



SKI TRACKS

Newsletter of the Bitterroot Cross Country Ski Club

Box 431 • Corvallis, Montana 59828

OCTOBER, 2002



SEPTEMBER MEETING

HIGHLIGHTS

By Judy LaSalle

The September meeting was held on September 14, 2002 at the Gordon Reese Ski Hut.

What a beautiful September day to work at the ski Hut; enjoy good friends and good food! Several members have been working both on Friday and Saturday getting things ready for the winter season. The firewood is in the basement, the Hut is cleaned, snags are cut, and a new run down Picnic Meadows is cut. President **Sonny LaSalle** opened the meeting at 4pm on Saturday with approximately 35 members. The items that were covered during the meeting are as follows: The summer rental program which went very well, new mattresses on the double beds, a donation of two runner rugs for the upstairs. They were donated by **Main Street Rug Company**. Thanks to **Mimi Kalamain and Peter Walsh**. We would like to purchase one more for upstairs. The floors have been redone by **Joe Rousoff and Earl Phillips** and look great. Thanks, guys, for all of your hard work. **Gordon Reese** thanked the work crews and recapped the week's work. We cut a trail down through Picnic Meadows in approximately 11/2 hours. There was discussion on needing to manage the vegetation and manage the fire danger. On Friday and Saturday morning, members from Darby filled the basement with firewood and cut snags west of the Hut and piled the brush for burning. We are gradually building defensible space around the Hut. The highway cleanup is going to be headed by **Ed Curran**. The state would like us to clean it at least 2 times a year. Watch for information from Ed in the newsletter. **Judy LaSalle** will be the interim Secretary until the election of officers in December. Once again, a special thanks to all who worked on the Hut. All, after the business meeting, enjoyed a delicious potluck.

REMINDER

By Leo Joron

Annual memberships expired on May 31, 2002. This will be the final newsletter for those who have not renewed their membership for the period June 1, 2002 to May 31, 2003. In order to renew an annual membership (or join the Ski Club) a written application, accompanied by the appropriate dues, needs to be mailed to the Ski Club at P.O. Box 431, Corvallis MT 59828.

Memberships can not be renewed using e-mail. Dues money goes to the Treasurer, the written application goes to the Membership Chair and, for those desiring e-mail newsletters, their addresses are forwarded to the e-mailer.

OCTOBER MEETING

Thursday, October 10, 2002 - 7:00 pm

First Presbyterian Church
1220 West Main Street, Hamilton

Program: **Jeremy Lurgio -
Bitterroot Backcountry Skiing**

WINTER HUT RESERVATIONS

Arlene, from the Wisdom Ranger District will come to our October meeting to take reservations for winter use of the Hut. The same restrictions as last year will apply, ie, one weekend, and no more than 3 consecutive weekdays. After this meeting we are unsure how many times we will have the calendar at our meetings, so people will have to use the phone to make reservations.

LOST AND FOUND

We found a set of keys at the Saturday, September 14 workday in Picnic Meadow. They are for a GM vehicle with a gas key as well as what looks like a post office box key with the numbers 1933 on it. I will hold them for awhile and then toss if no one responds. **Sonny**

TONY'S TIPS

By Tony Neaves

SKIS AND THEIR CONSTRUCTION

When you go in a shop or look through the catalogs and see skis costing anywhere from less than \$100 to racing skis that cost over \$400, your first reaction is probably, "Wow, what could possibly make them worth so much?" Well, it's the old saying you get what you pay for. Skis that cost less are made from cheaper materials and less labor intensive construction methods.

Racing skis which are at the top of the price range are made from very high quality materials and use very labor intensive methods. One company in Norway can't even start building their race skis until after moose season because their highly experienced guy who is responsible for the mold set-up is out there hunting! Skis are comprised of several components starting with the core. The cheapest core material is injected foam, like that in a lower end Karhu, for example. Wood is next and is actually a very good core

material. It is easy to manipulate, long lasting, and will hold its camber (arch) longer than injected foam.

When you get into the performance skis, the materials get more exotic. For instance, they use a honeycomb (like fancy cardboard!) core to make the ski lighter weight. Some high performance touring and racing skis use a high tech foam material called nomex or PMI mixed with carbon fiber.

Next is the outer material which these days is mainly an ABS plastic cap, which covers the top and sides of the ski. This differs from older skis which had separate materials for top and side. Depending on what the ski is designed for - touring, back-country, telemark, etc., there will be varying layers of fiberglass on the top and bottom. There may even be a "torsion box" which is basically a sock woven over the core to increase overall strength, making it more resistant to twisting. Old Epoke's are a fine example of this type construction!

Last and possibly most important is the base material! Cheap skis use cheap plastic known in the industry as an extruded base. Basically, this is a melted plastic that is extruded out into a ribbon forming the base. Its drawbacks are that it scratches easily and does not absorb or hold wax very well. Sintered base material is a higher grade of P-tex (trade name of the plastic used) that is a powder. They compress it with tons of force into a disc which is then put

on a lathe and bases are shaved off from it. This base material is porous so it absorbs wax and is harder than extruded so doesn't scratch as easily.

Ski manufacturers generally like to brag about what they are using so it is not hard to find out what their skis are made of. For most folks a lot of this doesn't matter, but it is fun to know and will give you some ideas about why prices can vary so much! Until next month - Think SNOW!



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Web page titled "Sale or Trade" By Pat Patterson

At several of this past year's meetings some of our members asked if we could have a "Sale or Trade" page in the Web site. In response to this request we did establish such a page, however, to date, no one has offered anything for sale or trade. With our regular meetings resuming in September, and the ski season not all that far away, we are asking that you use this page for any ski equipment you would like to sell or trade. In short let's use it or lose it.

Membership Renewals

Renew your membership now!

INDIVIDUAL - \$10 • FAMILY - \$20

SUPPORTING INDIVIDUAL - \$25

SUPPORTING FAMILY - \$35

LIFE MEMBER - \$100

Membership Dues

June 1, 2002 - May 31, 2003

MAIL TO: Bitterroot Cross-Country Ski Club

P.O. Box 431, Corvallis, MT 59828

Name(s) _____

Address: _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

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