

# SNOWSPORT CYMRU/WALES SUMMER NEWS 2004



## WELCOME

Welcome to the summer edition of Snowsport Wales News, bringing you news of all the activities of snowsports in Wales and of Welsh skiers & snowboarders.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Snowsport Cymru/Wales is holding its ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING on Saturday 11 September 2004 at 5.00 pm in Llandudno (venue to be confirmed). All members are invited to attend and are most welcome. The AGM deals with reports upon the years activities, accounts and election of officers for the following year.

In particular Snowsport Wales are in need of a Snowboard Director to represent and assist the development of Snowboarding in Wales. We are also in need of Press & Publicity Officers to help promote our activities and Welsh Snowsport stars. If anyone is interested in either of these roles we would be delighted to hear from them. Invites to the AGM will be sent to all members in August.

## WELSH ALPINE WEEK & CHAMPS - OPPDAL, NORWAY

Oppdal in Norway are to host the first Welsh Alpine Championships to be held in over twenty years 4th-11th December 2004. The week will include training opportunities for all racers entered into the events as well as a whole host of other activities for parents and recreational skiers. The main event of the week will be the Welsh Alpine Championships which will include Slalom and Giant Slalom events, races for minis through to masters are included in the format.

Prices for the week start at £431.00 and include return flights from Bristol, transfers, accommodation and lift passes.

As well as providing a great race opportunity, the Welsh Alpine Week is a great chance for recreational skiers to get in an early week of skiing to start the season.

For further details of the Welsh Alpine Week and to book your place on the trip go to our website [www.snowsportwales.net](http://www.snowsportwales.net). Alternatively go directly to Oppdal's website [www.oppdal.co.uk](http://www.oppdal.co.uk), where you can book online directly.

## OPPDAL SPONSOR CELTIC CUP SERIES

Oppdal ski resort have also sponsored the Snowsport Wales Celtic Cup Series, now titled the Oppdal Celtic Cup Series. The sponsorship has enabled Snowsport Wales to buy new equipment ensuring events are run to the highest levels.

The Oppdal Celtic Cup Series was run over three weekends at Pontypool and Llandudno snowsport centres in May, June and July. Over 120 competitors participated in each of the events which included five slalom competitions, a giant slalom and an extremely exciting knock out parallel slalom event to culminate the series.

Welsh Ski Team members achieved great results in the series with Mike Hatcher (age 19 from Cardiff) winning the series overall title and Gemma Harris (age 16 from Cardiff) taking third place overall and winning her age group.

## WELSH SKI TEAM SPONSORSHIP

The Welsh Ski Team are delighted to be able to continue to benefit from sponsorship of both Cross Sportswear, who are providing their uniforms and Labour Ready Cardiff providing financial support towards the ski team.



## ALPINE TRACKS SPONSOR WELSH SCHOOLS SKIING PROGRAMME

More good news on the sponsorship front came with the support of Welsh based skiing holiday company Alpine Tracks. Alpine Tracks, based in Bangor North Wales have agreed to support Welsh Schools skiing events for the next three years, this has also been matched by the Sports Council for Wales Sports Match Cymru funding scheme. Alpine Tracks organise skiing holidays in the alps, based at Morzine in France, Lech in Austria & Champoluc in Italy. For mountain biking enthusiasts they also organise mountain biking holidays in the summer months in Morzine, one of the meccas for mountain biking in the alps for further details visit their website [www.alpinetracks.com](http://www.alpinetracks.com)

Schools events have been held at five different venues through the spring and early summer months, it is anticipated that up to 400 children will participate in the schools skiing programme this year.

## WELSH SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIPS 2004 - ALPINE TRACKS

Sunday 3rd October 2004 at Llangrannog. Race entry forms will be circulated to affiliated schools and can also be obtained from Snowsport Cymru/Wales office and website.

## WWW.SNOWSPORTWALES.NET

To find out everything you need to know about Welsh skiing and snowboarding, mail order Sales, ski and travel insurance, forthcoming events etc. visit our website [www.snowsportwales.net](http://www.snowsportwales.net)

## BATMAN CHALLENGES FOR OPPDAL CELTIC CUP HONOURS



## ALPINE SKI COURSE LEADER AWARD - FEBRUARY 1/2 TERM

Snowsport Wales have organised the above course for February half term 2005. The course is designed to train and assess teachers and others leading school groups on skiing courses in the skills required to conduct their pupils safely around the mountain when they are not in lessons.

The course is being run in the Portes de Soleil region in the French Alps. Accommodation will be in a catered chalet in Morzine. The course is being supported by Alpine Tracks Ltd

The cost of the course is £582.00, including half board accommodation and courses fees (flights and lifts passes are not included). For further details contact the Snowsport Wales Office.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE SLOPES IN WALES

At each of the slopes in Wales there is an affiliated snowsport club organising regular coaching sessions in the evenings for its members. Each of the clubs differ in their emphasis though most are focused on providing training for juniors, slalom training and recreational skiing and coaching. Many of the clubs organise holidays to the snow both for recreational trips and more specialist activities. Club sessions are as follows:

- North Wales Ski Club Friday : Plas Y Brenin  
Contact: Rona Thomas Tel: 01492 640042
- Meirionydd Ski Club Tuesday : Trawsfynydd  
Contact: Simon Bromley Tel: 01407 860877
- Swansea Nomads Monday: Swansea & Pembrey  
Contact: Annette Evans Tel: 01792 844754
- Mery Hunt Tel: 01792 865565
- Cardiff Ski Club Tuesday: Cardiff Ski Centre 6pm  
Contact: Richard Wilson Tel: 01446 750659
- Torfaen Ski Club Wednesday : Pontypool Ski slope  
Contact: Ian Gurner Tel: 01495 245197
- Dragons Alpine Club Organise training and racing on snow in the alps through school holidays  
Contact: Georgina Kellen Tel: 02920 312762

## COACH & INSTRUCTOR TRAINING

Have you been skiing or snowboarding for a while now and want to put something back into your sport or just want to know more about how to teach & coach snowsports? You need to join the Snowsport Cymru/Wales Coaching Scheme. There are a variety of instructor training courses at level 1 and level 2 together with assessment and revalidation courses scheduled throughout the year on artificial slopes. Visit the Snowsport Wales Website [www.snowsportwales.net](http://www.snowsportwales.net) for up to date course calendar. A Calendar of Coaching Scheme courses can be obtained from the office. In particular we offer the following courses;

### Artificial Slope Snowboard Instructor Course

This course trains and qualifies snowboard instructors to teach at all levels on artificial slopes. The course is run over two weekends including Friday evenings.

### Artificial Slope Ski Instructor Course

This course trains and qualifies snowboard instructors to teach at all levels on artificial slopes. The course starts at level 1, Club Instructor, with a weekend training course followed by a period of supervised instruction and a one day assesment.

### Artificial Slope Performance Coaches Course

A week long course based in the UK training coaches to work with performers within clubs on artificial ski slopes.

### Alpine Performance Coaches Course

A week long course based in the alps training coaches to work with performers within clubs on snow. We work closely with Snowsport Scotland and England to deliver this course.

### Tutors Training Course

An initial training programme run at an artificial ski slope venue preparing potential tutors to embark upon training and accreditation as Tutors and Assessors for Coaching Scheme Courses.

Contact the Snowsport Cymru/Wales office for detail on any of the coaching scheme courses.

## SKI RACING FOR MASTERS (OVER 30s)

There is growing interest amongst older skiers in Masters racing (for over 30s). The British Masters Group of Snowsport GB is therefore widening its programme of activities. It is planned to hold at least 3 Training days this autumn at X-Scape Snozone centres in both Milton Keynes and Castleford and at Hillend for Scottish participants. Other days may be arranged at other artificial slopes in England if sufficient volunteer organisers can be found. The courses are intended to provide an introduction to racing for experienced older skiers as well as a get-together for the British Masters Group. Participants will have the opportunity to find out about Masters racing both in the UK and in the FIS Masters Cup (FIS-MC) Alpine races abroad. A 'FUNSTAR' race will conclude the days so that racers can see how they fare compared to

existing racers on the circuit. There is no requirement to be registered to attend these training days.

Further information will be published on the Masters web site [www.mastersski.com](http://www.mastersski.com) or may be obtained by sending a SAE to: Alan Jones, 3 Green Mount, Upton, Wirral, Merseyside, CH49 6NR.

The British Masters Group is also hoping to organise groups to attend the Kandahar Masters FIS-MC race at Courmayeur, Italy, 29-30 January and the Masters World Criterium at Sun Valley, USA, 5-9 April 2005. Some British Masters may well participate in other FIS-MC races.

Many older skiers who were unable, in their younger days, to enjoy the opportunities for racing and training that are available today, are now seeking to make up for lost time. This is shown by increasing numbers of entries in races both on plastic and on snow. They have taken their inspiration from the late James Woolgar who was racing the full Masters Circuit up to the age of 83 and was 3 times World Champion in his age group, although he did not get involved in racing until he joined the British Masters Group. Since the Masters Alpine series of races started seventeen years ago, over 100 international medals have been won by British skiers, many of them not former national squad members.

## WELSH SQUAD SELECTION

WOMEN	STATUS	CLUB
Gemma Harris	Alpine/Artificial A	Dragons/Cardiff
Stephanie Bream	Alpine	Kandahar (awaiting fitness tests)
Alice Thelwell	Artificial A	Dragons/Arrows
Emily Goddard	Artificial B	Dragons/Gloucester
Aimee Broughton	Artificial B	Dragons/Cardiff
MEN		
Michael Bool	Artificial A	Cardiff (awaiting fitness tests)
Rhys Evans	Artificial A	Swansea (awaiting fitness tests)
Philip Harris	Artificial A	Dragons/Cardiff
David Hatcher	Artificial A	Kandahar/Cardiff
Michael Hatcher	Artificial A	Kandahar/Cardiff
Will Manns	Artificial A	Dragons/Gloucester
Jamie Page	Artificial A	Kandahar/Cardiff
Peter Thelwell	Artificial A	Dragons/Sharks
Matthew Bradley	Artificial B	Stoke/Dragons
Andrew Crawford	Artificial B	Dragons/Swansea
Philip Gardner	Artificial B	Slalom Plus
Alex Jeal	Artificial B	Dragons/Gloucester
Simon Kilday	Artificial B	Dragons/Cardiff
Chris Mountfield	Artificial B	Swansea
Michael Thelwell	Artificial B	Dragons/Arrows
Andrew Watson	Artificial B	Dragons/Cardiff
Simon Watson	Artificial B	Dragons/Cardiff
Hugh Wilson	Artificial B	Dragons/Cardiff

## SNOWLIFE UK SNOWSPORT AWARDS

Snowsport Cymru/Wales together with other governing bodies and British skiing schools are now up and running with this scheme. The awards covers both skiing and snowboarding and whilst principally aimed at children and youths, the activities are also applicable for adults.

Snowsport Awards are a test of skills, knowledge and safety for skiers and snowboarders of all abilities. There are nine levels of award ranging from the introductory level to the highest test of all round ability.

The scheme is open to all skiers and snowboarders and there are no age restrictions. It may be entered at any level - it is not necessary to gain each award before doing the next level. Group leaders and school teachers (SCOs) can assess Level1. All other levels can be assessed by qualified ski or snowboard instructors, leaders or coaches.

Awards can be ordered by qualified instructors, leaders and staff at ski centres. A colour booklet that contains all nine levels for skiers and snowboarders can also be ordered from Snowsport Cymru/Wales. An information sheet giving descriptions & diagrams can be downloaded from the Snowsport Wales Website [www.snowsportwales.net](http://www.snowsportwales.net)

## OPPDAL CELTIC CUP SERIES WINNERS 2004

Men	Women
1st Michael Hatcher - Cardiff	1st Shanna Prince - Hemel
2nd Craig Ruddick- Sunderland	2nd Sega Fairweather - Swadlincote
3rd Daniel Wyatt - Pental	3rd Gemma Harris - Cardiff

## AVOID INJURY

Lets face it, Snowsports have a bad reputation for injuries, we've all seen the film clips of someone walking (hopping) off the plane with a leg in plaster. But our sports reputation as a dangerous activity is often overblown. Skiing injuries have apparently decreased 50 percent over the past 25 years. Thanks to better bindings, the rate of broken legs has declined 95 percent since the early Seventies.

However, knee injuries, particularly to the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL), are up. About 24,000 skiers a year injure their ACLs, which works out to one torn ACL for every 2,100 skier visits. But a bit of common sense, along with planning and conditioning, can help you stay off the disabled list. Here's how.

**Before You Go** You've heard these before, but do you really follow them? If not, you're asking for trouble.

**Stay Tuned** Sharpened, waxed skis & boards simply turn better and more accurately than those with rusty, dull edges and dried, gouged bases. Square, polished edges grip better and help you maintain control. Inspect your bases for gouges, and run your finger down the edge to check for dings. Keep your equipment in good condition, and insist that rentals or demos are tuned. Don't forget your boots. They should be set up for your particular legs and feet, so that they fit like a glove. Custom footbeds provide comfort and better feel for the snow.

**Check Your Bindings** Have your bindings checked. A setting that is too low (causing your ski to come off when you don't want it to) is every bit as dangerous as one that is too high. Transport your equipment in a bag to keep them clean. Dirt, grime, road salt and overhandling affect a binding's function.

**Shape Up** Skiing & snowboarding is not about brute force, but it pays to strengthen both your muscles and your cardiovascular system. Especially focus on sports specific exercises. Many injuries occur from muscle imbalances, so make sure you don't train one muscle group while neglecting its opposite. For example, you must strengthen hamstrings as well as quads, back muscles as well as abdominals. Muscular strength gives you confidence, staves off fatigue and affords more control. Being aerobically fit is especially important at altitude. The more oxygen you pump to your extremities, the safer you will be. But remember: Regardless of how much time you spend in the gym, you are going to get tired and sore. Snowsports use muscles that exercise machines never reach.

**Stay Loose** Warm, loose and elongated muscles not only work better, but also put less stress on the ligaments that connect your bones and the joints themselves. The more you warm up, the greater your range of motion and the less your risk of injury. It's best to stretch indoors before each day on the hill. But even simple stretches atop the lift before your first run are better than nothing. Concentrate on your quads, hamstrings and calves, but also stretch the shoulders, lower back and abdominals.

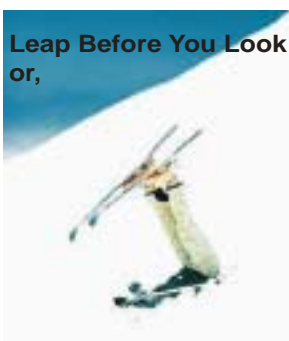
**On the Hill** Pre-skiing prep won't help much unless you also follow these on-mountain precautions.

**Falling Well** There is one constant in skiing & snowboarding: We all fall. The trick is to fall without getting injured. Some falls happen unexpectedly, and some are intentional (falling is our fail-safe brake). If you see a fall coming, keep your arms out of the way and try to land on your side. If you put a knee, elbow or thumb down first you are more prone to injury.

Knowing how to (and how not to) fall is the best protection against ACL injuries. Don't fight a fall. If you lose balance backward and feel your hips fall away behind your feet, your ACL is stressed and

**Leap Before You Look or,**

**Look Before You Leap!**



**If you're gonna go, Go for it!**

**May be check your equipment first**



vulnerable to tearing. Better to tip over sideways and slide to a stop than battle to stay upright. Lose face, but save a knee.

**Stay Centered** To keep falls to a minimum, you have to stay balanced over the center of the skis. Your bindings and boots encourage you to stay in this athletic stance, much like a tennis player's "ready" position. Keep your hands forward and sense the soles of your feet at all times; then make corrections as needed.

**Test The Snow** Forget the kamikaze approach: Good skiers test snow before they charge down the hill-especially in the more extreme territory. Ice, drifts, windslab, rocks, hazards, cornices and crevices are often not visible. Feel the snow by poking it with a pole or stamping it with your ski. Venture slowly into uncharted snow.

**Look For The Fall Line** The most catastrophic falls occur when a skier is momentarily confused or disoriented. Sometimes we fail to understand where the fall line would take us if we lost control and fell. This is especially true in bumps, or on off-camber (tilted) runs. Study an unfamiliar slope beforehand. Where is the basic fall line? In other words, if you were to let a ball roll down the hill, what course would it take? Where and how often does the fall line change? Understand & know where the hill really is.

**20/20 Vision** Glare reflected off snow is a serious menace to vision, which often leads to on-hill mishaps. Choose sunglasses and goggles for their UVA/UVB ray-screening properties as well as fashion. Take them with you, even if it looks cloudy; light changes rapidly in the mountains. Fog, shadows and flat light make it tough to gauge snow texture. Look for eyewear with easily interchangeable lenses, so you can choose the right tint whatever the light condition - yellow or red when it's cloudy; brown, green or orange for moderate or variable light; gray or mirrored for bright sunlight; and polarized to cut glare. If you choose to use just one colour, consider orange. An orange tint - light, medium or dark-seems to be the best color for allowing proper

light transmission and helping you see moguls and curves. Orange is also versatile; it's good for both bright and foggy days. In addition to finding the right lens, make sure your eyewear has a good ventilation system. Finally, don't move your goggles up to your forehead and then back down to your eyes. They're sure to fog.

**Dress Right** Cold sportsmen are stiff and slow to react, so it's important to dress warmly. Overheated sportsmen, on the other hand, get tired faster, lose strength, and become short of breath and dehydrated. Wear layers you can take off or put back on. Choose high-tech fabrics that keep you

warm but also let your body breathe.

**Drink Liquids** Dehydration saps strength and impairs judgement. You can become dehydrated long before your body senses you are thirsty. Carry water with you, and drink plenty and often. Go light on coffee and alcohol, which lower hydration levels.

**Know Your Limits** People get hurt when they are where they should not be. Too often they are lured or goaded there by well-meaning friends. Accept challenges, but don't get in over your head. If it is your first time at a new mountain, get a map and identify those runs that are right for you. Ask locals or patrollers for directions and advice about conditions, or hire an instructor or guide. Go with people who are slightly better than you are, but avoid those who are a lot better-unless they are willing to slow down and ski your terrain at your speed.

**Never Take a "Last" Run** An astounding number of accident victims lament, "It was my last run!" Cold, adrenaline and excitement can mask fatigue, we are often more tired than we think. Be superstitious. Quit while you're ahead & remember a great day.

## MAIL ORDER SALES - WAXES, FILES, SKIS

Looking for great deals on tuning equipment, race protection or skis - Snowsport Cymru/Wales runs a mail order service.

Stock lists & mail order form on our website: [www.snowsportwales.net](http://www.snowsportwales.net)



## HOLDING FAST

Today's carving skis demand that we stay out ahead of them. Proper technique is not so much a matter of pressing forward into the tips as it is leading the way with your upper body. Check out the symmetry between Kostelic's head and her hands: They form a triangle with her eyes and hands leading the way. Her body position is similar to that of a basketball player guarding an opponent.



It's difficult to remain stable at high speeds if you're not in a forward position. Visualize a triangle between your head and hands when you make fast, GS turns. Keep the triangle flexible-the shape of it shouldn't be rigid, as if you're gripping the handlebars of a motorcycle. Nor should you hold your hands as if "carrying a tray," despite past advice to the contrary. Note that Kostelic's inside hand is low, and her outside hand high, yet each hand is still visible in the lower corners of her field of vision. The higher outside hand helps her balance.

Skip your pole plant whenever you're skiing fast. Except in slalom, where short turns are mandatory, pole plants have all but disappeared in ski racing. At speed, a pole plant disrupts your flow, alters your stance and slows you down. Instead, use your pole like an antenna (see Kostelic's right pole) that skims over the snow just enough to remind you where the slope is underneath you.

## AND FOR SNOWBOARDERS & ERUDITE SKIERS OUT THERE

For all alpine skiers who want to be able to understand a little snowboard speak and for snowboarders who were too frightened to ask, here's some snowboard terminology and tricks with (basic) instructions. Please feel free to correct the editor or to add some new tricks to the list for the next issue.

**Alley oop** A term used to describe any maneuver in the halfpipe where one rotates 180 or more degrees in an uphill direction; that is, rotating backside on the frontside wall.....or rotating frontside on the backside wall.

**Backside** The backside of the snowboard is the side where the heels rest; and the backside of the snowboarder is the side to which his/her back faces.

**Backside Air** Any air performed on the backside wall of the halfpipe. (thank goodness for that!)

**Boned** A term used to explain the emphasis of style in a trick. In other words, if someone "boned out a method" they would grab hard and create an emphasis of the manoeuvre such that his/her legs or arms may appear extended or stretched to a maximum degree. To "Bone" means to straighten one or both legs.

**Bonk** The act of hitting an object with the snowboard.(eg. A tail bonk could be hitting the halfpipe lip with the tail of the snowboard).

**Chicken Salad Air** The rear hand reaches between the legs and grabs the heel edge between the bindings while the front leg is boned. Also, the wrist is rotated inward to complete the grab.

**Eurocarve** A term used to describe a certain mode of riding in which the rider makes large and hard cutting turns; usually getting way up on the edge and leaning the body parallel to the ground. Certain equipment may be associated with the eurocarver.....such as hard shell boots, plate bindings, and certain clothing.

**Fakie** A term used to describe riding backwards.

**Fat** A term used to describe how cool something is... Like a "Fat Air" might be a really styled out trick as well as being "large", that is, very high.

**Gay Twist** A trick which spins 360 degrees and includes a grab.

**Goofy Footed** Riding on a snowboard with the right foot in the forward position. In other words the right foot is closest to the nose, furthest from the tail, and in between the left foot and the nose.

**Grab** To grab either edge of the snowboard with one or both hands.

**Grind** To slide with the board parallel to the coping. Also see 50/50.

**Handplant (Frontside)** A 180 degree handplant in which the front hand is planted on the lip of the wall and the rotation is frontside.

**Handplant (Layback)** A 180 degree handplant in which the rear hand is planted on the lip of the wall and the rotation is frontside.

**Ho Ho** A general term given to any two handed handplant.

**Hucker** One who throws himself/herself wildly through the air and does not land on his/her feet.

**Lip** The top edge portion of the halfpipe wall.

**Lip Trick** Any trick performed on or near the lip of the wall of the halfpipe.

**Mashed Potato** An alley oop air on the backside wall of the halfpipe where the front hand grabs the toe edge in front of the front foot (mute) and the back hand grabs the heel edge in front of the front foot behind the back. Invented by George Pappas.

More terminology & tricks to follow in the next issue.

## SNOWSPORT CYMRU/WALES GOLD MEMBER SCHEME

Snowsport Cymru/Wales has launched a new membership scheme which aims to raise money for the Welsh Squad as well as giving back a little more to the members.



Join Snowsport Cymru Wales Associate Gold Membership and get a Snowsport Cymru Wales Microfleece Polo Neck, a Snowsport Cymru Wales Gold Lapel Badge, and support the Welsh Ski Team at the same time.

All new Associate Gold Members receive a top quality microfleece polo neck in black (RRP £17.00), manufactured by Cross Sportswear and embroidered with Welsh Ski Team Supporter logo. You will also receive a Gold Members lapel badge. From membership fees of £20.00, a contribution of £5.00 will go towards supporting the Welsh Ski Team in their endeavours to get a Welsh skier into the Olympic Games.

The scheme is also available to existing members who want to support the squad and get a great value Microfleece at the same time. Existing members can purchase a Welsh Ski Team Supporter Microfleece for £15.00

A big thanks to those who have already supported the scheme, we look forward to more coming on board in the future.

Details of the schemes are on our website [www.snowsportwales.net](http://www.snowsportwales.net) or call the office 02920561904.

## FUNDING FOR WELSH SQUAD

Funding for Welsh ski squad members has improved dramatically over the past twelve months thanks to a few very important initiatives.

Sports Council for Wales, through Welsh Office funding, has provided financial support to help assist the travel costs of Welsh squad members attending squad training sessions. At the same time Sports Council for Wales has also supported the Welsh Alpine squad coaching costs.

Add these packages to the support given through sponsorship of the squad by Cross Sportswear and Labour Ready, along with the volunteer fundraising at events, the Welsh Squad is in an enviable position. Many thanks to all concerned.



**Michael Hatcher**  
Oppdal Celtic Cup  
Series Winner 2004

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY REVIEWED

Snowsport Wales has recently reviewed its child protection policy with assistance of the NSPCC and Sports Council for Wales. The new policy provides advice upon good practice, recruitment of instructors, coaches & volunteers as well as practical advice for a organisations working with clubs.

A copy of the policy is available to download from the Snowsport Cymru/Wales website - [www.snowsportwales.net](http://www.snowsportwales.net)