

Off Piste



Rowan Christie working his way back up out of the South Arm of the Snowy River, after a short downhill run. Behind him are the shoulder of Mt Kosciuszko and Etheridge Ridge. On a CCCSC ski tour, Thredbo to Kosciuszko. Sat 26 September. Photo: Ken Moylan

The CCCSC XMAS Party will be held on Wednesday 9 December. See inside for further details.

The Club has a new Social Meeting venue for 2016. See details on page 2.

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Newsletter Contributions

- Photos of trips, lessons, snow country, meetings or social events.
- Reports on tours, lessons and races and CCCSC events.
- Letters to the editor.
- Articles about XC skiing, snow conditions or related topics.
- Items to buy or sell.
- Please send emails to cccsceditor@gmail.com
- The next newsletter will be out in early May 2016.

Presidents Piece

Spring works it's usual magic here in the gardens of the presidential palace. Servants flow too and fro changing winter doonas for summer doonas in our numberless bedrooms. Our acres of bluebells and rhododendrons are out. We are looking forward to our first swims in the infinity pool which was enlarged over winter to the confusion of mathematicians everywhere.

But even while the 2015 winter snow pack is receding, there is an **important** and **exciting** change for club members to note for next year. We have a **new venue** for social meetings.

Social meetings next year will be held at:

The Hughes Community Centre Hughes Place Hughes

The entrance to the community centre is in Hughes Place. The room is heated!

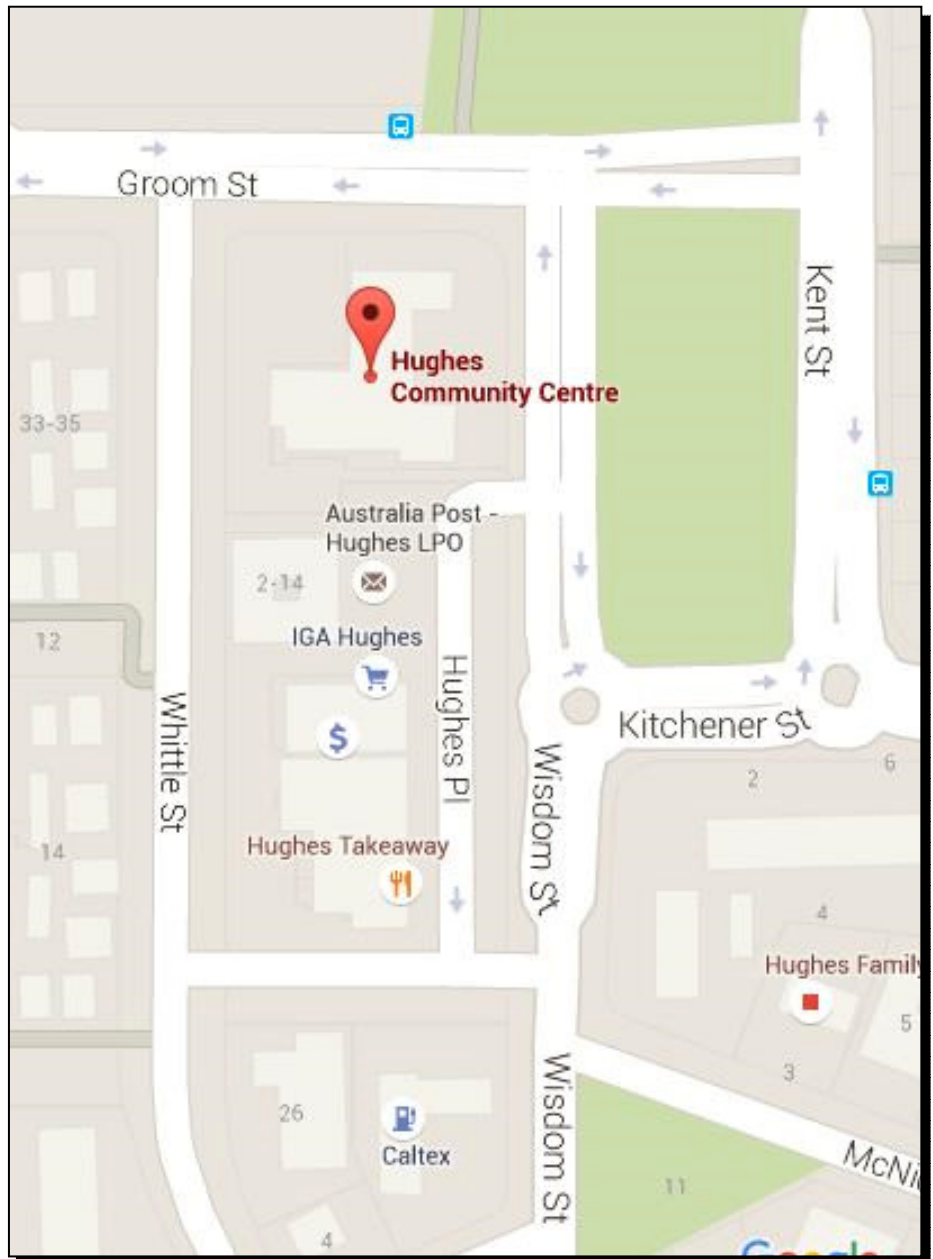
Here you will find lots of paved and lit parking in Hughes Place, or very close by in Whittle Street. The first meeting will be on 25 May 2016, and then as usual on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month

The Christmas Party

Wednesday 9 December

Everyone is invited to this year's Christmas party. It will be held as usual at Nara Park, behind the Hyatt Hotel, beginning at 5.30. BYO everything.

Everyone here in the palace hopes you all have a wonderful active summer. For those skiing in the northern hemisphere this summer, we set aside our envy, and look forward to hearing about your adventures next winter at the social meetings in their new venue.



Map showing the new venue for social meetings in 2016 in Hughes.
Below — Streetview image of Hughes Community Centre.

*Lachlan Kennedy,
President*



Tips for Writing Trip Reports

Trip reports are a great way with sharing your trip experience with club members.

But have you ever thought that the most important part of your trip experience for Off Piste readers is the mountain travel knowledge that you gathered during your trip? Readers are hungry for this information so that they can use it to plan their own snow trips.

This knowledge might comprise such things as -

Why you chose the destination.

How you chose your route to the destination.

What navigational issues you considered - eg land marks, pole lines, roads, obvious peaks, gradients, trees, rocks, and likely snow conditions.

Weather conditions that did or might affect navigation, and their affect on the condition of the snow pack. For example a recent storm may have exposed ice in one place and created a powder stash in another. The snow might have been crusty in some places because of a few sunny days preceding the trip.

Exit points, or chicken-out points, in the even of poor weather.

Variations in the route you discovered on your trip which you think might be useful on future trips.

Your experience deserves to be shared, so happy travels, and write on....

Lachlan



Inside the Hughes Community Centre.

New Committee for 2016

The Club held it's 2015 AGM at the Masson Street hall on 23 September 2015. To make the event more festive the club provided a food and a choice wines for members who were there. This will be a feature of all future AGMs.

The make up of the Committee for 2016 is:

President - Lachlan Kennedy (for his 3rd and last term)
Vice President - Vacant
Secretary - Vacant
Treasurer - Paul Room
Tour Co-ordinator - Alan Levy
Off Piste Editor - Tony Brown
Membership Co-ordinator - Vacant
Race Co-ordinator - Joanne Clancy
Social Meetings Co-ordinator - Rowan Christie
Webmaster - Ken Moylan
Training Co-ordinator - Vacant

With a vacancy rate approaching 40% the club clearly needs more members to volunteer for the committee. So please step outside your comfort zone to consider stepping outside your comfort zone to consider joining the committee. It's as easy as that!

If you want to talk about joining the committee please contact me or talk to any of the other committee members (past or present).

The committee is a friendly collaborative and mutually supportive group which delivers great benefits to free heel skiers in Canberra.

The AGM also adopted a new motto for the club which is 'The CCCSC - Canberra's home for free-heel skiers'.

*Cheers,
Lachlan Kennedy (President)*



XMAS Party

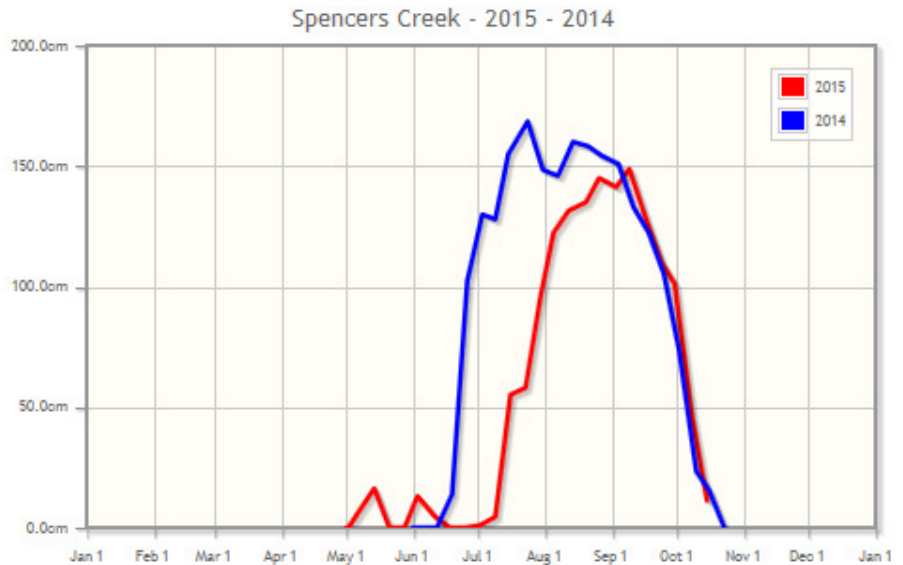
Wednesday 9
December

The CCCSC XMAS Party will be held on Wednesday 9 December at Nara Park, Lennox Gardens (on the lake shore behind the Hyatt Hotel) from 5:30pm. A club banner will be erected near one of the BBQs. This is a BYO food and drink event. So come along and say hello and goodbye to your ski mates till next year.



Snow Depth Chart

The latest snow depth chart for Spencers Creek shows that we had a very short ski season compared to last year. Skiable snow was almost non-existent until mid July and had a one month lag from the previous year, and since early September the snow depth chart for both years has been almost identical.



Perisher Workparties for 2016

Workparties on the Perisher Nordic trails and Cross Country Centre will be conducted in 2016 on the following weekends:

6 & 7 February
5 & 6 March
2 & 3 April
7 & 8 May
4 & 5 June

Contact Peter Cunningham for more information about these weekends.

Discoverxcski

The Ski & Snowboard Australia Cross Country Committee is excited to announce the launch of [discoverxcski](http://www.discoverxcski.com/), an introductory web portal that aims to boost cross country skiing grassroots participation.

Designed to be mobile/tablet friendly, Discover XC showcases the many different faces of the sport and provides practical information and tips for beginners of all ages. Whether people might be interested in finding a healthy recreational alternative, keeping fit during winter, discovering snow-fun for the whole family, exploring the alpine back-country, seeking an adrenaline rush or taking up ski racing, Discover XC and cross country skiing has something for everyone. Please check it out at <http://www.discoverxcski.com/> and spread the word!

Marathon Skier - a new online magazine

Finland's Worldloppet race, the Finlandia-hiihto, has launched a special digital magazine devoted to marathon skiing. The [latest issue](http://www.marathonskier.com/english/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/V3_marathon_skier_issue12015_en_091315.pdf) is in English at:

http://www.marathonskier.com/english/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/V3_marathon_skier_issue12015_en_091315.pdf

And for all Worldloppet news, the Worldloppet Magazine is now available at www.worldloppet.com

CCCSC TOUR PROGRAM 2015

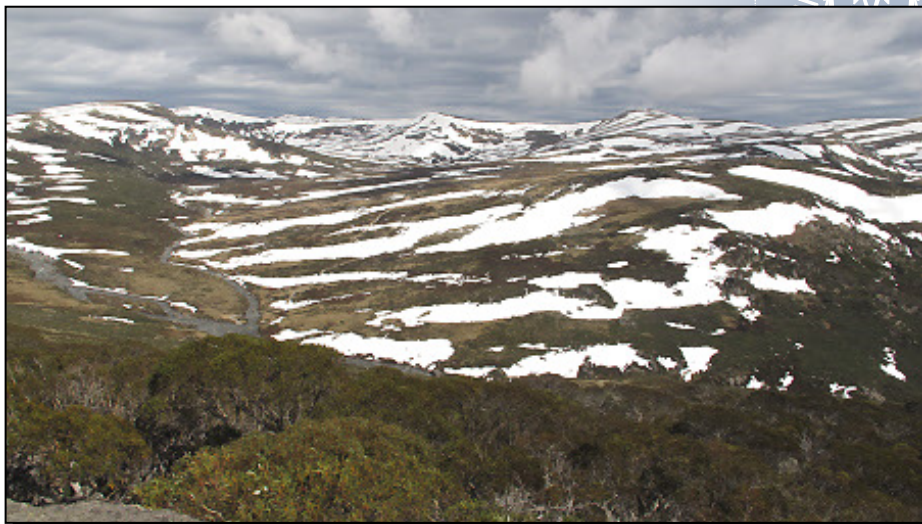
DATE	DESCRIPTION	LEADER
Saturday, 7 November	Wilkinson's Valley Exploration Intermediate Skills Hilly Terrain Long Distance To mark the end of the ski season for me, we shall visit the valley between Mt Kosciuszko and Mt Townsend. Catch the chair up Thredbo and walk and ski for the rest of the day. The plan is to go out along the metal walkway, before dropping into Cootapatamba and making our way to Wilkinson's Valley. If we are fast enough, there will be a bagging of Mt Townsend, otherwise we'll return via Mueller's Pass and Rawson's Pass. This is the day of the Snowy Ride, so the chairlift should be able to get us down about 18:00 (instead of the more usual 16:00).	

Trip Report — Lodge Weekend — 17-18 October



23 people attended the Club lodge weekend at the Southern Alps Ski Club lodge at Charlotte Pass on the weekend of 17-18 October. The weather was cloudy but mostly fine on the Saturday, and sunny but breezy on the Sunday. The snow cover had diminished greatly from the preceding week and walking was involved to reach the snow, but ski trips were done to Kangaroo Ridge and across the Snowy River up to Carruthers Peak along the various snow drifts. Another fantastic feast was held on the Saturday evening for the group. We hope to do this again same time next year.

Alan Levy



The Main Range from Charlotte Pass lookout, Sat 17 Oct. Photo: *Bruce Bartlett*



Group drying off after having crossed the Snowy River, Sun 18 Oct.
Photo: *Alan Levy*

Group having lunch on Carruthers Peak, looking towards Mt Townsend, Sun 18 Oct.
Photo: *Alan Levy*





Photos from the 2015 Ski Season

Dead trees on the Perisher Trails, Tues 4 Aug.

Photo: Bruce Bartlett



Margaret Mahoney admiring an enormous old snowgum below Mt Twynam, Sat 12 Sept.

Photo: Bruce Bartlett

Skiers at Illawong Bridge on the Snowy River, on a Club trip, Sat 12 Sept.

Photo: Bruce Bartlett



Photos from the 2015 Ski Season (cont.)



Kim Hello, Sonja Weinberg and
Melinda Brouwer on the plateau
above Trapyard Creek, Sat 5 Sept.
Photo: Alan Levy

Rowan Christie and Melinda
Brouwer climbing the
western faces at Tate West
Ridge, Sat 19 Sept.
Photo: Alan Levy



The entrance to Blue Lake,
Sun 4 Oct.
Photo: Monika Binder

Photos from the 2015 Ski Season (cont.)



Skiing on Watsons Craggs,
28 Sept.
Photo: Monika Binder



Adam Lilley, Monika
Binder & Bruce Barnett on
the summit of Mt
Twynam, 13 Sept.
Photo: Monika Binder

Bruce and Carol Bartlett
skiing on the Ramshead
range above Thredbo,
18 September.
Photo: Alan Levy



Trip Report — A Week in New Zealand

After finishing the Guthrie Gallop (the half length Snowy Mountains Classic) on Saturday, 8 August 2015, Gale & I rushed to Sydney to catch our flight to Queenstown, New Zealand. We met up with the rest of our party, all looking forward to racing in the Merino Muster, our closest international World Loppet, and getting another stamp in our World Loppet passports. We were Gale Moylan, Marg Hayes, Bruce Wharrie, Arnold D'Bras, Peter Ward, James Finnie, Craig Alexander, and Ken Moylan, and at least 6 of us were already international Loppeteers.

A few hours after leaving Sydney, we were in Queenstown, getting ourselves sorted out. We picked up the 4WD people mover (like a Tarago) and a Japanese direct import Subaru Outback station wagon, and drove to the house we'd rented in Wanaka. It was an easy enough drive, with beautiful scenery and grand mountains. There was a shorter way, but, by that late in the afternoon, we feared the ice on the road and took the long way.

The next day, Monday, we all drove up to the Snow Farm, straight up the hill from Cardrona village and across the valley from Cardrona Alpine Resort. It is an easy 20 minute drive from the house to the turn-off and then another half hour up a steep dirt road with about a dozen hairpin bends and maybe 2 guard rails. We were glad both our vehicles had 4 wheel drive, as the road went from dirt to mud to snow on the way up.

The Snow Farm, once known as Waiorau, is great for track skiing. There are 55km of groomed trails

carved into the Pisa Range, in a mixture of 40% beginner, 20% intermediate and 40% advanced. We were well above the tree-line, so often it felt like we were skiing on the Main Range, but the snow was much faster. The main resort building, the Lodge, offers accommodation, ski hire, lessons, and sells trail passes.

I skied on the tracks for four days, rested on Friday and raced the Merino Muster on Saturday. Here follows highs and lows:

Good Bits

Lots of these.

The Tracks

All of the tracks are groomed for skating and classic. The black section I skied, Hanging Valley, has some pretty exciting sections. One side track, 2006, has 2 drops where you can't see the bottom from the top, they were so steep. All through the trail system are sharp corners at the bottom of fast down hills. My cornering technique got a lot better in that week than years of skiing at Perisher or Falls Creek.

Waxing

Almost a Week on Blue Extra.

Monday: blue extra stick, for the cool, dry snow.

Tuesday: another day with cool, dry snow. Blue extra stick of course.

Wednesday: smooth, effortless glide. Blue extra stick. Yay!

Thursday, how wonderful! The snow, despite getting no new falls, was staying cold and dry. Perfect for blue stick. Could it get any better?

Friday's wax: not skiing today, but it drizzled.

Saturday's wax: universal klister. Misery. The rain had wetted and aged the snow and we were on slow klister.

The Snow

During the week we were there, the snow was dry and light and cold. It was wonderful. On our first day, where the groomed trail made a tight, uphill turn, I took my touring skis off track and carved 2 perfect telemark turns in the light, fluffy snow. What joy to see the snow come up and flow over my boots! We passed the same way several times over the next few days and my track was still there, a perfect 'S' carved in the constant snow. (Even more ego-stroking was seeing someone else had tried to emulate my track, but their turns ended in craters.)

The Instructor

Gale and I got a lesson from the chief ski school instructor, a Russian named Alexei. His style is very supportive, mostly being "that looks good, but if you do this you will be better". I can still remember a few of his tips and exercises and feel better doing them.

Cardrona Pub

It is friendly, colourful and charming. We melted marshmallows around the fireplace and drank on-tap mulled wine.

Bad Bits

Never is everything perfect.

Roaming Charges

I should have immediately bought a local SIM card, from the airport, for my tablet. NZ charged about 11 times the rate as Telstra!

Too Many Skis

Gale and I brought touring skis but they weren't of much use during our stay. I used mine once and Gale used her's twice. Racing or track skis would've been enough for this trip.

Too Much Track Skiing

Track skiing is nice enough, but after 4 days of it for the race training I was looking very longingly at the untracked and ungroomed snow on the other side. I'm not only a track skier! I'm also a ski tourer! Let me be free!

Excess Baggage

In Sydney, Air New Zealand wanted to charge me a excessive amount of excess baggage for my oversize ski bag. Thanks to Marg for convincing the staff in Sydney that my skis were

(Continued on page 10)



View of the rounded, treeless hills and showing the quality of the trail grooming. The Snow Farm, Cardrona, New Zealand. Monday, 10 August 2015.

Photo: Ken Moylan



Jim Finney and Marg Hayes walking in the carpark. This photograph shows about a third of the entire carpark. A far cry from the Perisher carpark, but compatible to Windy Corner's carpark in Falls Creek. The Snow Farm, Cardrona, New Zealand. Wednesday, 12 August 2015. Photo: Ken Moylan



There is some off-track skiing at the Snow Farm, but it would have been harder to organise. Here is a group of skiers, moving along the bottom of this valley and moving out of sight. Most off-track skiers wore equipment closer to downhill, alpine touring or randonee. I felt sad for them, just shuffling along on the flats, but also felt daunted at the terrain they must surely be about to go into. The Snow Farm, Cardrona, New Zealand. Monday, 10 August 2015. Photo: Ken Moylan

Have a look at the temperature. Below freezing, even in the afternoon!
No wonder the snow stayed good after a snowfall.
On the wall where the trails all began and ended.
Snow Farm, Cardrona, New Zealand. Monday, 10 August 2015
Photo: Ken Moylan

(Continued from page 9)

not too long. (2.1 m instead of the standard maximum of 2.0m.) In Queenstown, the same ski bag got onto the plane with no hassles at all. Yay New Zealand!

Waxing and Waxes

Bring your own waxes and iron. Wanaka had a fair selection of glide wax but neither it nor the Snow Farm have much in the way of grip wax. No wax remover at all (it can't be carried on airplanes), so I had to make do with a bottle shellite (white spirit in NZ).

Not Long Enough

I could have spent another week in New Zealand, just not at the Snow Farm, but the week was sandwiched between the NSW & Victorian ski weeks. I would've liked spending a bit of time in hectic Queenstown and get onto a glacier or up to a back-country hut.

Planning Bits

Much of the success of the trip was the preparation put into it.

Accommodation

Staying in Wanaka was a good choice. We had a house with a view straight down a road to Lake Wanaka and it was about a quarter hour's walk from the centre of town. Wanaka felt like it was about the size of Cooma, but the more compact business district and general feeling gave it the tourist and skier friendliness of Jindabyne.

There is on-snow accommodation at the Snow Farm and Cardrona has some units and flats.

Ken Moylan





Gale Moylan making her way along the River Run trail. Note her wide skis. They were too big to fit into the classic tracks, so she was skiing on the skate groomed part of the trail. Monday, 10 August 2015. *Photo: Ken Moylan*

Gale Moylan skiing the easy trails at The Snow Farm, New Zealand. The snow fencing marks where the trails are, which are really hard to tell apart. Monday 10 August 2015. *Photo: Ken Moylan*



Ken Moylan letting it rip on the lovely dry snow. Look at the snow flowing over my skis. Look at the rounded, treeless hills behind me - almost like being on the Main Range. The Snow Farm, Cardrona, New Zealand. Monday, 10 August 2015. *Photo: Ken Moylan*



It is almost the Main Range, but with ski trails. The Snow Farm, Cardrona, New Zealand. Monday, 10 August 2015. *Photo: Ken Moylan*

Trip Report - Thredbo to Mt Kosciuszko - Saturday 26 September

On Saturday, 26 September 2015, Ken Moylan led Rowan Christie, Gail Moylan, Peter Robinson, Rob Waller, and Sonja Weinberg for a ski up to Mt Kosciuszko.

Route

Getting there was the simple ski from Thredbo chairlift, roughly following the metal walking trail to Rawson's Pass (pausing for morning tea at Cootapatamba Lookout), before going straight up to reach the summit.

We had lunch there before returning via Kosciuszko South Ridge, crossing Cootapatamba Creek between the lake and the hut, and working our way through the rocky lines and boulders that are in the area around North Rams Head and Main Rams Head.

There was some dissent in our party, as a member or two wanted to visit Cootapatamba Hut, but the navigator was worried about the party getting back to the chairlift in time to catch the last one down and vetoed that suggestion.

Finally, Gail, Rob and Rowan skied down Thredbo's Super Trail while the rest of us caught the chair down. I didn't think I had it in me to ski all the way down.

At the bottom, Gail and the others had nothing left in them after working their way down the heavy late Spring snow on the Super Trail.

Best Bits

The ski down from Kosciuszko South Ridge into the Cootapatamba valley.



Rob Waller, Gale Moylan and Sonja Weinberg on their way down Kosciuszko South Ridge. Behind them are North Rams Head and Cootapatamba valley.

Photo: Ken Moylan

It was lovely, consistent snow on a steady slope down to the creek.

Surprising Bits

Seeing a wedding party! There was a wedding party at the Eagle's Nest getting their photographs taken. According to the liftie, it is not uncommon.

Fats bikes on the snow! Two men had dragged their fat bikes up to the top and were determined to ride down. They were mostly successful, for a loose definition of successful.

There were very few people on the top. Despite the lovely weather, only a

handful of people were on top at any time.

Worst Bits

The chairlift shutting down too early. We had enough daylight, fine weather and energy to ski for another hour. We could have reached Cootapatamba Hut with no fear of missing the ride down, if only the lift had stayed open longer.

Wax of The Day

Purple klister worked well in the morning, but changed to red klister for the afternoon.

Ken Moylan



Sonja Weinberg and Gale Moylan on the top. Behind them are the Main Range and the summit cairn.

Photo: Ken Moylan

Racing Roundup

It was a great season of racing for club members both in Australia and internationally!

Highlights included:

- Canberra Cross Country Ski Club taking out 3rd place in the club's category in the KAC race, with nine club members participating.
- Club members travelling to New Zealand to compete in the Merino Muster world loppet race, and then to Falls Creek Victoria to compete in the Kangaroo Hoppet world loppet race.
- Great weather for the Kosciuszko Tour at the end of August. A big thank you to the club's volunteers who made the day a success.

Results for all the races can be found on the PXC website at <http://www.perisherxcountry.org/pages.php?RESULTS-35>

Several members participated in racing for the first time this season and they are keen to do more next year. We will be organising accommodation and transport in 2016 to encourage more members to take part. It's all about having fun and challenging yourself in a supportive atmosphere.

Kosciuszko Tour will be on Saturday 20 August in 2016.

The Merino Muster race is moving to the weekend traditionally reserved for the Kosci Tour (end August – early September). This means that the Kosci tour will be held on Saturday 20 August next year. We are planning to 'celebrate' the change of date by having an interesting course to take best advantage of the mid-season snow. I hope club members will continue to support the Kosci Tour both as volunteers and racers.

Off Season training

Several club members have expressed interest in getting together for some ski specific training over the summer and autumn months. In particular the activity of 'skiking' has piqued some interest (see <http://www.skike.com.au> for more information). If you are interested in meeting up for some fun 'dryland' training over please send an email with your contact details to cccscracing@gmail.com

Jo-Anne Clancy



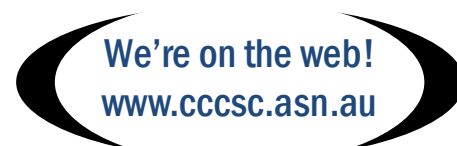
Local wildlife seen on recent Club ski trips!



Kim Hello and Jo-Anne Clancy
near Snowy Bridge, Sat 10 Oct.
Photo: Alan Levy

Club Committee Contacts

President Lachlan Kennedy	cccscpresident@gmail.com
Vice President Vacant	cccscvicepresident@gmail.com
Secretary Vacant	cccscsecretary@gmail.com
Treasurer Paul Room	cccsc treasurer@gmail.com
Membership Secretary Vacant	cccscinfo@gmail.com
Tour Coordinator Alan Levy	cccsc tours@gmail.com
Instruction Coordinator Vacant	cccsc training@gmail.com
Kosciusko Tour Coordinator Jo-Anne Clancy	cccsc racing@gmail.com
Meeting Coordinator Rowan Christie	cccsc meetings@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor Tony Brown	cccsc editor@gmail.com
Webmaster Ken Moylan / Nick Reese	cccsc webmaster@gmail.com



CANBERRA CROSS
COUNTRY SKI CLUB

PO Box 6234
O'Connor ACT 2602

Email: info@cccsc.asn.au

Fun and fitness in the snow



Club Snow Camping Gear for hire

The following gear which is owned by the Club is available for hire to Club members. These prices are cheap. The commercial hire charge for a 2-person tent is \$45 per week-end.

Tent (Macpac 3-4 person) - \$20/weekend ; - \$30/week

Trangia stove - \$3/weekend; - \$5/week

Snow shovel - \$4/weekend; - \$6/week



Club Safety Gear for use by Tour Leaders

The Club has four Personal Locator Beacons (PLB), two GPS units and some first aid kits which are available free of charge to members leading Club ski tours.

PLB (GME MT410G)

Contact Alan, Jo-Anne, Bruce or Lachlan.

GPS (Garmin Etrex Vista HcX)

Contact Alan or Jo-Anne.

