

Useful Websites...

Nordic Skis and Ski Equipment (often cheap deals at this time of year)
 Braemar Mountain Sports (Scotland) www.braemarmountainsports.com
 Backcountry UK (ex Basecamp Ilkley) www.backcountryuk.com/
 Mountain Spirit (Aviemore) www.mountainspirit.co.uk/

Other Outdoor Equipment including clothing and mountaineering
 Snow and Rock www.snowandrock.com
 There have been some good deals at the new Snow and Rock store at the Metro Centre /Cameron Park.

SnowSport England (SSE sponsored events and lots of other useful info)
www.escnordic.org.uk

And don't forget Tyneside Loipers own website www.contraflow.com/loipers
 Charlie Fisher has been working hard to get the new website established. By the time this this newsletter is published you should be able to access details of the latest TL events. The website has lots of other useful information and you will also be able to access past newsletters. Any comments and feedback please send to Charlie Fisher (phone 0191 261 7719, or e-mail apdh05@dsl.pipex.com)

Norway in the Summer!

I have two copies of the DNT summer brochure if anyone would like one - walking from hut to hut (without skis!). The organised tours look really good. But a do-it-yourself trip would be easy to organise. I am promising myself a summer trip to Hardangervidda or Jotunheim one day!

Next Newsletter due early October

Please send your contributions by 30 Sept.

E-mail Addresses

Do please contact me (Alan Mitcham) if you change your e-mail address. Information on club activities is often disseminated by e-mail. It is a useful way to keep in touch.



Website www.contraflow.com/loipers

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Club Events

Thurs 11 May, 7.30 pm	End-of-Season Meet (Charlie's house) see page 2.
Friday 26 May	Evening bike ride - Tyne valley (contact Alan) page 4.
Thurs 22 June	Evening walk - coastal (contact Nuala) see page 4.
Sunday 23 July	Bike Ride County Durham (contact Stuart) page 4.
8/9th July and 2/3rd Sept	Roller Ski Coaching weekends at Hetton Lyons, Durham (SnowSport England) see page 4.

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Editor's Musings

A mixed year for local snow in Northumberland and Durham.... I hope other people managed more local skiing than I did! The end of the season went on and on into March and April. Walking with Ramblers near Rothbury in early March, I would have been better off with skis. And expecting to ski in the Cheviots in January, I had to walk instead. Much of the time we had a tantalising one or two inches of snow - just insufficient to ski. No doubt the best snow came when I was away elsewhere.

It was a great year in much of Europe (especially in late season). There is still plenty of good snow to be had in the Alps as I write this newsletter.

In Scotland, the best snow came in early April. Paul Gaines got a text message from Nevis Range ski area (whilst we were skiing in Norway!) advertising *4 feet of fresh powder - ski area fully open, - all lifts running, - car park accessible!* Even now (beginning of May) there is still skiing to be had at Cairngorm and Glencoe.

End-of-Season Meet (Charlie's house, 11th May, 7.30 pm onwards)

The usual end of season do is at Charlie's house on Thursday 11 May. Do come along and tell us what you have been doing over the ski season (and bring any slides or photos).

We will have some slides of the recent club trip to Norway (see page 8) and hopefully some photos or slides from Chris Ottley's and Vivienne and Harry's Norway trips too. Don't miss it - especially if you are thinking of doing the easy hut touring trip in Norway planned for next year!

Charlie's house is 26 Victoria Street (off Westmorland Road, just beyond the Discovery Museum. Nearest Metro is Central Station. Give Charlie a call to let him know you are coming, or for more detailed directions.

Bring some food to share. TL will provide the wine!

Ellen-Ann's Winter of Racing!

I started off the racing season with the Marcialonga light (45 km) in Italy, though I didn't do a great time (5 hours 40) as I had a thigh injury.

Then I went to Sweden in Vasaloppet Week: Tjejvasan and did 2 hours 40 for the 30 km women's sprint which I really enjoyed and ended up among about 6 thousand women (one of the only 3 English entries)!! The bus was a far cry from the Vasaloppet bus last year when you could have heard a pin drop: it was full of tense silent men gazing dispiritedly out of the window. Mind you it was very early: 5.00 a.m.! The Tjejvasan however was quite different and everyone was chatty and ready to share training stories and anecdotes of previous races. It snowed lightly almost throughout. The tracks were great and it was fun to ski in under the arch which says "In out forefathers footsteps for the Victories of tomorrow"

I also entered the Sjeitvasan 30k skate sprint (4 hours 20) but this was just my 4th day on skating skis (excuses!) and the snow was like porridge oats except for one bit where the piste machine got ahead, before it then got churned up or snowed or both. I got a nice diploma at the end. I just entered the day before and the bus takes you to the start at 10.00 a.m. The bus was chatty and everyone was told to stay on until the start because it was quite cold, about -10C. The boys on the rescue skidoo were cute - they tailed me for 15k but I didn't look round and then they gave up and as they went past they wished me "Lycka tik" which is good luck! in Swedish.

Ellen-Ann McKenzie

**How does Cross-Country Ski Wax Work?
(info provided by Swix !)**

Uphills and Flats - You need grip! The wax allows snow crystals to penetrate the wax layer and give grip.

Dowhills and Flats - You need glide! The snow under your skis melts due to friction as you glide. The wax lets your skis glide over this water layer.

The ideal glide is provided by the wax hardness matching the snow crystal hardness so a snow crystal imprint is made in the wax. Snow crystal hardness relates directly to temperature, so check the temperature range given for the Swix product. Snow which has gone through a cycle of thawing and refreezing has very large rounded crystals, so a thicker tackier wax layer is needed to make the crystal imprint! This is the reason for using klister.

There is some good advice on waxing technique (including a series of video clips) on www.swixschool.no

A few words from Heather on the Trans-Jurassic - 54 km in France/Switzerland....

My trip to the Jura was ****GREAT**** I didn't do a great time but in other ways it was my best ever ski marathon. I felt very good physically and I wasn't the least bit tired at the end of 54k. I think this was largely due to our training strategy - train really hard for a week and then spend a week resting and recharging your glycogens (i.e. stuffing your face), then do the race. I have to thank my tolerant employers for letting me "work from home" for a week, based at Sheila's place in Switzerland.

The countryside was lovely - undulating hills, with forests, meadows and wide clearings where there were great views. The weather was fairytale beautiful at the start and then thinly veiled cloud, which is ideal to keep the snow in good condition during a race. The snow was reasonably good (probably very good, if you were leading the field). During the race, they fed us on Mars bars, chocolate, prunes and sweet, sweet tea. I haven't eaten so many Mars bars for about 30 years! They're great for the energy levels. I've just been to the dentist this morning - guilt trip!

The French snow was absolutely super during our training week - great glide. But every time we popped into Switzerland, we found they hadn't groomed the snow for weeks and it was hard work. But there are other compensations in Switzerland - like sitting on the terrace of the refuges, eating soup and fruit tarts with a view over Mont Blanc. Real soft stuff – it's not at all like a club trip to Norway!

Results:

Helen Dickinson	4 hr 52 minutes (2nd British lady)
Heather Dickinson	6 hr 01 minute - but I did enjoy it!!

Heather says that she and her family have already booked for the Goms valley (Switzerland) for next New Year!

Another World First for TL Member

On March 4th, TL member John Starbuck completed the first winter ascent of the highest mountain in the Arctic, Gunnbjornsfjeld at ~3700m, in Greenland. The team flew in from Iceland in a ski equipped plane to base camp at 2000m and then hauled sledges up to advanced basecamp at ~2400m. The next 1100m of ascent was completed on skis over horrible sastrugi up to the summit shoulder, then changed to crampons for 150m of Facile and a final 50m of PD+. Temperature was -40C, but fortunately there was little wind.

On returning to base camp, it was ransacked by a polar bear. It was scared off by hitting it on the nose with a saucepan and lighting flares - no-one hurt, but 3 out of five tents trashed. Finally, the pick-up plane nearly wiped everyone out on landing to collect us.

John Starbuck.

Member News

Frank Cauley has recovered well from his broken leg (January). He has been out biking and walking, earning much praise from the consultant and physio for his fitness. He was sorry to have missed the ski season (looking forward to next year) but successfully completed his first transit through airport-style security with a large metal plate in his leg!

Chris Ottley, Vivienn and Harry Hall and Paul and Alan were all ski touring hut-to-hut in Norway over the Easter season -Chris in the Rondane, Vivienne and Harry in the Skarheimen and SW Jotunheim and Paul and Alan in Breheimen and north Jotunheim (surviving on Soreen Malt Loaf!) See page 8.

Ellen-Ann has been doing races all over the place! (after her early season race training week in Bruksvallarna, Sweden) See article on page 15.

Heather and Helen Dickinson spent a week in the Jura mountains in early February culminating in the TransJurassic (54km) (enthusiastic comments from Heather on page 14). Helen took part in the Engadine Marathon and was 2nd British woman (5 minutes behind the first) - we're hoping for an article in next newsletter, Helen.

Alasdair has been to Bangladesh “really great, but not skiing this time”. See Alasdair's World Masters article and photos (Brusson, Italy) on page 7. Despite starting the week with a cold, he managed a PB, 2 hours 46 minutes in the 45 km skate.

Summer Outings

Friday 26th May - Evening Bike Ride (contact Alan 01661 823960)

This will be around 15-18 miles (time permitting) in the Tyne Valley and south of Wylam, on quiet roads, tracks and old railways. Meeting time and venue (to be confirmed) probably 6.30pm at The Keelman PH, near Newburn. Finish in time for a pub meal washed down with one the real ales from the Big Lamp Brewery.

Thursday 22nd June - Evening Walk along the Coast (contact Nuala 07770 376732)

Probable 6.30 start, ending at The Ship Inn at Low Newton. Check with Nuala for final arrangements.

Sunday 23rd July - Bike Ride in County Durham (contact Stuart 0191 371 1163)

Meet at Blanchland at about 10.30 am (GR 965 504). Stuart has planned a mainly off-road route of around 30 to 35 miles, with a possible lunch stop at Allenheads. But bring packed lunch just in case. If anything like the route that Stuart organised last year, this should be really good.

Thursday 27th July - Evening Walk in Hexhamshire (contact Jane 01434 608321)

Start and finish at the Travellers Rest near Slaley. 5 or 6 miles walk followed by a drink and a bite to eat at the pub. Check with Jane for final details and meeting time.

SnowSport England Events

A full listing is included on the website www.escnordic.org.uk

The most relevant dates for TL (not too distant from NE) are as follows:

<u>8/9th July</u>	Roller ski coaching Hetton Lyons Park, Co Durham	Contact Adam Pinney aapinney@tinyworld.co.uk tel: 01582 602995
<u>2/3rd Sept</u>	ditto	
<u>9/10th Sept</u>	Nordic Downhill and Telemark - Tamworth Snowdome	Contact Ralph White jartwhite@freuk.com tel: 0161 445 9417
<u>30Sept/1 Oct</u>	Roller ski coaching Lancaster	Contact Grahame Aspinall gaspinal@bofrog.com 01484 681294

I intend to get to some or most of these events (so let me know if you are interested). I will try to find out more about the Nordic Downhill and Telemark coaching at Tamworth. Previous such events (held on the dry slope at Silksworth) were very good - the Tamworth Snowdome should be a much better venue. (Ed.)

Obersdorf 2006

Despite having to pull out of the planned Norway trip with Alan, I nevertheless counted 21 days on skis in the first three months of the year. This was due quite simply to the best winter that Germany has seen since records began. I was able to ski out the door one Friday afternoon when a quick 30cm fall left our own town impassable to all but those on skis. Loipe on the edge of the Frankfurt city were maintained for several weeks— a 30km marked long-distance route through our ‘hills’ (900m high) was one highlight.

The snow also lead to casualties, most notably when the roof of an indoor icerink collapsed in the south. Munich ground to a halt for a few days after nearly a meter of new snow fell one weekend, to add to the huge piles they already had – there was simply nowhere left to shovel the stuff. The Munich tram drivers dug out the network by hand and snow was transported painstakingly to selected carparks and piled up like white slagheaps, still melting as we speak. This freak weather delayed my own week down in Oberstdorf, a cosy village which was an ideal base for my first serious attempt to learn to skate. Just outside the village is a competition / training area which hosts world championship events every year or so, including a well-groomed flat expanse ideal for tentative first steps, along with the tortuous competition course which boasts a good uphill stretch with a brutal 30% gradient.

After a fine breakfast, mornings were spent trying to skate round the freshly groomed local loops, in temperatures of -5C. The entire week was gloriously sunny and afternoons the snow too soft down in the valley, so I enjoyed a few hours of downhill (for which I have little aptitude but enjoy nevertheless), before swapping skis for a final evening round or two before retiring to eat huge amounts of pasta. I treated myself to tuition from one of Germany’s national trainers, once with a small group of fellow ‘converters’, and once on my own. A man after my own heart, a keen ski tourer in the wilds of the Bavarian alps, we got on well despite my crude German and his handful of English phrases. All he could think to say at the end of the group session, on pointing me down the steep winding descent to the ‘finish line’ was: ‘Charlie, enjoy your meal.’

The final morning of my week, when I had him all to myself, we went through a bewildering array of exercises and things to remember. I may well be the roughest material he has yet had to deal with, given that he is used to working with the youngsters who aspire to world class performance, but his ability to extract step change improvements in surprising ways, was greatly encouraging. The repeated attempts to descend a short steep slope on a single ski was perhaps the most ‘fun’ we had; but oddly the biggest single improvement came when he took an old pair of tights out of his pocket and vigorously polished my skis, resulting in a significantly longer glide. Tights are on my list of must-have equipment for next year!

Charlie Fisher

Scotland Weekend March 2006

Sadly the joint weekend with the Lakeland Club at the Gulabin Lodge near Glen-shee did not take place, because of lack of support from the Lakeland Club itself. It would have been a good venue - maybe another year?

With only 3 stalwarts from Tyneside Loipers, we decided to stay at a B&B in Kingussie (handy for Cairngorm, the Monadhliaths, Rothiemurchas, or even Nevis Range). The B&B was superb but the one and only pub in Kingussie was fairly dire!

Saturday morning, we called at Cairngorm Mountain Sports to hire telemark skis for Paul Wharrier and then drove straight up to the Cairngorm ski area. The new mountain railway delivered us swiftly to the top of the mountain (very efficient). But there we were blasted by spindrift and took one or two easy but unenjoyable runs on the Ptarmigan bowl (deep powder near the top and hard ice further down). It never fails to surprise me how many complete beginners are lined up at the top of Cairngorm in ski school in such awful conditions! Better snow conditions were further down in Corrie Cas. Paul dropped out by mid afternoon (first time on telemark skis) but Neil and I managed to last out most of the day and covered most of the mountain.

Overnight Saturday we had about 5 inches of fresh snow and Sunday morning we decided to ski from the B&B west of Kingussie into the lower hills of the Monadhliath (we almost skied from the door). The best skiing was on the golf course and through the forest, before we hit the hills. Neil and I skied further up onto the Monadhliaths and we reached a bothy where we stopped for some lunch. After another hour we covered barely a kilometre (conditions were not ideal as the snow had been blown around so much). Coming down was quite comical (if not ridiculous)! Frequent falls in the random drifts of deep, deep powder - on several occasions, great difficulty in getting back up onto our skis!

We learnt that the A9 was still closed at Drumochter. At 3pm we were close to booking in for another night at the B&B (Paul was looking forward to phoning school on Monday morning to say that he was stranded in Scotland). We decided on a visit to the Police Station at Aviemore (where it was confirmed that the A9 was still closed) and we sat in a bar and ordered tea and scones, finally agreeing to take the long, long journey around the coast via Aberdeen (the only road that was open).

Thank goodness we delayed to have that cup of tea - crossing the road back to the car, we heard that the A9 was now open. And so we joined the long slow queue of cars over Drumochter and were home late on Sunday evening.

Alan Mitcham

Roller Skiing for Summer 2006

We are again meeting up on most Thursday evenings for an hour or more of roller skiing at Hetton Lyons Park (near Houghton Le Spring) and along the Hadrian Way in Newcastle. The club has several pairs of roller skis and boots and you are welcome to join us. We usually do some ski related exercises and several circuits around the track (and often stop for a natter along the way!)

Hetton Lyons Park is an undulating 1.8 km circuit around a lake and up and around a playing field (quite pleasant especially with swans with cygnets and various other water-birds on the lake). You can also do a smaller circuit which avoids the larger hills.

If you haven't yet tried roller skiing, the SnowSport England weekends (see below) are an ideal time to try. Or just come along and join us on a Thursday evening. Roller skis will help you to develop your cross-country technique and will certainly keep you fit. Contact Alasdair to find out more and to check meeting times and venue (phone 0191 266 2327, or e-mail awilson.craw@blueyonder.co.uk).

SnowSport England are hosting two weekends of roller ski coaching at Hetton Lyons Park (8/9th July and 2/3rd Sept). They are also hosting roller ski coaching at other venues, including Lancaster (which I can recommend on the basis of past experience). Full details of the various events can be accessed on the SSE website.

There will be coaching from 10 am until about 5 pm on Saturday morning, with a talk and video on Saturday evening and then a Sunday morning race followed by more coaching until about 4 pm. The course is for all abilities including beginners and children. Ex Olympic biathlete Mike Dixon will be in charge of coaching (he is excellent)!

The course fee is £60 for those booking in advance (£80 for late entries). See page 4 for more info and contact details for Adam Pinney who is coordinating the events.

Don't be put off by the Sunday morning race! Quote from Adam Pinney "There will be shorter/less serious races put on as well, and the idea is to get everyone who is on the course to also take part in the races even if just as a fun runner."

The Joys of Artificial Snow - or the World Masters XC Ski Championships 2006

Take a secluded valley in north eastern Italy, a few tens of km and a couple of ranges of Alps from the site of this year's Olympics, and add 1300 skiers of ages ranging from 30 to 90 and you have the makings of a World Masters Cross Country Ski Championships. The only problem was the snow - or the lack of it! Luckily Brusson in the Valle d'Ayas was well prepared and had whole meadows arrayed with 10ft tall standpipes topped with spray nozzles. I missed the sight of the tonnes of snow being moved around to form the 15km of trails but the results were well appreciated by the skiers. The whole community of the valley seemed to be involved in the project and had invested tens of thousands of Euros into putting on the event for 10 days in early February. The result was one of the best World Masters Championships I've been to and that doesn't take into account the overall performance of the British team of 9, which was one of the better ones in recent years despite the acknowledged high standard of the competition. Norman Clark again won two medals in his M70- 75 class and several of us bettered our previous best performances in terms of percentage behind the winner's time. It is encouraging that all the efforts people are putting in to train off-season and improve technique are paying off, with the help of excellent coaching by such as Mike Dixon and Adam Pinney. I think people are enjoying their skiing better too – I certainly am.

To take part in next year's competition, as usual a series of races of 30k, 10k and finally 45k, freestyle or classic technique, you need to be a competent skier and a member of the BMCCSA (a snip at £5 a year). The delights of Rovaniemi in north Finland await you, and you can visit Santa's real grotto. The website www.mwc2007.com/ gives further details and you can look up what happened this February at www.mwc2006.com/home.asp?l=e

Contact me for more information on taking part in this inspiring and challenging event.

Alasdair Wilson

Norway 2007 - An Easy Hut Touring Trip!!!

Several people have mentioned that they would like to do an easy hut touring holiday. A rough plan would be to go to a comfortable and conveniently placed hut (such as Fondsbu in SW Jotunheim). We would then expect to do day tours from the hut with the occasional overnight stay at another nearby hut.

This would be a really good opportunity for anyone who wants to try out some Norway hut touring (with a view to doing a more demanding trip another year). It is also an opportunity to have a reasonably-priced week of skiing in good company and wonderful surroundings on guaranteed snow (unlike Scotland)!

If you are interested, do please speak to me or Charlie and let us know your preferred dates. Easter weekend is 6-9th April 2007. The best weather and snow conditions are likely to be near to Easter time.

Alan Mitcham.

Chamonix Weekend – January 2006

Four Tyneside Loipers (keen telemarkers) went on the club weekend to Chamonix Valley at the end of January. We stayed at the Couronne Hotel in Argentiere (a bit run down but cheap and convenient) and had a very enjoyable few days skiing in the various Chamonix ski areas.

We skied at Le Tour, Flegere/Brevent and Les Houches. Les Houches had the best snow and with hindsight we might have done better to have stayed there, as the transport system (free ski bus) did not work particularly well. Tim and Paramjeet (who arrived a day later than Neil and I) made the sensible decision to hire a car from the airport at Geneva.

On Sunday morning we decided to go back to Les Houches and loaded all of our skis in the back of the car before realising that the front of the car (the bonnet and windscreen) had caved in due to an enormous snowfall from the hotel roof. We then had to suffer another two days of riding the inefficient ski bus!

It was great to ski with a group of keen telemarkers. It was also great to get out in the evenings for a meal in one of the café/restaurants in Argentiere. Several times in the evenings we ended up playing cards in the hotel dining room. We will definitely be doing a similar trip next year, probably to Flaine or Morzine or Verbier - all are readily accessible from Geneva and have good ski areas and well-developed lift systems. We will have to book early to get cheap flights!

Let me know if you would like to join us in January 2007! Alan Mitcham



Leaving Sota Saeter—first day



Norwegian couple skiing with a Border Collie



Sheltering from the wind in a snow bunker

NORWAY 2006



Tea and hot waffles at Sognefjellshytta



Alasdair competing in the 45 km Skate at Brusson Italy, February 2006 (2 hour 46 minutes)



and at Kizerslka, Czech Republic, February 2006

Deep in Jotunheim (Norway 2006)

Yes – it really was *deep*! We arrived on 5th April to find new snow just about everywhere (even in Oslo). Paul Gaines and I took the bus north to Bismo and then a very expensive taxi to the DNT staffed hut at Sota Saeter (a beautiful remote valley NW of Jotunheim). There was just us plus a Danish couple who had been there several days.

Next day we skied to Nordstedelsaeter (23km and 950m of ascent). The snow was very soft and the steep climb up through the birch woods was hard work (a tough first day with 8 hours of skiing). The only other occupants at the hut were a DNT guided group and we had a very sociable evening meal and talked about our next days route over to Krossbu and their next day going to Sota Saeter. (One of their party was in severe pain overnight with sciatica and was left waiting in the hut to be lifted out by helicopter!)

Next day we had another 23km and several hundred metres of ascent – another tough day, especially after several more inches of fresh snow overnight. The weather deteriorated and the day seemed to go on forever! We didn't see another person all day and no trace of any ski tracks. We didn't see our skis either, buried under the soft snow! Progress was very slow and we had several stops to recover our energy. Paul's supply of Soreen Malt Loaf was a real lifesaver. It seemed to be constantly uphill – in fact it was mostly uphill! At 9pm and getting dark, we were pleased to be met by two snow scooters (out looking for us after nearly 11 hours skiing). We still had about an hour of skiing to go.

Two days later (well rested) we skied from Krossbu to Skogadalsboen. Despite the further snowfall, the snow had consolidated slightly and the going was much easier (though fairly tricky on the steeper down hills). The day after that we had our first real day of sunshine (mainly uphill to Lervassbu).

Day 6 – Tragedy! We had worked out a route to Spiterstulen taking in a 2000m+ peak with a ridge ascent and then a descent via a big snow bowl to rejoin the main route down the valley. But Paul's binding broke (disastrously) when we had gone just 1 km, so we forced to limp back to Lervassbu. And we lost about 2 hours getting the bindings replaced, leaving only time to ski the direct route to Spiterstulen.

Ours big plan had been to ascend Galdhoppigen (2472m - highest peak in Norway). We were not having much luck with the weather – it was windy with frequent flurries of fresh snow. A slight improvement was predicted for two days later (our last day, Friday). But then the forecast changed and so did our plan for climbing Galdhoppigen. We climbed for about five hours (1400 metres of ascent), the last 200 metres of ascent being quite tricky and rather tiring – neither of us thought of taking

a summit photo! We retraced our route down the summit ridge and back down the glacier. The long final descent to Spiterstulen was steep and difficult and we were too tired to ski elegantly (or even without falling!). Nevertheless we had earned our pre-dinner glass of expensive Norwegian beer.

On our final day at Spiterstulen, we took advantage of one of the guided tours (free to anyone at the hotel!). This was a big circuit of Galdhoppigen around 4 large glaciers. The weather seemed almost perfect and it was hot work re-ascending much of our route from two days earlier. Unfortunately the weather didn't last and near to the summit ridge it became very cold and windy (like winter in Scotland). At this point we descended down a steep snow-filled gully (skis strapped to our rucksacks). Then another 2km of skiing, and another steep descent onto a different glacier, and finally over a slightly corniced ridge onto yet another glacier for the main descent to the Spiterstulen valley.

We finished off with a swim at the hotel and spent the evening talking with some of the others on the tour (and listening to the do-it-yourself music and singing in the hotel lounge). One of the others on the tour appeared with his arm tied in a sling and claimed to have dislocated his shoulder. Bizarre conversation ensued: I said, "Have you seen a doctor?" and he said, "I am a doctor!" Unbeknown to us, he had done it on the last kilometre down to Spiterstulen.

The whole trip was very memorable. We had some great food! Not so much a hut-to-hut tour – at times it seemed like a hotel-to-hotel tour! We stayed in 3 DNT *huts* (all of them staffed, one with inside toilets) and we stayed in 3 *tourist hotels*. On our rest day at Krossbu we skied a circuit of about 7km and ended up at a nearby *tourist hotel* where we had tea and hot waffles with jam and cream!

The weather was exceptional. Usually at this time of year the snow is reasonably compacted and there are small amounts of fresh snow which make for ideal skiing. But this year the heaps of fresh snow meant that we spent most of our time having to break trail (which is very tiring) - hence our very long 11 hour day to Krossbu.

Commiserations to Charlie Fisher! He and I should have been skiing the previous 10 days in The Rondane but Charlie had to pull out at short notice. Charlie and I are both committed to next year's club trip which will be an easy hut touring trip based in southern Jotunheim (see page 10).

Alan Mitcham.

Best Grub:

Smoked salmon on lettuce & farmhouse bread with mayonnaise sauce (Sota Saeter)
Salted beef (Skogadalsboen) with roast potatoes and vegetables (Lervassbu)
Trifle - layers of fresh berries and cream and crunchy toffee bits (Nordstedelsaeter)
to which we failed to do justice after seconds of the previous course.