

On the Friday, the club room was tidied of unnecessary clutter and the old Eiger dining room next door was cleared and decorated by an indomitable force of mostly female DHO volunteers



# Amateur Inter Club Championship Races 2011

Mostly Liz Moore with contributions from Ingie Christophersen, Lizzie Davies, Cleeves Palmer and Freddie Whitelaw

**A buffet was organised in the dining room and drinks prepared in the club room. In the evening the competitors, helpers and assistants gathered for “The Captain’s meeting”, and after a short introduction from Liz Moore, once people knew where and when to congregate the following day, the party began.**

On the Saturday, everyone congregated at the Lauberhorn race track start hut at about 9.00 am. This was the GS and eventually close to 130 skiers went down the Lauberhorn course to the finish some way short of the Hundschoopf. By 12 noon it was over and most repaired to the restaurant at the top for food or a drink (or both) before then progressing to the race track side of the Bumps where a non-serious parallel slalom was organised. Some racers didn’t participate because no points were awarded in the championship for this competition, but it was enormous fun and various volunteers came from the DHO to fill the gaps created

by the “no-shows”. These included 5 members of the Mackintosh family who were out in Wengen to celebrate the 80th birthday of Douglas Mackintosh, eldest son of our ex-President Chris Mackintosh and himself an ex-Olympic skier in 1956. Douglas participated and his Mac team progressed to the 2nd round, but no further.

That evening, everyone took the train up to Kleine Scheidegg and the entire station buffet was filled to bursting. As dusk fell, the view from the restaurant of the Eiger, Monch and Jungfrau was quite magnificent. It was a truly magical occasion.

How the staff coped with everyone expecting their food at the same time we will never know, but one extremely successful weapon in their armoury was to keep the drink flowing continuously (which it did).

Various speeches were made, some a trifle inaudible and the final speech was made by Max D Amstutz, the author of the recently published book “The Golden Age of Alpine Skiing”. He drew particular attention to the fact that Alpine skiing had started here and special mention was made of that greatest of early British racers, Chris Mackintosh. Eventually the party came to an end and about 30% of the participants skied down to

Wengen with instructors from the Swiss Ski School acting as guides and keeping everyone under control. Others decided that the train offered a less energetic and warmer return to Wengen.

The following day the magnificent weather continued and a Super G was set to start at the Lauberhorn race start hut and continued down to finish rather lower than the GS of the previous day, but still just above the Hundschoopf.

Once the results were tabulated and protests heard, we all went down to the open air bar outside the Brunner Hotel where the presentation of the prizes took place. After all had been presented, the competitors rather reluctantly started on their way home.

It had been the most fantastic weekend. The team of volunteers led by Liz Moore had performed so well and delivered such a well oiled performance that we could not help but feel that it was close to perfection. It might have been a little bit like a Swan, serene on the surface but paddling like hell underneath, but if so, we could see no evidence of frantic paddling. What her team did was an enormous credit to the DHO, and reflected well not only on our club, but the village of Wengen as well.

Cleeves Palmer, Chairman of Kandahar Ski Club (Cleeves is the inventor and “father” of the AICC races, we were delighted to have him as both a guest and a competitor)



## AICC Races Introduction by Cleeves Palmer

### **4th Amateur Inter-Club Championship**

The DHO and their Wengen friends ensured a happy 4th edition of this championship, blessed by new snow and beautiful sunshine, the organisers, helpers and of course the racers could not have been luckier. Racing on the Lauberhorn piste was a tremendous privilege and I know that it was much enjoyed by the racers that I spoke to, even though the finish gate of the GS was rather interesting...

As Beat Hodler said at the 2nd Championship “What we have in common is a love for skiing and the mountains and an inextinguishable passion for ski-racing. But in the coming together for a team championship there is something additional. It is the sharing of such an adventure, the sharing of our passion with old and new friends – one says in German ‘shared sorrow is a half sorrow and shared fun is double fun’ ...” wonderful words that epitomise our coming together every year.

There is no doubt that the annual coming together of our clubs, all of whom have very

individual histories and traditions, will allow us not only to strengthen the bonds that exist, but also we can learn from each other with the gaining of new ideas that will enrich amateur ski racing in the years ahead.

I look forward to our journey to Gstaad in 2012 and I very much hope that they pass on the baton to SAS (Schweizerischer Akademischer Skiclub) for the 2013 championship.



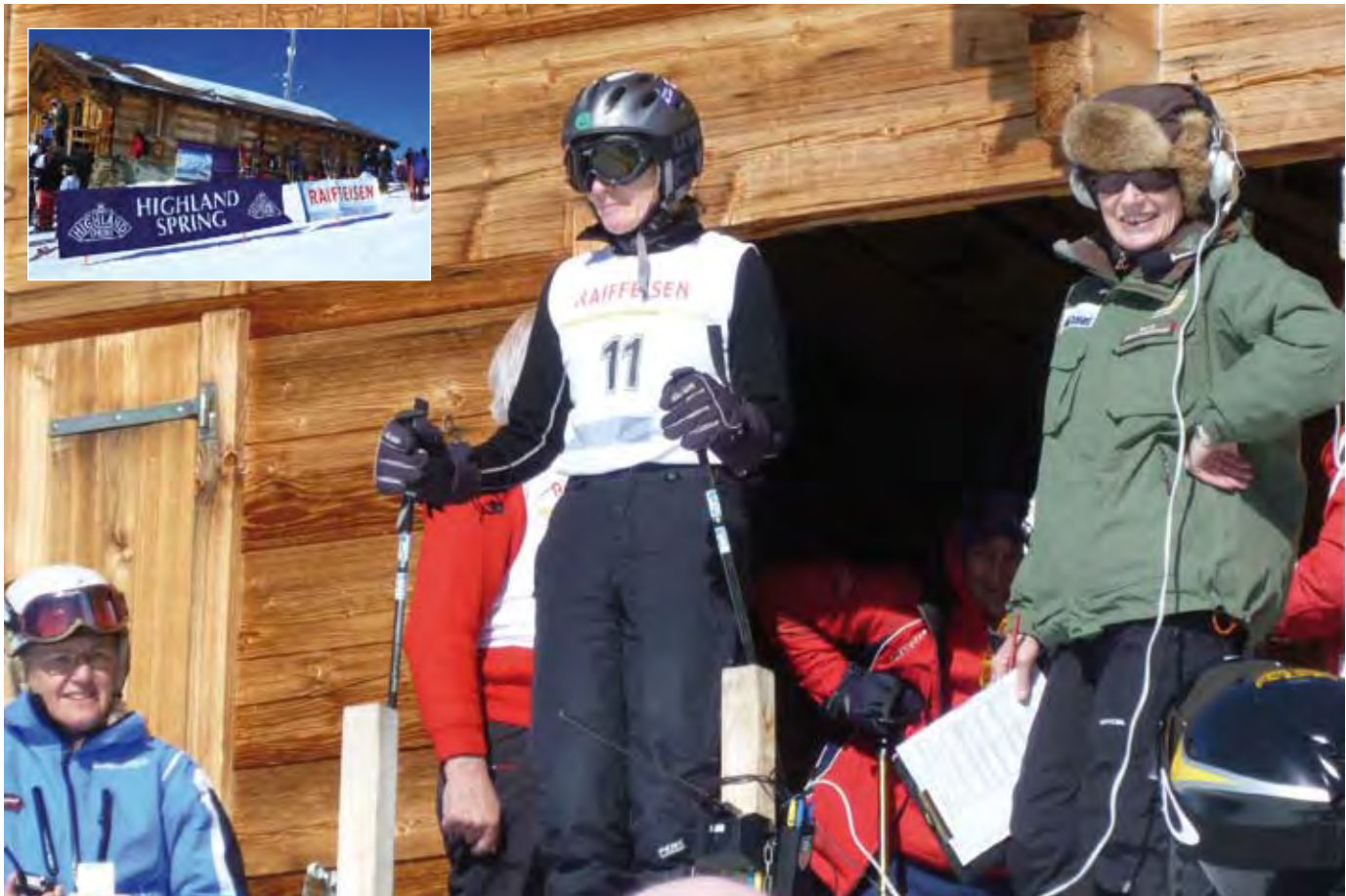
**Ingie Christophersen**

## Ingie, Chief of Race

Following the successful races in Mürren and Cortina over the last three years, it was the turn of the DHO to host the AICC races.

A mixture of racing, socialising and reminiscing, young racers hot off the FIS circuit, middle aged house-wives who always hankered after a bib on their bosom, and old fogies who were still itching to feel, and look, like Bode Miller or Herman Maier. This must be the happiest and most exhilarating way to fulfil all those dreams, amongst like-minded wanna-be racers, in the perfect setting which is the Lauberhorn piste, against the backdrop of the Eiger, the Mönch and the Jungfrau.

The week-end kicked off with the Team Captains Meeting in the DHO Club room, accompanied by generous amounts of Prosecco followed by a buffet supper in the old Eiger dining room. The Ladies who lunch (and ski) did us proud –they might not have made the food but they certainly bought it and displayed it with their own hands, DHO hospitality at its best and most generous.



**At the Lauberhorn start hut, Sarah Hoyle, Maureen Fanshawe and Ingie Christophersen**

The Giant Slalom. The crowd gathered at the bottom of the start hut ramp and the clicking of cameras was audible – you would have thought that Bode Miller and Herman Maier really were there.

When you're ready darling, was the order to start. Not quite World Cup procedure but then nor were the shapes of the competitors World Cup shapes. Bibs rode up over shiny cat-suited convex tummies and must have been difficult for the gate-keepers to see. There was a lot of huffing and puffing and rubbing of thighs and posing and posturing and in general behaving as if one had done this before and was only resuming where one had left off 40 years earlier.

The giant slalom was followed by the parallel slalom – and team spirit and competitiveness was rife. Holding racers back before the start signal was abandoned – most of them were half way to the first gate even before the starter had reached 2.

We caught the last train up to Scheidegg and the Alpen glühnen was just magnificent and magical. Scheidegg buffet, whose culinary prowess I thought reached no further than

Käseschnitte mit Ei und Röstli did us proud – posh food, beautifully served. We had speeches and hurrahs and the young skied down with torches accompanied by Wengen ski teachers and the oldies went back down on the train.

Super-g. The word instils fear and butterfly tummies. The atmosphere was depressed and quiet – no posing, no bravado, just nervous twitches and heavy breathing. The photo crowd was absent, nursing its own nerves.

But oh what fun once they were down and drowning a glass of Prosecco and telling every one how they had exceeded the sound barrier.

Prize-giving, more hurrahs and the DHO is the best and our local Wengeners the most wonderful and how could anything be improved upon even one nano-iota.

Roll on Gstaad

## Lizzie Davis was one of the backroom girls who made it all happen

Last year in Cortina SC 18 Club treated us to a superb Gala Dinner in their magnificent Club House. This year we wanted to do something different but equally impressive, warm and convivial.

We showed off our lovely new DHO Club-room on the Friday night but we eventually had bookings for 180 people at the Gala Dinner so a larger venue was required. Liz Moore came up with the idea of the event to be held at Kleine Scheidegg in the Station Buffet Restaurant, with the option of skiing down after dinner by moonlight.

On the night, we all made it to the last scheduled train up to Kleine Scheidegg for the start of the dinner at about 7.00pm.



The restaurant looked lovely in the early evening light. The glasses sparkled and the blue and white DHO colour scheme was picked up in the napkins and candles.

Through the window the magnificent and mighty Eiger North Face was seen in the pink setting glow of the sun. Certainly no Old Master oil painting could have made a better back drop.

The restaurant did us proud and came up with a delicious menu of Salad, Pork in a Mushroom Cream Sauce with Rosti and a Trio of puddings all washed down with local wines.

Karl Näpflin started the speeches by welcoming everyone to Wengen. He was followed by our Vice President, Mike Woodhall, who thanked all the volunteer organisers and introduced our guest speaker Max D. Amstutz who talked about the development of skiing in the Alps. Max also signed copies of his book, The Golden Age of Alpine Skiing.

Time to ski down. About a third of the revellers had opted to ski down by the light of a tiny crescent moon. So off they set with their local ski instructor guides and glow sticks on their helmets for the return journey. A few people had had to cover their dinner jackets with ski clothes; others had been more circumspect and had not worn such finery!

Max Davies, our President, had negotiated with the Jungfraubahn and they had laid on a special train to take down those not opting to ski. For quite a lot of the ride down we were able to wave to the skiers from the warmth of our comfy seats.

Everyone arrived back safely and early enough to enjoy a bit of Wengen village night life before a still early night prior to Sunday's Super G race.



**DHO men (46-60)**



**Liz Moore celebrating and refuelling when it was all over**

## Liz Moore's Contribution

The AICC originated with the Kandahar Club in Mürren. The first event was therefore hosted and held by them in March 2008. It was already decided 4 years ago that DHO would host the event in Wengen in March 2011. Of course at that time it seemed years away, with plenty of time to organise it!

In March 2010 we started planning and organising, setting up the programme of races and social events. Suddenly 2011 was upon us and it was a reality!

Wengen is an ideal place to run such an event and with the enthusiasm and enormously hard work of so many wonderful members and locals the DHO hosted an excellent weekend.

We had 34 teams from 11 different clubs coming from France, Switzerland, England, Italy and Austria. They all arrived in Wengen on Friday 4th March. The team Captain's meeting was held in the DHO Club Room followed by a buffet supper for all the teams. The Fuchs family kindly let us use the room behind our Club Room, which made it possible to host approximately 140 people! With the help yet again of DHO volunteers, who must be the best in the world!, the evening was a great success.

Saturday 5th March was a beautiful day with glorious sunshine and excellent snow. The Giant Slalom was run on the Lauberhorn race piste in the morning and the fun parallel

was held on the Bumps piste in the afternoon. The DHO had great success overall with the fastest female time of the day as well as many other excellent results. In the fun parallel the men's team from Arlberg won, which was wonderful as they were new to the event.

After the fun parallel everyone had to rush back to their hotels to get ready to catch the last train up to Kleine Scheidegg for the Gala dinner which was held at the Bahnhof Buffet. There were 180 in total for the dinner that was beautifully presented by the restaurant. Michael Woodhall gave a speech (in the absence of Max Davies our President) welcoming everyone to Wengen.

Karl Näpflin from Wengen Tourismus also welcomed the teams on behalf of Wengen. Our guest speaker was Max Amstutz, author of The Golden Age of Alpine Skiing, who spent a great deal of his childhood in Mürren. Having returned to the Berner Oberland he told me that he found Wengen and the DHO totally charming!

After dinner, the majority of the diners took a special train, very kindly sponsored by the Jungfrau Railways, back to Wengen. However 60 racers skied down from Kleine Scheidegg to the village, guided by Ski teachers from Wengen Ski School. Sadly there was no moonlight, but with the expert help of the ski leaders and a few torches everyone returned safely to Wengen! It was a wonderful thing to do and it was made so much easier for us on the organising committee to have the help of the piste preparers and the Ski School.

On Sunday 6th March, we held a Super G and again it was on the Lauberhorn Race piste with the finish just before the Hundschoepf! Another gloriously sunny day with all racers at the finish given a congratulatory glass of prosecco!

This time the DHO had the fastest female and male time of the day! There were also many other excellent finishes. All results can be found on the AICC and DHO website.

Prize giving was held outside the Brunner Hotel with the DHO gaining many podium places. The winning overall teams (GS & SG Combined results) were:

**Female 18/45 GOLD:**

Alexandra Moore, Vroni Famiglietti, Claudia Gassmann, Grace McCutchan

**Male 18/45 SILVER:**

Karl Ungar, Mark Gassmann, Kari Näpflin, Ryan Regez

**Female 46/59 SILVER:**

Sheridan Killwick, Maureen Fanshawe, Tessa Lawrance, Helen Whittet

**Female 60+ GOLD:**

Sina Cova, Sally Ireland, Liz Moore, Linda Fairbrother

**Male 60+ BRONZE:**

Jean Daniel Gluck, Richard Hackett, Robert Goodwin, Martin West

**GIANT SLALOM RESULTS (GS)**

**GOLD:**

Alexandra Moore 18/45;

**SILVER:**

Vroni Famiglietti 18/45;

Sina Cova 60+

**BRONZE:**

Sheridan Killwick 45/59

**SUPER G**

**GOLD:** Vroni Famiglietti 18/45;

Ryan Regez 18/45;

Sina Cova 60+ Jean Daniel Gluck 60+

**SILVER:** Alexandra Moore 18/45

Maureen Fanshawe 45/59

Sally Ireland 60+

**BRONZE:** Liz Moore 60+

The weekend was a wonderful combination of great sporting spirit, enthusiasm, harmony and sunshine!

The racers who participated and contributed to DHO's success put up a wonderful performance. We are honoured now to have quite a number of Wengen residents taking up DHO membership and as a result racing for us. Thanks also to the older ones who came out before the event to train as well as the younger generation who took time off work or University to make the AICC in Wengen such a terrific event.

Next year, Eagle Ski Club from Gstaad will be hosting the event on 9/11 March. At present it is limited to 4 teams per club but

we are always interested in new volunteer amateur racers!

In the light of the DHO racing success at this event we are now trying to organise some amateur racing days during the next winter season. The first occasion will be Wed 28/Thurs 29th December when the young DHO race trainees will also be in the village, so they can show us amateurs how it should be done! We will try to repeat this during the week before the McMillan Cup i.e. week beginning 23rd January as well as the few days before the AICC. We are also trying to organise an evening of drinks and snacks in London at the end of November at a venue still to be confirmed. This will be aimed mainly at members who would like to participate in the Amateur Racing!

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any queries on the above

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## Sponsors, helpers and supporters – our grateful thanks

Our main sponsors were Highland Spring, Raiffeissen Bank in Wengen, Wengen Tourismus, Brechin Management, Ingie Christophersen, Jungfrau Railways, Wengen Ski School and Chalet Traumli.

Thanks must go to Christoph Egger, Heinz von Allmen and their team of course setters, timers and piste preparation. They worked tirelessly throughout the whole weekend to make sure everything on the mountain ran smoothly and safely.

David and Debbie Manns came out from England to do the race calculations. This is a thankless task and heaven help them if the results are wrong! Thanks too to Mike Lowe, our headgatekeeper and all the volunteer DHO gatekeepers including Sarah and Cara Robinson who came out especially for this event. Cara is now a confirmed new racer as we suddenly had to fill a spot in our 2nd18/45 female group and having bravely

stepped in she seems to have caught the racing bug! As Ingie says put a start number on any keen skier, place them in the start gate and the thrill of hurtling down the hill between gates will do the rest and make them come back for more!!

We would particularly like to thank Ingie Christophersen, Sarah Hoyle and Lizzie Davis for all their hard work and organisation. Along with Susie Davies, Cynthia and Ian Perkins, Tony Davis, Diane and Robin Paterson, Gilda Prest, Christina and Brian Phillips, Phillip and Wendy Hill they were a great team!

Thanks must also go to Kieran Stevens for being so patient and producing an excellent AICC brochure as well as a life sized pop up display that arrived in Wengen in time for the races!



**Max D Amstutz**

## Max D Amstutz' speech

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

It is not only a great honour for me to speak to you on the occasion of tonight's Gala Dinner here at the Kleine Scheidegg, but also a great personal pleasure. It gives me the opportunity to recall the glorious times of the emerging art of alpine skiing a century ago, when British and Swiss alpine ski pioneers joined forces and, against great odds, aimed to make downhill racing and slalom accepted by the FIS and the Olympic Committee.

It also gives me the opportunity to recall my early childhood in Mürren, when as a small boy of five in 1934 I started my career as a skier, alternatively sobbing and having fits of rage because my skis obstinately refused to



obey my wishes. I have to admit that I never made the grade. I left Mürren too soon, built my career far away from the Alps and became a so-called citizen skier, never achieving more than average skills. But I still remember Sir Arnold Lunn and Christopher Macintosh from my early days in Mürren. They were heroes that I admired greatly. I wanted to become a famous sportsman like they were, but alas, that remained a dream.

To properly highlight today's celebration, I would like to plunge into the history of skiing and recall two races that took place during the Golden Age of Alpine Skiing in the first quarter of the last century, races which were fundamental for the immense success of this sport later on, and which bear a resemblance to this year's Inter-Club races: the birth of the classic downhill race in 1911 in Crans Montana and the 1st British Ski Championship on the Lauberhorn ten years later, in 1921. Both are milestones in alpine ski racing history and marked the start of the fight to break down the monopoly of the Scandinavians who dominated ski competition with their cross-country and ski jumping disciplines, considered at that time the only true form of skiing. Although these disciplines are great sport, they were not adequate for mastering the steep and snowy slopes of the Alps. It was the British, together with the Swiss, who first introduced the way to do this, a quite unexpected miracle when you consider that Great Britain is a lowland country.

The first of these two events occurred almost to the day one hundred years ago. Arnold Lunn, then a young lad of 23 years, and his father Sir Henry organised in Crans Montana, above Sierre in the Rhone Valley, what can be justly considered the birth of alpine downhill racing. It took place on 7 January, 1911. Although the course contained some short flat and uphill stretches, it was clearly downhill almost in a straight line and therefore ground-breaking for the future. The winner among the ten participants was Cecil Hopkinson, who ran the course in 61 minutes. In my opinion, this historic competition has a symbolic significance for the DHO Club, which was dedicated by its founders on 7 February, 1925, to specifically promote the art of downhill racing. Let me add that the Montana downhill run was also the first of

the famous Kandahar races, since the Robert of Kandahar Challenge Cup was awarded there for the first time. By the way, on 3 April this year, a historic memorial race will take place in Crans Montana to celebrate the pioneering event of 1911 organised by the local World Cup Committee.



**DHO prize winners (18-45 men)**



**Ed Perrott**



**A DHO clean sweep**



**Ladies Ski Club Team**



**DHO Ladies (46-60) and (inset) celebrations at the Gala Dinner**



The second historic racing event which we should also recall at this year's Inter-Club Championship is the 1st British National Alpine Skiing Competition, which took place in 1921, 90 years ago, right here on the Lauberhorn above Kleine Scheidegg. It was the very first time a national championship skiing award was given for a downhill race. It was a splendid experiment, a precedent again pioneered by the British. Only ten years later, other countries began to include downhill racing in their national skiing championships. That early British feat made an impact on the FIS and the IOC – they began to wonder if perhaps something else worthwhile existed in the skiing world beyond cross-country and jumping. Freddie Whitelaw has aptly documented the importance of that 1st British Ski Championship in the photo display he created for this year's Inter-Club Event. The British Championship of 1921 is another important milestone in the history of alpine ski racing. Let us also remember the winner among the 15 participants of the race: Leonard Dobbs.

Some final reflexions now on the Inter-Club Championship as a novel institution: I understand that the initiative to create this kind of multi-club racing event stems from the Kandahar Ski Club, and that the inspiration behind it was Cleeves Palmer, Chairman of the Club. The idea was immediately embraced by the other Arlberg Clubs, the DHO, the SAS and the Ski Club 18, as well as by the local clubs of Wengen, Mürren and Lauterbrunnen. All these clubs date back to the years of the Golden Age of Alpine Skiing, when all-weather racing in any snow conditions was the rule.

In my opinion, there are three characteristics which identify the Inter-Club Championships as typically Golden Age Competitions, bringing new life to old traditions:

*In the first place, they are pure amateur racing events, just like in the 20's, when professional skiing did not yet exist. The motto was and still is: to participate is more important than to win, true to the original Olympic spirit.*

*Secondly, they are team events. Beat Hodler, the Kandahar President, once said, "We don't race for our honour, but for the honour of our team". Team spirit, a classic British quality, is what counts in these competitions.*

*And thirdly, they strive to promote fun and making friends, building new networks that might last a lifetime and thus enrich our short stay as human beings on this sometimes nasty world. When he won the Inferno in 1929, Jimmy Riddell, born in 1900 and later a British skiing champion, said, "To ski, however well or poorly, is a reminder that one is alive, and that life is tremendous fun".*

To finish, let me congratulate you on this splendid idea of Inter-Club Championship, which shows that the creative spirit of British skiing is still alive and kicking, just as it was when alpine skiing began.

I wish you a very good evening.



**DHO ladies celebrations in full swing on the podium**

**(Below) Parallel Slalom**

**(Bottom) Sally Ireland & daughter Alessandra at prize giving**

