

RECENT SKI RECORDS

ROBERT S. LYMBURNE, a member of the Olympic Ski Team, on March 12, 1932, on the famous natural Revelstoke, B.C. ski hill, made a standing jump of 269 feet (82 metres). While this jump was not made in an official tournament, it is endorsed by the



BOB LYMBURNE MAKING HIS JUMP OF
269 FEET (82 METRES)

Revelstoke Ski Club, and by affidavits signed by William Jamieson, judge; Nels Nelsen, whose great jump on this hill in 1924 of 235 feet long remained unchallenged; Ivind Nelsen; Orrice Higgs and Joseph Beruschi, all residents of Revelstoke and present when this jump was made. This jump came at the close of a remarkable jumping exhibition by Lyburne, and before an enthusiastic crowd of some three hundred people. Commencing at 215 feet he increased his distances to 252, 255, 263, and then 269 feet, a truly amazing performance. His style as shown in the photograph is near perfect in all particulars, and we who met him and watched his fine jumping as a member of the Canadian Olympic Ski Team, are greatly pleased at his wonderful Revelstoke performance. In view of the complete proofs submitted, it should be officially accepted as an amateur record. In Europe also they are lengthening their hills and making long distances, and Mr. Arnold Lunn writes us that at Davos that famous Norwegian ski man, S. Ruud, jumping *hors concours* made a jump of 82 metres, equalling Lyburne's performance.

Amazing speed is also being recorded in downhill running. This last winter at St. Moritz over the Flying Kilometre course, a 650 foot slope of 40 degrees groomed like a ski jumping hill, the timing, electrical within 1-1000 of a second, L. Gasper of Innsbruck, Tyrol, won the 100 metres of the course at 75.8 miles per hour, and was again clocked in the outrun of the course at 136 kilometres or 84.7 miles per hour.

THE SKI CLUB OF GREAT BRITAIN

ITS DEVELOPMENT, FUNCTIONS AND AIMS

By GERALD SELIGMAN

ON MAY 6, 1903, twenty years after the first pair of skis was buckled on in Canada and about a year before the formation of the first Canadian ski club, the Ski Club of Great Britain was founded at a dinner held in a London restaurant.

The principal object of the eleven foundation members—luckily all still with us but two—was “the encouragement of ski-ing in the British Isles.”

Although our old periodicals are full of reports on ski-runs in Derbyshire, in Lancashire, in Cumberland and so forth, the snow was too evanescent and the terrain fashioned on too small a scale for home ski-

ing to become a success. Ski-ing in Scotland had rather better fortune, owing to a severer climate and its best ski-ing slopes being farther removed from the attentions of the Gulf Stream, but there are today very few who even compare Scottish with Alpine ski-ing.

Coupled with what may perhaps be called this physiographical deficiency the touring agencies developed a great deal of activity and it was not long before we were crossing the English Channel every winter on their advice and that of our more widely travelled members, such as the Richardsons.

In consequence the aim of the Club, as set

forth in the Year Book for 1905, was altered to "the encouragement of the sport and the giving of information to members as to how, when and where to ski."

In that form did the written word remain until 1909, but the British pioneering spirit was at work.

There is no more absorbing task than to look through the old Year Books of those days. Our members, then some 300 in number, were visiting the snows in every part of the world, reporting, recommending, criticising and advising. There are articles on the probabilities, the possibilities and the impossibilities of ski-ing in such countries as Montenegro, Turkey, Germany, all manner of places in the Central Alps, Tyrol, Norway, France, Sweden, Lapland, The Caucasus, Spain, New Zealand, New South Wales, the United States, and last but not least, Canada. Little wonder is it that the Club developed surely and swiftly and that ski-ing became one of the recognized national sports of Great Britain.

In addition to this, much organization work and work for the improvement of ski-ing technique was being carried through. The third class test had been borrowed from the Davos English Ski Club which had been in existence several years before the Ski Club of Great Britain, and in 1910 this was followed by the second class test. The Club also arranged for members to represent it at all the more frequented continental centres, so that advice and help might be given to members, while non-members might be recruited to the Club. At the same time ski-ing courses were held under the guidance of experienced runners, and in this way technique, although very rudimentary, started upon its long journey of improvement.

An endeavour was made to encourage jumping, but little of serious moment was achieved in this respect until later.

It will be seen that the responsibilities of the Club as the guiding body of the sport in Great Britain were increasing, and the last few years before the war proved no sinecure for those in authority, nor was their task plain sailing. In 1911 a powerful rival body called the British Ski Association was instituted and, as was natural, there was a little trouble. A good deal of this was allayed when a year later a Federal Council was formed on which both Clubs were represented as also a few other ski clubs which had now come into being.

Thus for a time the Ski Club of Great Britain ceded to the Federal Council its supreme authority over British ski-ing.

This state of affairs lasted until 1923 when some leading members of the British Ski Association and the Ski Club of Great Britain

who were also the leading members of the Federal Council got together. Arnold Lunn and the Hon. Edmund Pery—now the Earl of Limerick—acted on behalf of the British Ski Association, while Alex Keiller and the present writer were chosen as delegates of the Ski Club of Great Britain.

After rather protracted negotiations both groups of delegates recommended to their respective committees the amalgamation of the two clubs and this was duly carried out in 1925. The amalgamated body maintained the name, badge and colors of the Ski Club of Great Britain, this being insisted upon by us as a *sine qua non* of the negotiations, while certain of the views of the British Ski Association were adopted as guiding principles, notably the absence of a ski-ing qualification for candidates for election, and the lowering of the subscription to the sum of ten shillings per annum which several of us thought, and some still think, too low a figure for the privileges and benefits which members of the Club enjoy. Thus, however, was found a happy ending to what had been a rivalry of some dozen years including the *anni non* of the War.

The new body had some 1,700 members and the fact that today, after seven years, it numbers over 5,000 is proof that the amalgamation was the biggest event in British ski-ing since the foundation of the Club, and has resulted in nothing but advantage to the cause.

The rapid advance of ski-ing at home has had its echo overseas, and today there are nearly thirty clubs in Great Britain and in all parts of the Empire affiliated to the parent body. These are bound by the same principles and the same ideals as ourselves so that, together, we form a powerful organization and one able, as has been recently proved, to make its views heard and respected in international ski-ing councils. Parenthetically it is interesting to note that our membership is widely extended among overseas British ski runners who, naturally, enjoy all the privileges of home members, added to which a possible concession is, at the moment, mooted, while in addition we have a considerable number of foreign members, both European and American, who join us principally to obtain the Club publications and certain other privileges to which they are entitled. The British Ski Year Book is probably the most famous ski-ing publication in the world.

Today our aims and objects as stated in the Rules are as follows:—

"The objects of the Club are the encouragement of ski-running in all its forms, including ski-racing and ski-jumping, the promotion of touring on ski, pioneer work

and exploration, the furtherance of technical skill on ski and of snow craft, the promotion of good fellowship among ski-runners in this and other countries, the maintenance of a ski-ing library and Club rooms in London where members may meet, the publication of the Year Book and of a quarterly Journal, the holding of periodical meetings, lectures and dinners, and the strictest preservation of the amateur status. The Club shall also hold the British Ski Championship, and shall select the teams which shall represent Great Britain against other countries. The Club shall also be responsible for the British Ski Tests, leaving to other clubs the right to hold domestic tests."

It follows that with so wide and varying a range of interests the work of the Club is immense. It is carried on by a central council assisted by a number of committees who in the main hold no executive authority but are only advisory bodies.

The Committees are as follows:—The Technical Committee, Ski Jumping Committee, Ski Mountaineering and Touring Committee, Long Distance Racing Committee, Winter Arrangements Committee, British Ski Teams Fund Committee, Down-hill Racing Selection Committee, Jumping Selection Committee, Long Distance Racing Selection Committee; and there are a few unofficial committees working on special subjects such as lectures and entertainments, research on glaciological and technical matters, and so on.

The business of the Club is transacted by an honorary and three paid secretaries and the honorary editors of the two journals, the "British Ski Year Book" and "Ski Notes and Queries," each of whom has his paid Secretary.

I would like to digress a moment on the question of "Representatives," Official Club Representatives" or "O.R.s" as we call them. They, and the services they render, are one of the chief causes of the success of the Ski Club of Great Britain.

Circumstances prevent us obtaining the ski-ing at week-ends that nearly every other country has available and most of us take a regular two to four weeks winter holiday, for which purpose we have to pack up and make a journey, spreading ourselves far and wide in different ski-ing centres abroad. Nine-tenths of English ski runners do this between Christmas and the middle of March, and it is really only during that period that the Club is a more or less corporate body. By the end of March we are almost all of us again scattered in our houses throughout Great Britain, and only reunite physically at club dinners or lectures and morally when we receive the Club publications.

To each ski-ing centre during the season we despatch an O.R., who represents the Club for the time being and is the pivot about which our organization moves. He gives advice, organizes, helps, arranges tests or races and provisionally elects new members, whose election is subsequently reviewed and generally ratified by the Council. It is unnecessary to add that these O.R.s themselves are most careful not to encroach in any way upon the operations of any club that may be organizing ski-ing on the spot.

I do not know whom we have to thank for this idea which is, I think, unique in its way, but it would be impossible to value it too highly. Without it the Club's organization could not go on, while, by their labours, our wide flung and short lived winter activities proceed in unison and uniformity as though we were all congregated in one centre.

Of late years Technical Deputies (T.D.s)—men and women of some ski-ing skill—have been appointed to take over from the busy O.R.s duties connected with technical matters, such as the appointing of local test judges, and so forth.

Mention must also be made of the large body of judges who give up, like the O.R.s and T.D.s, much of their hard-earned holidays to others.

Finally, there are the weather reporters who daily cable the state of the weather to the London Press so that reliable and impartial information may be available.

This small army of helpers is under the control of two members of the Council—one in the Eastern and one in the Western Alps—and these are responsible to the Council or such unfortunate members of it (there are always some) as remain in London. The Club has a few O.R.s in several other countries, British and Foreign, and the work has been so successful for the Club and so advantageous for ski-running, forming as it does a link with the parent body, that it is intended to appoint a larger number if suitable volunteers are forthcoming.

While we take leave to think that the organization and administration of the Club are in good working order, the man who pats himself on the back and says "perfection has been reached, I can find nothing more to do" usually finds something he wasn't looking for. We are fully alive to the immensity of the work still before us which, so far from becoming less as we put achievement behind us, grows with our spreading activities.

Although the standard of British ski-ing has improved greatly in most branches in recent years, there is no Englishman who will not say that he would like to see its general level much higher than it is.

Then again, and partly to that end, we want to spread our banner far and wide to reach more private members and more affiliated clubs, for only thus is power obtained and good achieved.

One of our greatest anxieties and at the same time our dearest wish is the strictest adherence to our time-honoured principles concerning the amateur status and the rejection of all inducements, apparent or subtle, to become enmeshed in commercial entanglements.

Another of our more active aims is to inculcate a love of snow-craft and of high

mountaineering among our members, so that the joys of climbing with and even without skis can lie open to them. High mountains suitable for skis do not lie in daily or weekly reach of us over here and the achievement of this object is therefore one of real difficulty.

With this little list, which marks in particular relief a few of our especially cherished aims from out of the long count of our activities referred to above, I hope our ambitions have been made clear to the reader—and I will only add one more—"the promotion of good fellowship among ski-runners of all nations."

LONDON LETTER

BRITISH ski-ing activities last winter were severely curtailed by the Crisis, and by the appeal of the Chancellor for English people to stop at home.

The most important event was the sending of the Oxford and Cambridge team to Canada; it would indeed be carrying coals to Newcastle to describe this event in your annual, but it is only right to say that every member of the team returned to this country with enthusiastic reports of Canadian hospitality. We all hope that some day it may be possible for a Canadian University Team to pay us a return match on the Swiss snows.

The Ski Club of Great Britain decided to send a British team to the F.I.S. Downhill Meeting, which is in effect the European Championship for Downhill ski-ing. The team did only moderately well. Our star turns ran below their proper form: on the combined result Bracken was thirteenth and Peter Lunn fourteenth. The very small community of British skiers put up a good show, however, in the big Oberland events. My son, Peter, won the New Year Slalom at Wengen and the No-Fall Championship and was second in the very important Laberhorn Cup for which the German and Swiss University students who were competing in the inter-universities match all entered. This was very cheering in an otherwise depressing season.

The Arlberg-Kandahar was a tremendous event. This event is the blue riband of European downhill ski-running, and continues to attract an ever-increasing entry of first class runners. It was won for the second time in succession by that magnificent ski-runner, Furrer of Zermatt. The ladies' event was won by Fraulein Lantschner. The British were poorly re-

presented—neither Bracken nor Mackintosh could compete—and we had a very weak ladies' entry. We hope next year to remedy this state of affairs.

The Pery Medal, which can only be awarded once a year, was awarded to Mr. R. L. Holdsworth, who established a ski-ing height record on Kamet.

An interesting innovation which was tried out for the first time in the Arlberg-Kandahar race was the group start. Ski-runners were divided into groups in order of merit, though all ski-runners were eligible for the prize. The racers started at minute intervals with all the first class runners in one group, the second class runners in the next group and so forth. The object of the group start is to prevent a first class runner losing a race because a poor runner has chosen a very narrow place in which to fall just in front of him. The working of this system is fully described in the British Ski Year Book.

Sir Claud Schuster, a well-known ski-runner and mountaineer, has succeeded Mr. Alex. Keiller as President of the Club.

By the time this letter is published, it is expected that the Club will have passed a new rule to the effect that the entrance fee will be suspended in the case of Canadians who wish to join the Ski Club of Great Britain. They will then only pay the annual subscription of ten shillings on joining the Club. For this sum they will get all the same advantages as hitherto, the Year Book, Ski Notes and Queries and the Members' Handbook.

We very much hope that those Canadians who are interested in the development of European ski-ing will join our Club. They will be more than welcome.

ARNOLD LUNN.