it was a little wet if you fell. Alec Riefsteck even left his dad and kept up with the Haydel boys and Derek Nagy. (Is this a good thing?)

There were more games on the bus, before getting our Subways, two more movies, and finally arriving home. This was our first trip to run. We had great accommodations (TVs in the bathroom even), fun skiing, and we didn't mess up too badly!

I want to thank all the people on the trip, especially for all that cooler carrying. ♦♦

## Saturday highlights

"Getting away . . . meeting new members"

"Watching Zack conquer his fear of heights" (went solo on the lift)

"Returning with the same person 30 years later" (picture time for the McCulleys)

"Not quite conquering the moguls" (next time Bailey)

"First day I didn't fall down" (Mitch)

"Watching Mitch and Allister racing down the hill"

"Tanya and Mitch getting stuck at the bottom of a lift that wasn't working" (Great hike! Be glad it wasn't a walk to the top)

"Chris Hanner snowboarding for the first time" (needs a little work on those 360s)

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## Race report

# Marquette:

## The Superbowl of CMSC racing

by Scott Dahman, race coordinator



Seven racers made the long trek to Marquette, Michigan on Super Bowl weekend—Mark Monnin, Todd, Kim, and Sam Mowry, John Wegman, Neill Wilkins, and yours truly. Elaine and Jake Schlorff and Sara Smith also accompanied.

The Friday race clinic was great, though not too heavy on instruction. By contrast, Ski Brule puts on a textbook clinic to kick off the opening weekend the CMSC racing season. Coach Wendy observes each racer from the bottom of the hill and provides detailed commentary and choice advice for improvement. As I completed a particularly rough run on a well-worn slalom course in the 40 degree Marquette sun, I stumbled over to Coach hoping to get a prescription. A racer from the Chicago Friars, Eric Carl, was already BS-ing with him as I approached. The exchange went something like this:

*Scott to Coach:* At least your water won't freeze today.

*Eric:* That's not water.

*Scott:* Well then it certainly won't freeze.

*Coach:* Yeah dude, our Thursday night race league is real intense.

Right on, bro. Do you mean the racing or the extracurricular activities? But let's not be critical. For the price of a discounted lift ticket at Wilmot, Marquette Mountain delivered not only the lift ticket, but set two practice courses on the closest thing to a real mountain as can be found in the Midwest, whipped up all the half-chickens and potato salad we could eat, and poured all the beer we could drink at lunch. As usual, they delivered more than we paid for.

Not wanting anything to slow him down, Neill drove solo Friday night, while the Mowry kidlets and Jake rode three-wide in the back of a Subaru. Rumor has it that ol' Neill made the 520-mile trip in about six hours, packing a meal and stopping only for gas. Why so slow, Neill? Oh yeah, Chicago rush hour.

The folks at Marquette are great. They run the show, with the local race team and coaches setting the course and doing just about everything except registration and awards. They also have the cure for racers weary of all the turning typically required in slalom and GS. The Marquette Super G course has about three different personalities along its 600 vertical feet, including a steep tuck-and-go section at the top, followed by a long flat with minimal turning, and capped with an airborne launch into the sweeping bottom section.

In the Saturday slalom race, poor Neill could smell the finish when he crashed into a gate and lost a ski. Todd also posted a DNF on his second run. Mark Monnin and I took gold medals in our respective classes, while the kidlets rounded out the podium in their class with silver for Sam and bronze for Kimmie. John held on for a

### We're in fourth place

after the Marquette race, with 4281 points. We need 1414 points to catch third-place Chicago Friars. Sam Mowry and Scott Dahman were promoted to new classes, C Women and B Men, respectively. The good news is that they are getting better. The bad news is that it will be harder for them to win races.

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fifth place finish. Neill, John, Mark, and I took part in the Super G. A great time was had by all, despite John's spectacular crash near the finish line.

The Sunday GS race was marred by clouds and a steady light rain. The silver lining was the empty slopes. I'm sure Marquette Mountain and their volunteers wished we would just go away so they could shut down and start their Super Bowl parties, but we heard no such complaining from our friendly hosts

The weekend would not be complete without a couple more crashes, so Todd and I decided to make it complete. I lost an edge and could offer no excuse for my difficulty in handling the wet conditions. I kept my equipment, hiked up to catch a missed gate, and completed the run to secure a few points for the club. Failing to finish a single run, Todd appealed to an astonished crowd of onlookers at the bottom that he was just skiing faster than his ability to read the course. No argument here, though the consensus among credible observers was that he really wasn't moving too fast. Todd has rightfully earned a new nickname—DiNF.

In the end, Mark Monnin took home the club's sole gold medal of the day. Neill bounced back with a second place finish, besting a legally blind guy. John fulfilled his dream to win a medal this year with a third. Sam won her race, but skied so fast that the race committee instantly bumped her to the C Women class and denied her a medal, while Kimmie hung in there with a fourth. Though my fall secured a last place finish, my second run was strong enough to earn a fourth strike, bumping me to the B Men class. Now that I have to face young speed demons like Derek "Mute" Nagy, it is time to duck into the phone booth and emerge with a new wardrobe!

After the racing, everyone was eager to hit the road and maybe get home in time to watch the end of the big game. The kidlets contemplated hitching a ride with Neill when a disturbing thought crept into Sam's head: (somewhere around Green Bay)

*Kimmie:* I have to go potty!

*Neill:* Here is an empty Pepsi can. Try not to spill on the floor.

*Kimmie:* But I can't hold it still unless you slow down to 90.

On second thought, they decided to squish back into the Subaru. . . . And thanks to the one hour time change, Neill arrived home before he left.

The unusually high level of slopeside carnage over the weekend remains a mystery. The leading theory is that Sara Smith possesses telekinesis and likes to watch skiers fall. Even her sweetie, John, is not immune. Maybe it is payback for him getting her knee messed up at Brule. It pays to stay on Sara's good side!

"Thank you, Marquette" for another memorable weekend! If I make only one race next year, I'll be back.

Ski fast! ♦♦

## Racing terms demystified

**GS:** giant-slalom race, similar to a typical NASTAR course. Gates consist of two poles, connected by a fabric "panel."

**SL:** slalom race, a challenging event requiring a seemingly endless series of tightly linked turns around single-pole gates. Gates break away, so skilled racers can knock them down as they pass. Racers who don't like to think too much are bamboozled by this event. The Champaign Team has a few such racers, but it shall be left to the reader to discern their identities.

**Handicap:** A measure of a racer's performance computed as the percentage of time in excess of the par-time.

**Par-time:** An estimate of the time a world-class racer would take to complete the course, determined by the times of one or more pacesetters and the hill-factor.

**Hill-factor:** A multiplier to adjust the par-time according to the length and difficulty of the course. The hill-factor is usually determined by placing a wet index finger in a drafty space, or it may be extracted from a certain bodily cavity below the waist.

**Class:** CMSC racing has five ability classes, ranging from fastest to slowest: Elite, A, B, C, and D. Each ability class is defined by a range of handicaps. There are also divisions based on gender and age.

**Strike:** A strike is given for each run that exceeds the bounds of one's ability class. A racer is promoted to the next ability class after receiving four strikes.

**DQ:** A fine establishment serving tasty treats, or the racing specialty of Judy Haydel and Mike Sargent.

**CHAMPAIGN SKI CLUB  
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2004-5

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The board meets at 7 pm the Tuesday following the second Monday of every month at The Bread Company in Urbana. All are welcome.

# Year End Awards Party



**Friday  
April 22**  
V.F.W. Hall  
09 Edgebrook Drive  
Champaign



*6 pm*  
Social time  
with appetizers and drinks.  
Order dinner from the kitchen.

*7 pm*  
Meeting starts with awards and  
election of new board members

*8 pm*  
Live Entertainment!  
Featuring nationally recognized '50s  
and '60s rock and roll band

**JIM EASTER  
& THE ARTISTICS**

***Don't miss this special event***  
to share pictures, reminisce and dance the night  
away (till 11 pm anyway) with good friends

***You may be getting an award***  
and don't even know it

***Mark your calendars now***  
and bring your trip pictures

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The V.F.W. Hall is near where the old KMart used to be. From Prospect Avenue, take Bloomington Road east. Turn left on Hagan Street, then right on Edgebrook. There is plenty of parking on the street, in the lot west of the building, and across the street in the lot for city employees.

# Club calendar

## *First Friday Happy Hour*

- Fri Mar 4 6 pm at Hideaway of the Woods Grill & Bar,  
809 S. Prairieview Rd., Mahomet, 586.7722
- Fri Apr 1 6 pm at Olive Garden, 30 E. Anthony Dr.,  
Champaign, 351.6339

## *Parties*

- Fri Mar 18 St. Patrick's Day Party featuring Mulligan Stew. 6 pm  
at Steve Maloney's, 1408 Maplecrest, Champaign
- Fri Apr 22 Year End Awards Party, Champaign

## *Winter trips*

- Mar 20-27 Big White, British Columbia



BOB GRIFFIN

A group of us got together at Don Kennen's house in Silverthorne, Colorado, for a spaghetti dinner. From top to bottom: Don Kennen, David Garner, Tanya Muller, Mike Clary, Dana Clary, Judy Tolliver, Ed Krol, Steve Smith, Denny Coleman, Joyce Goggin, Kelly Smith, and Eileen Coleman. The photo was taken by former club member Bob Griffin, who was visiting with his wife Alice from Evanston, Wyoming, where they retired. The Smiths were at Copper Mountain demoing next season's equipment for WildCountry.



## **St. Patrick's Day Party**

**Friday, March 18**

**6 pm at Steve  
Maloney's**

featuring  
**MULLIGAN STEW,**  
with everyone  
bringing something  
for the pot!

Meat will be provided by the club, and you bring canned vegetables, soups, and broths that will be added to make a one-of-a-kind, delicious stew. Or, if you choose, you can bring breads or desserts.

This is a BYOB party, with dinner as a bonus.

1408 Maplecrest Drive  
Champaign  
355.0534



*Beaver Creek, Colorado, in early February*

# The Back Page

Last month I skied with a helmet (Giro 9) for the first time, and after the first five minutes, I didn't even notice it. It was warm, comfortable, extremely lightweight, and it even looks cool. Count me in with the helmet converts—I can't imagine skiing without one now. Bonus: it was manufactured right here in East Central Illinois, in Rantoul.

*—Judy Tolliver, Editor  
tolliver@uiuc.edu*



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