

2015 Memories

The following beautiful memories have been written by Claire Pharand.

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Caledon Opening Day

As tradition has it, Skicousi gathered at the regular opening day spot: Caledon. This year, mixed emotions floated through the air.

Skicousi lost a few members; some did not renew their membership because of failing health. And to those, we wish prompt recovery. The Ski School lost a few of the instructors, rather sudden and quite unpredictably. Our condolences to family and friends.

The members were greeted with smiles and sharing of summer memories. Joan, of course, had so much to say about her horse and the competitions. Judy, Bonnie and Charlotte bravely made it even if the plane landed in the wee hours of the morning (but one cannot feel too sorry, after all they were in warm weather and sandy beaches). John shared his excitement about his upcoming trip to Israel.

Many members took to the hills to revive the ski legs. The Ski School had its intro, assessing skiers into groups. And off they were, on the slopes, to become better skiers. Others went about passively, aggressively, comically down the hills.

Lunch was served after a great morning of skiing. Members were served to a delicious and filling bowl of chili. What a brilliant idea of serving lunch instead of breakfast! So many skiers commented positively about this change while getting onto the lifts. Congratulations to the Social Committee for a job well done!

The Board took a few minutes to introduce its directors, those who give selflessly to make Skicousi a success. There is no better time to reflect on this and ask ourselves if it is time to help out; volunteer and take a position on the Board. Think about it: it may yet be the best experience you may have. Talk to your Nominating Committee: Donna, the other Donna and Cindy!

And Barb, the Trips Coordinator, had to announce the short trip to Killington had been cancelled. Consternation and disappointment sighed through the hall. How could this happen? Was it the location? Was it lack of communication? What will one do for that planned period?

On the other hand, the long trip to Silver Star has the green light. Those registered for the long trip were relieved and happy!

Before everyone realized it, the sun was setting and it was time to be treated to a hot chocolate (or something stronger), pack up and return home. Reminiscing on the day brought dreamy smiles. After all, it was cold, the sun was bright, and the wind light. One would not likely have enjoyed as much had it been at Blue where the wind was ferocious at the summit. And just think: Mont-Tremblant was a chilly -37C without the wind factor!

Craigleith

It's always special skiing at Craigleith. The slopes are wonderfully groomed and the panorama is so enchanting. January 15 was no exception.

Even the Craigleith members were saying they never experienced skiing in such perfect conditions. The staff is friendly and is happy to see us. Did you see the lift operator enticing you to move along? Singing and dancing as he was loading people on the chairs? I could have stayed there all day enjoying the show!

Best of all, we were treated to a race. Craigleith staff set up the gates and the Skicousi members were studying and projecting the best path to get the best time and win the race. Because it's all about speed and winning the trophy.

If you kept your lift pass and you did the race, you will be able to spot your time, hoping that next year your time will be better!

LAST THREE DIGIT OF LIFT TICKET	FIRST RUN	SECOND RUN
558	27.18	26.78
537	26.85	26.62
521	26.33	26.07
480	25.85	
714	23.54	
461	20.37	19.99
482	23.18	
481	21.78	
502	28.88	
463	36.17	
484	22.81	
451	24.22	
528	33.88	31.51
581	33.81	29.14
523	35.84	29.94
446	22.80	22.63
458	20.83	20.15
562	23.68	23.08
487	23.22	22.87
498	26.24	25.48
(Snowboard)		
486	22.46	
418	28.73	28.12
488	25.99	26.28
457	29.02	27.30
(Snowboard)		
563	25.56	25.38
565	26.68	25.13
588	35.44	31.42
572	24.82	24.96
742	27.41	26.52
456	28.79	26.01
740	29.17	27.98
767	25.58	25.68
(Snowboard)		
718	29.02	28.25
(Snowboard)		
768	33.20	31.83
(Snowboard)		
568	35.23	33.92
435	22.04	22.33
772	33.67	35.37
(Snowboard)		
750	22.93	
519	27.85	25.82
514	32.88	30.41
548	27.13	26.85
438	23.59	22.66
454	25.09	24.05
438	26.57	25.10
453	27.79	26.70
021	37.17	38.53

Osler

There is no snow in the Greater Toronto Area. It is dismal to look around and see everything brown and grey. One has to join SKICOUSI to discover that snow belongs on the hills in the Georgian Bay area.

And.....

FABULOUS is the one word that would describe skiing at Osler this week. The day started with well-groomed hills even if the light was rather flat. A few flakes started coming down from the heavens above to accumulate to about 10cm during lunch time. The afternoon skiing was in powder! One could not have dreamed a better scenario for the day.

It was rather unfortunate that the Skicousi members could not all sit together for lunch. Osler had 3 different groups, of which Barometer had reserved most of the seating in the cafeteria area. Most of us took shelter in one of the two rooms downstairs. Come to think of it, it happened last year too where members were spread throughout the building. But the idea is not stay inside but to play outside. And that is what we did!

Those who surfed the 'Weekly Notes' were collecting an extra draw ticket. Even if I doubled my chances, I did not win the lift tickets or the lesson. But it allowed me to dream twice as much about the evasive windfall. It's like the lottery: it could be you! I wonder what the Committee will think of next to bring the members to surf the website on a regular basis...

The Social Committee made the official announcement: tickets for Closing Day will be on sale starting next week. Make sure you purchase your ticket. It is an absolute fun day! You can dress into your summer attire to match the theme 'Fun in the Sun'. I simply can't believe that the season is halfway through its pace.

As I shovelled my driveway when I returned from Osler, I kept going back to the tremendous feeling of ripping down Sleigh Ride and Rattler. It just made pushing the snow a little easier. And the landscape in the Greater Toronto Area is coated in white after the small storm that passed through... for now...

Alpine

It was under a brightly lit moon that I headed towards Alpine Ski Club. The air was calm, the wind had not yet started its dance.

It was not too long though, that the sun slowly peaked over the horizon and sent the moon for a good day's rest. It came out in its total splendor without a cloud to frown upon.

As I arrived at Alpine, I was surprised to see so many cars and buses! Coaches as well as school buses. My curiosity was provoked. I wanted to know who was infringing on Skicousi's ski day! I soon found out that 390 students (or approximately 390, take a few) were attending a ski and snowboard race as part of their school curriculum. Oh! How I wished I had those sporting activities when I was a kid in school... Maybe there was... But with my memory getting more and more short term, I simply don't remember. Or... maybe I made a mental block because high school was last century and I may want to forget how old I am!

Nevertheless, there was still plenty of room on the hill to share the runs. There was still no wait time at the lifts and adequate runs to try out. There was trace of fresh powder and accumulated light fluffy snow on the runs so I assumed snow must have fallen through the night. It was simply divine to slice through the powder and push the legs as I made my way down the hill.

It was time for lunch and our lovely social ladies made a few important announcements: tickets for closing day were now on sale! I simply can't believe that we're already thinking of closing day. Banish the thought but I still bought my ticket. I would not want to miss on the fun!

And then they talked about Valentine's Day – yes, that happens to be next week! Remind me to ask them where they bought their funky hats. I did get the request for the chocolate cake. As I am taking a few minutes to jot down these lines, the house is filled with the scent of chocolate. I'm keeping my fingers crossed that it will be edible...

Please someone! Stop the clock from rushing into spring. I have not had my fill of skiing yet! Is there a way to stretch the season? Yes, there is! Alpine offered 'Welcome Back Vouchers'. It entitles the bearer (that would be me) to return to Alpine with a friend (I wonder who I will invite) starting March 7. Imagine skiing on school break at Alpine while Blue Mountain is filled with frenzied school kids...

And last, my thoughts are for Scott, wishing him a prompt recovery...

Blue Mountain – Valentine's Day

It was plenty cold at Blue Mountain. But it was plenty warm inside at the South Base Lodge. Plenty of love, plenty of sharing, plenty of chocolate.

Yes, it was Skicousi's Valentine's Day Party!

The tables were set up, some with great attention, some with conviviality. Stewart shared Hugs and Kisses, mostly with the ladies. Sweets from everyone to everyone. Lunch was an incredible feast. Aphrodisiacs were a staple. The snowboard ladies sported their bras; it would not have been the same without this special participation.

The Social Committee must have had a difficult time in corralling a willing judge, impervious to bribes. The judge must have had a difficult time in selecting the winning table dressing. In the end, the judge made a sagacious decision and awarded the prize to the 'table with the chandelier'.

As much as one would think, it was also a day of skiing. The morning was wonderful. Bitterly cold but no wind. There had been trace of fresh powder and it was wonderful to cut tracks into the snow. Then, the wind made its presence known in the afternoon and it challenged every skier on the hill. It was relentless as the skiers made their way to the top of the mountain; exposed flesh froze within minutes. It was relentless as skiers slalomed the hill; fingers and thumbs were numbed. A wind so strong that it was impossible to reach the lift without having to push and heave against the terrible air current.

The day finished early for some, had more hot coco breaks for others. But in the end, it was still a marvelous day. It was a day of sharing laughs, good food, great company and more memories.

Happy Valentine's everyone!

Another cold day. Windy day. Sunny day! But a poor consolation at a balmy -20 in Osler.

Osler

I have no idea what happened to the calendar of warm days on Thursdays this year. I anticipated nice ski days as Tuesdays and Wednesdays were relatively mild and skiable. But the weatherman insisted on providing cold and extra cold, windy and extra windy Thursdays.

It is the club's before-last outing and there is already nostalgia in the air.

Osler was in great condition. The runs were well groomed and it was paradise skiing. Had it not been for the cold. Comparing to last week's Blue Mountain, the somewhat sheltered lifts provided some relief from the unrelenting wind. My friends and I persevered, no one wanting to admit it was time to stop.

It's as if there just wasn't enough skiing this season. Perhaps it was the elongated breaks to warm the fingers and toes. Perhaps it was the more frequent pauses to a hot chocolate. But I could not get enough runs in through the day to satisfy my appetite.

I skied until the bitter end, pushing the runs to the max today. Even with the cold, I did not want the sun to set, the lift to stop. I wanted just that one last run of the day to last forever. Regardless of the cold. Regardless of the wind.

I will prevail and overcome the cold to ski.... Ski..... Ski..... Ski.

Closing Day – Devil's Glen - Fun in the Sun

Really? Shorts and T's on the hill? Did you not see the thermometer, registering lows as never seen before?

Ha! There is a good reason for such disregard to frozen limb and skin that has been exposed to these frigid temperatures for the past six months: It is Fun in the Sun Party. Mmm, yes, and the Social Committee did not spare any effort in closing the day in a fantastic fashion.

Our three gracious ladies organized a perfect day: the lunch was superb, the prizes simply wonderful. Even though I tried to bribe a few winners in letting go of their loot, I was terribly unsuccessful.

Our infamous two boys, Willie and Donnie, were busy selling 50/50 tickets, amassing huge amount of money. They were relentless in spotting skiers who would willingly let go of the money purse. The winner was nevertheless quite unexpected: Donnie, the ticket seller. And quite a nice take-home pay for all the efforts he had put in to raise money for the Social Club.

The Board of Directors made a call to all members to think about helping out, in various positions and activities, all for the good of Skicousi.

And then it was over. Sad, really. Having to say goodbye to people befriended since January was hard to do. 'See you next January' sounded hollow and so far away. Some advanced promises of keeping in touch over the summer. But one thing is sure: we will all be back at opening day in January 2016!

Happy summer everyone!