

HUNTLY NORDIC SKI CLUB

www.nordicski.co.uk
www.facebook.com/HuntlyNordic

NEWSLETTER No. 52

October 2017



The leaves are changing colour, the nights are drawing in, the AGM date is set and the winter calendar is published, so it must mean that the winter season is approaching and the return of the eternal hope that there will be more snow this year and that I will be fit enough to enjoy it.

I hope to get to Whistler in December and continue the battle of packing out my new telemark boots so I can wear them all day and softening the bellows enough that I can do a proper telemark turn. I also really do need to get fit for skiing this year as I am going to spend Christmas with Youngy in Livigno (1800m) and then watch the start of the Tour de Ski in Lenzerheide. To this end I have been trying to follow a series of Yoga classes, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ooc0cJsyV50> and run more following a half marathon plan <http://www.greatscottishrun.com/media/25289/GScotr2017-Starter-HM-Training-Plan.pdf>. If you would like to share any sites you find helpful for skiing, just let me know.

I am also desperately hoping that Mr Trump and Kim Jung-un stop irritating each other so that the Olympics go ahead safely and smoothly.

In this edition of the newsletter we have various reports from the rollerski races over the summer. As well as an idea for a ski holiday in Norway.

Does the newsletter need to change? Are there topics you would like covered? More articles about the wonderful places you've been to (or places to avoid!) or your new kit? Would you like a junior or puzzle section, a photographic competition, shorter but more frequent newsletters? Please let me know your ideas. Contributions are always welcome.

Eileen Cosgrove Editor tout.tele@gmail.com

Ski Sale

The club is planning a ski sale on Sunday 19th November. This will be a slightly different format to previous years. It will be a chance to sell and buy ski kit and clothing as well as other fitness equipment.

Club Logo



Our current club logo *may* be in need of an update so you are invited to submit any potential new logos to huntlynordicscchair@gmail.com by **1st November, 2017**. In the next stage you will be invited to cast your vote in an online poll to determine which one the club uses. Additionally, the logo will be used on club clothing and badges so now's the time to get creative. Should a new one be chosen, the winning design will receive a item of clothing displaying the new logo. If you are not a desktop publisher, please don't worry, the shape and essence of a club logo design is what we're looking for.

Happy designing!

Other news

At local government level changes are afoot as Aberdeenshire council hopes to transfer their leisure facilities to a Sports Trust by April 2018. Our understanding is that the current staff will continue, but the management will have more freedom to develop new services and make improvements as somehow there will be more money available. The club is looking forward to meeting with the new Trust and clarifying the role of HNOC, and to see how we can work together to enable HNSC to deliver its aims for the future.

The Chair, Elizabeth Massie has sent members a survey, which the committee hopes you will take the time to respond to so the committee takes forward your ideas and views as it develops a strategy plan for HNSC.

At a national level Snow Sport Scotland has had a rather stormy year, as Sport Scotland has asked it to review its memoranda and articles of association. Frank Musgrave has been very involved in helping the organisation to reach a point where

they can move forward and has been representing cross country skiing's interest as the nordic committee chairman.

Scottish Cycling are looking to use the HNOC to deliver a pilot project encouraging school children to get into cycle racing. Previous Cross Country skiing Olympian, PJ Barron is now working with Scottish Cycling on this project.

Team GB and the Olympics



2017 season highlights

- Muzzy – 4th World Champs 50k
2nd & a 6th in World Cup
- Youngy – 22nd World Champs sprint
12th, 13th & 17th in World Cup Sprint
- 4 athletes meet Olympic Qualification Standard
- Callum – PB in World Cup 15k skate Quebec
- Annika – Best ever women's results in World Champs - 38th



It was wonderful to have the GB elite ski team in Huntly in May, many of them returning to old training haunts across Aberdeenshire. Since being in Huntly they have had training camps in Lillehammer, at altitude in Livigno then Stelvio in Italy. After more time in Norway and Sweden, they have just had 10 days of sunshine in Mallorca and are now getting ready for another 3 weeks at altitude in Tignes France

before the opening race of the season at Beitostollen Norway mid November . Of course it's an Olympic season. Whilst no-one has yet been selected Andrew Musgrave, Andrew Young, Callum Smith and Annika Taylor have all reached the Olympic selection standard, and James Clugnet and Nicole Bathe may achieve the standard before the selection date. After this season's ever improving performances, there is a real chance of some awesome results and fantastic skiing to watch. Of course club members Roy Young and Alex Standen are part of the coaching team travelling with the athletes around the world. You can follow the teams progress at <https://www.facebook.com/Britishnordic>. You do not have to sign up to Facebook to see the page and read the news

Not only did current and potential Olympians visit Huntly, but Eddie the Eagle kindly dropped by one Sunday morning when he was vaguely in the area during his lecture tour of the country. He spent time with the Sunday morning training group and the Kids club in the afternoon.

CAIRNGORM HILL CLIMB & GLENMORE TIME TRIALS, 17th Sept 2017. *Pete Thorn*



After an early start on a day that could be described as a little bit wetter than dreich, a small contingent of Huntly skiers took on the challenge of the Cairngorm Hill Climb. The early start necessary to avoid the tourist traffic heading up the Ski Road to the funicular and a close up view of cloud. In a close men's race Huntly's Frank Kelly got to the top only a few seconds behind the RAF's Steve Perry. The Sun briefly appeared & I got a

view of Loch Morlich as Frank Musgrave (HNSC) passed by my marshalling point looking particularly strong and stylish - Andrew would have been proud of him. But a little bit more stylish was Cameron Cruickshank (HNSC) who won the U18 climb with Highland's James Slimon not too far behind, in fact James looked like he was going to catch Cameron as he passed by but Cameron must have increased his pace in the final part of the race. In the U14 race best placed Huntly skiers were Kieren Forth & Logan Duncan in 3rd & 4th while Elspeth Cruickshank came 2nd in the girl's race with Madeleine Cruickshank 4th.

It got no drier for the afternoon's Glenmore Time Trials. CBNSC borrowed Huntly's Marwe 610 skis for their races. Frank Kelly reversed the Hill Climb placings to win the men's 15 lap Time Trial. Cameron Cruickshank looked a little more dominant winning the U18 race, while there was another 2nd for Kieren Forth in the U14 boys race. Elspeth Cruickshank was once again 2nd behind Hannah Henderson (CBNSC) & Madeleine went one better than in the morning with a 3rd place. Making her debut in a race away from Huntly was Sophie Forth who mastered the challenging

Glenmore track to win the novice race - she definitely won't be a novice for next year's races.

The 6-race SSS Scottish Rollerski Series 2017 concluded as the last soggy ski boot crossed the Glenmore finish line. After some hasty arithmetic the final standings were calculated in time for SSS Nordic Chair, Frank Musgrave, to hand out the trophies to the category winners. Frank Kelly's win meant that he topped the



men's table ahead of Steve Perry who took consolation in being 1st Vet. Huntly had no representatives in the Senior Ladies competition which I mention to encourage some of our Huntly ladies to take part next year? Cameron Cruickshank & Fergus Newman won the U16 & U18 titles respectively while Logan Duncan

topped the U12 table. Elspeth Cruickshank was first U12 girl. Congratulations to all category winners & also to all skiers who took part this year.

HUNTLY SPRINTS & CLASHINDARROCH HILL CLIMB, 27/28 May 2017. *Pete Thorn*

It isn't often that we can boast a World class field at a Huntly race but that is what we had for the Sprints & Clash Hill Climb in May. The entire senior British Team turned up along with a couple of Norwegian ladies currently training with the British Team. I'm going to name them all 'cause you never know what medals they may bring home one day: Annika Taylor, James Clugnet, Andrew Musgrave, Callum Smith & Andrew Young. I would like to claim that it was the high quality reputation of the prestigious Huntly races that drew them here but the truth is that they were attending a training camp & were an unusual sight on the quiet Aberdeenshire roads.

It was a rare chance for many of us to see top skiers in action & ski alongside them, no matter how briefly. Joining them were members of the British Junior Teams, the Army Biathlon Development Squad, RAF & club skiers from all over the UK. This was easily the highest quality field ever assembled at a Huntly race. Another striking feature of the weekend was the range in abilities & ages from 8-year old novices through to veteran skiers in their sixties.



Making their debut were the new club Marwe 610 rollerskis which have replaced our old barrel-wheel rollerskis for our races. Another innovation was a photo-finish setup using video on a mobile phone - simple but it worked surprisingly well.

The Huntly Sprints always produce exciting & close races & we weren't disappointed. Not surprisingly the course records were broken in both Men's and Ladies events, in fact four men and three ladies were inside the old course record. The men's competition was won by sprint specialist Andrew Young in a combined time of 3min 32sec from Musgrave. Two Norwegian ladies Mari Gussiaas & Marthe Bjoernsgaard (Lilliehammer club) tied for first place in a time of 4min 08sec.

Age group winners were:

U18 men: Fergus Newman (Huntly) 4:04.

U16 men: Cameron Cruickshank (Huntly) 4:38

U16 ladies: Lily Sierakowski (Huntly) 5:47.0

U14 boys: Tristan Marshall (London Hyde Park) 5:22

U12 boys: Andrew Dare (Cairngorm) 5:33.0

U12 girls: Jasmine Uth (London Hyde Park) 6:01.0

1st Novice Boy: Luke Nicholls U10 (Huntly). 1st Novice Girl: Sophie Forth U10 (Huntly)

New Course Records:

655m Flat: Men: 1min 14sec - Andrew Young.

Ladies: 1min 27sec - Mari Gussiaas, Marthe Bjoernsgaard, Annika Taylor.

1135m Hill: Men: 2min 18sec - Andrew Young, Andrew Musgrave.

Ladies: 2min 41sec - Mari Gussiaas, Marthe Bjoernsgaard.

Things got even better for the knock-out races with several races putting Alan Telford's photo-finish to the test. But even this couldn't pick the winner of the



men's final where a late lunge by Musgrave resulted in a dead-heat with Andrew Young. The ladies' final was won by Mari Gussiaas from Marthe Bjoernsgaard who recorded the same time. Angus Duncan U18 (Huntly) won the men's Plate Competition and Logan Duncan (Huntly) won the boys U14 age group final.

Trophies were entertainingly presented with a Scandinavian flourish by British Team endurance coach Hans Kristian Stadeim while the squad members busily handed out GB Team T-shirts or signed the cycle helmets of excited juniors.



HUNTLY ROLLERSKI CHAMPIONSHIPS, 9th Sept 2017. *Pete Thorn*

A late rising Fergus Newman missed the start of the U18 race but the flexible race organisers allowed him to move up a category to compete in the longer senior men's 7.1km race where he managed a third place behind Frank Kelly & race winner Paul Whibley (CBNSC). Holly Rees-Lay (Hyde Park) as the solitary female entry not surprisingly took the senior ladies title. A strong performance by Cameron Cruickshank saw him romp home first in the U18/U16 5.1km distance while Beth Ireland (LRNSC) became U18/U16 ladies champion ahead of Huntly's Lily Sierakowski. Cairngorm's Hamish

Henderson won the U14 boys 3.7km race with Huntly's Kieren Forth & Logan Duncan continuing their close rivalry in second & third place respectively. Another

of the BNDS English contingent, Jasmine Uth (Hyde Park) took the U14 girls' title in a fairly close race from Hannah Henderson (CBNSC). First Huntly girl home in 3rd place was Madeleine Cruickshank ahead of her younger sister Elspeth. Possibly the most entertaining race of the day was the mass start 1.8km Novice race where Harry Osbaldiston (CBNSC) just managed to hold off Sophie Forth (Huntly). Specially mention must be made of Francie Meynell who determinedly completed the course in her first rollerski race & received the biggest ovation of the day.

HUNTLY 3-LAP CHALLENGE & TEAM SPRINTS, 10th Sept 2017. *Pete Thorn*

A slightly later Sunday start meant that Fergus Newman managed to make the start line in time for the 1302m 3-Lap Challenge which he went on to win ahead of Cameron Cruickshank & Brodie Murray. First veteran home was Carsten Uth (Hyde Park) with Roy Young just few seconds behind him. Beth Ireland won a tightly fought ladies race ahead of Lily Sierakowski & Jasmine Uth.

As the final skier collapse over the line it brought to a conclusion the 4-race Huntly Club Series which this year was won by Fergus Newman & Lily Sierakowski.

As always the 3-Lap Challenge results were used to seed the skiers into fairly evenly matched pairs for the Team Sprints. And as always this produced exciting racing. For the second year running Brodie Murray ended up in a pairing that became Team Sprint champions his partner this year being Dave Horsley. The B-final was won by a brother/sister pairing of Elspeth & Cameron Cruickshank.



SKI TOURING IN NORWAY *Hilary Musgrave*

The Rondane National Park in Norway includes some of the highest mountains in the country. It also has a good network of the fantastic “hytter” run by the Norwegian Touring Association (DNT) - cabins which range in size from 4 bunk beds to hundred bed hostels. Frank and I decided to explore the area but being elderly pensioners we thought it would be more relaxing to go with an experienced guide to



make sure we didn't get lost. We signed up for a week long hut to hut DNT guided tour crossing the park from north to south. We have done a couple of DNT trips before and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves but there is always the initial worry that everyone else in the group will be super fit and capable of schussing down every hill without making unplanned snow holes on the way. This year we were a group of 14 plus 2 leaders. When we met at Oslo railway station I was cheered to find someone older than us on the trip - but Terje, age 77, skied daily 3 times around a 6km long lake to keep healthy! The 71 year old from Colorado had climbed Everest and was the most elegant telemark skier I've seen. We were the only Brits, the rest of the group Germans, Americans and Norwegians. Though we were definitely the least competent downhill skiers, we were relieved to find that we could comfortably keep up with the daily pace. It was a great group socially - everyone kindly spoke English. One of the Norwegians, produced shot glasses for everyone on the first evening engraved with our names, and a bottle of aquavit to toast the start of the trip - and another one on the last evening to toast the finish.

The holiday didn't get off to an auspicious start as due to lack of snow in the north of the park we were skipping the first 2 hytter and would be taken by minibus from the train station at Hjerkinsn direct to the third hytte. Sure enough, when we got off the train there was a distinct lack of snow - worse, there was also a lack of minibus. Eventually our transport arrived and we were driven about an hour into the mountains to Oevre Doeraalseter. We were the only people there when we arrived in the afternoon but another two groups turned up later both of whom had walked over the snow-less route we had originally planned to follow.

We spent two nights at Doeraalseter. On the first day we started off walking, with skis strapped to rucksacks - we got quite expert at fastening them on by the end of the week. The main problem was remembering when going past trees that I had over a metre of ski above my head and the tree always wins. After an hour we found snow and had an enjoyable day re-discovering our ski legs. We got back to the hytte just as a heavy snow shower started and it was very cosy sitting by the fireside with a mug of hot chocolate looking out at it.

Day 2 took us to Rondvassbu, one of the best know of the DNT hytter surrounded by the highest mountains in the area. After an hour walking over heather and lichen we reached good snow and as there were snow showers on and off all day ski conditions were transformed with firm crust covered by about 20cm powder. The trail went steadily up for the first 3 hours then a run down to the 5km long Rondevatnet lake with the hytte at the far end. The lake is in a deep narrow valley and as we skied down to it the sun came out and the wind strengthened from behind us - perfect skiing!

Rondvassbu is a big hostel and relatively easy to access from the the road and train in Gudbrandsdal, so it was busy. We had two nights here too and had hoped to ski up one of the mountains but next morning it was snowing and thick cloud so instead we went for a gentle day trip, about 6km out to an old cabin for lunch and then back. After a couple of hours I felt I really was not fit enough as this 6km was going on a long time. Then we passed a signpost pointing back the way we came saying Rondvassbu 8.5km and I began to feel slightly uneasy about our leader's map-reading skills. Ten minutes later the co-leader got out her GPS and decided we were 2km south of the trail we thought we were on.....so much for having peace of mind travelling with an experienced guide! His rather dubious excuse at the time, that the trail was not as marked on the map was later verified by the hytter staff. After lunch we had a much more enjoyable ski back under clearing skies with the mountains appearing dramatically from behind the clouds, our "easy" day having turned into the longest day we did.

Next was Bjoernholia, one of the loveliest hytter I've been to. It was a fun ski getting there with a steep uphill start then an undulating ski across the watershed and a long downhill where even I could let my skis just run. All good things come to an end though, and the gentle descent took us into a narrowing valley through birch forest. As the trees got closer together, the snow got softer, the trail got narrower and the river got less frozen and closer to the steepening banks, options got fewer and skis began to get taken off and on with increasing frequency - though having them off was not an easy option as in the soft snow we sank in over our knees. Bjoernholia is a staffed cabin and the couple who run it make their own jam, bread, cakes, smoked fish.

Our last stop, Eldabu, is a self-service cabin. The cabin is actually 2 buildings (all DNT cabins have at least 2 buildings so that if one is catastrophically destroyed by fire there will always be somewhere to shelter) with beds for 12 in the larger one and 6 in the other. Nobody can ever be turned away from the cabins - they are all remotely situated and people rely on them for shelter, food and warmth - and we knew that at busy times they get very crowded. We were at the start of the Easter holidays and by the time we got to bed there were over 20 people in our cabin and 12 in the other one!

It was sad to finish our last 14km ski down to the road in the morning, and to find crowds of people on the tracks near the roads after having the mountains almost to ourselves all week. It had been a wonderful holiday - good skiing (in the end), beautiful mountains, good company. We would thoroughly recommend the area and DNT trips - in spite of the missing tracks!

If anyone is interested in DNT tours their website is <https://www.dnt.no/> with an English version at <https://english.dnt.no/> . Note that there are fewer tours advertised on the English version - this is not because only Norwegians are allowed on some trips but because English speaking tour leaders are not guaranteed on them all. If you want to tour independently you can still use the huts. In central and southern Norway the smaller ones have bunk beds with duvets, a wood-burning stove with fuel, a gas cooking stove also with fuel and cooking utensils, and a store room stuffed with tins of food, coffee, jam, porridge etc - you pay by putting money in an honesty box. We haven't toured in the north of the country but many of the huts there do not have the food supplies. Huts are locked with a DNT master key which you can get from any of their offices if you are a member. The larger huts are staffed at busy times with cooked evening meals and breakfast.

A Rolling Weekend Away On Skis *Elizabeth Massie*

The 2017 British Rollerski Championships were to be held on 1st October (well after harvest.....) at Castle Combe race circuit. Many months in advance, plans were put in place by northern and southern contacts to build a productive training and racing weekend. Four Huntly club members did successfully join Cairngorm, Highland, and later London area and other clubs, for the 2017 British Championships weekend.

Saturday's training session was held on beautifully sculpted tarmac paths through one of many newly built estates in the greater abyss of Swindon. The training was hard, the coach tough, but the brambles were sweet, the Marshall family's granola bars fab, and on lookers intrigued.



The afternoon skate session promised to be gentler, so parents were afforded time to gather supplies at the local super enormous market for the next critical fueling sessions. On Saturday night, more skiers joined the assembled party, quite possibly to eat a cheap, cooked and nutritious meal in advance of tomorrow's race. As race day beckoned, a few realised that the beautiful chimes of the Cirencester clock, ring through the night every 15 mins, however all happily appeared for breakfast. We think it was the morning run rather than any under nourishment (porridge, scrambled eggs, toast and jam) which caused many skiers on completion of their roller ski warm up at Castle Combe to pile into the café for quite enormous cooked breakfasts.

The Castle Combe ring is primarily a motor racing circuit. It is beautifully encircled by ancient mature trees and in stark contrast has an inner complement of solar panels. Consequently when racers leave the first corner, there is a rather long and nervous wait before they are spotted again nearing the final corner. Bristling with excitement and some nervousness, the racers gathered. The day's races would conclude the GB Rollerski series in addition to the British Champs. There were a few past Olympic Biathletes warming up conspicuously, but also quietly, an EYO skier and a HNSC club Alaskan for the same race.

After a BNDS fund raising raffle which was successfully sold by athletes mostly on roller skis, the Laser Biathlon Team event followed over a shortened course and shooting range.



The assembled group happily departed in a plethora of directions with awards for racers, British Champions created and GB series decided. Plans for 2018 hope to include more people, skiing and successful trips. Thank you to all who made the co-operative weekend such a success, i.e. everyone.

Point to remember for the next trip: When someone offers to drive you to the airport, make sure that when you are 20 miles into the journey, you haven't forgotten your handbag containing all the important items. (Although you do learn what your friend is truly made of).

2017 British Rollerski Championships Race Report *Elizabeth Massie*

The event was kindly this year hosted by Wessex Biathlon and Nordic Ski Club at the aforementioned venue. The 12k Sprint(?) men's race of four laps started in dry but windy conditions. As the skiers strung out, there were a few races unfolding within the race. Hamish Wolfe (HNSC) led for most of the race and demonstrated a great win, in style. 2nd Phil Garside, 3rd George Holdsworth. 1st Vet Marty Watkins who was later presented with the beautiful Bob Lacey Memorial Trophy.

The 6km ladies race was next, so of course it rained on the great diversity of ages who took part. Well done to Holly Rees-Lay. GB Series Senior Ladies' winner too! 2nd Stephanie Cook. 1st Vet Alison McKinlay.

3k Novice/U18 race: EYO athlete to novice then. The rain had abated and everyone shot away at the gun. This race concluded many months of training and racing for the nine known athletes taking part, so there was an air of great anticipation on and off the track. Charlie Harrigan and Fergus Newman (HNSC) were vying for an outright win in the boys' race, and all looked great for Fergus until his final line to the finish was taking him up the wrong side of the track! Eventually the screaming penetrated and a last minute swerving dive across the track got Fergus past the dividing cone to the correct side of the track just in front of Charlie to sprint to the finish in the lead. Jings!

James Slimon(HN) and Joseph Rosenfeld had a critical battle to conclude the season. In front of his grandparents, James drove through to the finish with steely determination to take third U18 and by one point, runner up in the GB series behind GB Series U18 Winner and British U18 4th placed Joseph. It was that close and confusing.

A loose pole tip hindered Jo Crane (CBNSC) from the ultimate challenge she hoped to give Beth Ireland for their battle in the young ladies' race but both finished in great form with Beth clinching both British Champ title and U18 series title. Jasmine Uth finished 3rd U18 and U14 Champ.

Tristan Marshall cruised through the 3km in a great time to beat David Massie (HNSC) into 2nd U14. Tristan also picked up the GB series title too, whilst David picked up a generous new pair of poles from the sponsor for his efforts throughout the day.

Next was the Laser Biathlon Team Relay event. David and Tristan, 12 and 13 respectively, were pitched against enormous and fully grown Olympic biathletes but delightfully Hamish Wolfe and Patrick Rodwell were too, and produced an astounding win. Phil Garside and Marty Watkins 2nd. Fergus Newman and Charlie Harrigan took 3rd, James Slimon and Joseph Rosenfeld, 4th. Holly and Beth took the Ladies title ahead of 2nd place Amanda Richardson and Alison McKinlay. Jo Crane and Jasmine Uth held off her dad Carsten and Elizabeth Massie (HNSC), for 3rd place. For most of the teams, this was their first experience of biathlon and all acquitted themselves with remarkable precision and timing. Full results per <http://www.wessexbiathlon.org/>



