



Action on the Corviglia Slopes, St. Moritz. 'Fotografie Hein Gorny, Hannover

## LONDON LETTER

EUROPEAN ski-ing last winter was complicated by European politics. The Austrian Nazis broke up many of their own big meetings, but failed to ruin the Arlberg-Kandahar, which was won for the third time by that amazingly consistent runner, Otto Furrer. Jeannette Kessler won the Ladies' Arlberg-Kandahar, which has now been won on four out of the seven occasions on which it has been held by British members of the Kandahar Ski Club.

We did very well, indeed, at the FIS Downhill Racing Meeting at St. Moritz, which is, as your readers know, in effect though not in name, the European Ski Championship. Of the fourteen nations who sent representatives the British were third best. Out of fifty starters, Clyde was seventh on the combined result and Peter Lunn eighth. Peter Robinson who has lived in Switzerland for many years, a young Canadian not turned nineteen, did brilliantly in the FIS. He has long been known as an exceptionally fine international jumper. In the FIS Straight Race he finished twelfth, beating all the British team excepting Clyde. He unfortunately did not do so well in the Slalom. Those who regard the Slalom as an unnecessary race might reflect on the fact that brilliant jumpers like Ruud and Peter Robinson usually do well in straight races, with but little experience, but never do any good in a Slalom until they have got down to the job of training for the Slalom and mastering the Slalom technique.

Peter Robinson's finest performance was in the Decenary Meeting of the Kandahar Ski Club. This was held in March, and unfortunately only one British member, Jimmy Riddell, entered for the race. All the rest were back in England.

The race was held down the famous Schiltgrat course. The controls were rather differently placed, enabling Peter Robinson to pick out a daring line of his own, different from and considerably shorter than the orthodox Roberts of Kandahar route to Shambles Corner and Broody Bump. He did an amazing

time, 2 minutes 13 seconds, and finished second to Willy Steuri, 2 minutes 7.4 seconds, beating such famous runners as Zogg and von Allmen of Wengen. This was a magnificent performance.

Times on the classic courses show a steady decrease. A few years ago 3 minutes 40 seconds would have won almost any race down the Schiltgrat course. Last year the Roberts of Kandahar was won in 4 minutes 14 seconds. This year Peter Lunn won the Roberts of Kandahar in 2 minutes 40.6 seconds and the Prince Chichibu in 2 minutes 37.6 seconds, both over the Kandahar course. This was in mid-winter when the conditions on this course are less easy than in March. Steuri's time, 2 minutes 7.4 seconds, was fantastic. "Robinson's Line," as it now known, was one of the most sensational pieces of straight running—true, he fell twice—that I have seen. He also did very well in the Easter Meeting of the Kandahar Ski Club at Sestrières, and reasonably well in the Arlberg-Kandahar.

There is a widespread feeling that the Slalom counts too much in the combination. The FIS Special Committee for Downhill Racing has approved the method which I suggested for reckoning combined results. The general effect of this will be that the Straight Race will count three, the Slalom two.

A new record was established in the Flying Kilometre, the highest speed attained being 135.849 kilometres an hour (84.39 miles per hour). I have often debated the question as to the average speed obtained over a long downhill racing course. This problem has now been solved. Walter Amstutz measured extremely accurately the whole course used for the FIS Straight Race at St. Moritz. This was measured not on the map but on the ground itself by means of ropes. The average speed, attained by the winner, Zogg, was just short of 40 miles an hour. This, I confess, is much higher than I had expected, and must mean that over portions of the course, not specially prepared portions such as the Flying Kilometre which is more like a jumping hill than a racing track, Zogg must have touched at least 60 miles an hour.

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