

CANBERRA
CROSS COUNTRY
SKI CLUB, INC

Off Piste



SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- Trip Reports

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2023, ISSUE 5

11 OCTOBER 2023



Clarke East Ridge, Mt Lee, Carruthers Peak. Some of the Main Range, showing the remaining snow. Taken from near the lower tree beside the path to Foreman's Crossing. On a Club trip, from Charlotte Pass to Carruthers Peak. Sunday, 8 October 2023. Photo: © Ken Moylan.

Next Newsletter

The next newsletter will be produced in mid November. Deadline for contributions is 11 November. Please send any articles or photos to ccsceditor@gmail.com

Welcome to the 5th edition of Off-Piste for this season. I was overseas for the month of September so missed some skiing. I was hoping for a few days on the snow during October, which is often the best time to ski, but the very warm September has meant that the snow has mostly disappeared, about a month earlier than last year. Any skiing at the moment will mainly be on drifts and involve a lot of walking. See page 8 for the most recent report of the conditions on the Main Range.

In the absence of snow, we will again aim to put on some walking and camping trips over the summer and autumn period. There will be a final newsletter in November so anyone interested in putting on some summer activities should let the Tour Coordinator and myself know for inclusion in the next newsletter and on the website.

The Club's AGM was held in September and the only change to the committee is Penny Rossiter taking over the Secretary role. Ken Moylan has relinquished this position but he will remain as the Webmaster.

Perisher X-Country will again be organising some work parties at the Nordic Shelter and around the XC trails over the summer break. Further details of these workparties, and of the Club XMAS party in December, will be included in the next newsletter.

Alan Levy, Editor



End of Snow Prediction for 2023

It is September and time for Skistradamus to dust off his crystal ball and see when the snow will be gone this year.

As we all know, 2023 has been pretty bad, but not quite as bad as the infamous 2006 season.

In August, I was looking with trepidation at the Snow Hydro snow depth charts and wondering if the early July dump would be the high point of the season.

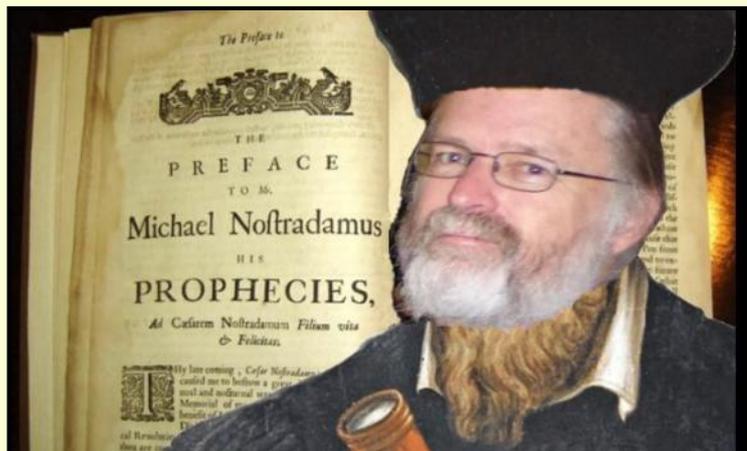
Fortunately, a decent dump in early September boosted the snow depth to 112.3 cm, as measured on 13 September 2023.

By my reckoning, that means that the snow will be gone, as measured by the Snowy Hydro depth gauges at Spencer's Creek, 35 days afterwards, that is on 18 October 2023.

Let us await the end.

Skistradamus

Late September 2023



Summer trips

A number of club members lead walks over the summer, and they are quite popular.

If you are interested in leading a walk, single day or more, please email our tour coordinator, Bill Stanhope, at ccsctours@gmail.com

Snow Depth Charts

Spencers Creek

CURRENT LEVEL 5.1cm AS OF 05 OCT 2023



Snow depth chart for Spencers Creek, as measured on 5 Oct, compared with last year. Last year's peak depth looks to have been around the end of September whereas at the same time this year the snow will have almost disappeared. Current reading is 5.1cm!

Spencers Creek

CURRENT LEVEL 5.1cm AS OF 05 OCT 2023



Snow depth chart for Spencers Creek, as measured on 5 Oct, compared with 2006, which was the worst snow year in recent times. This year has had more snow depth but a very rapid decline due to the very warm September. The snow will likely disappear a month earlier than last year.

Trip Report — A Visit to Porcupine Rocks — Sun 10 September

On Sunday, 10 September 2023, after the best fresh snow for weeks, Ken Moylan and Mike Hinchey went for a ski from Perisher to the Porcupine Rocks.

The Route

We left the comfort of the NPWS shelter in Perisher, headed up the road, quickly left it, and skied up Rock Creek. We kept to the Mt Wheatley side of the valley, and as we were a small party, made quick time. Ken tired after a while, Mike took over and we made quicker time.

At times route finding was tricky, as we often came to places where the best way forward was to go down. But we had worked for our altitude and were not going to give up any height, dammit!

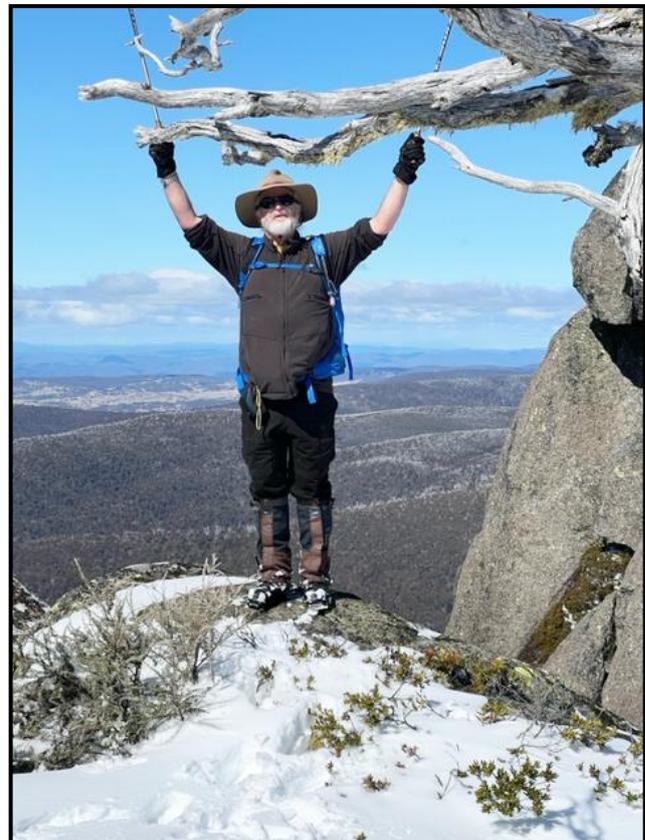


Crimson rosella at Perisher Gap. Photo: Mike Hinchey

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Skiing in the Betts Creek valley. Photo: Mike Hinchey



Ken at Porcupine Rocks. Photo: Mike Hinchey

(Continued from page 4)

Despite the recent good snowfall, we walked much longer than usual for the last part up to the rocks, stopping 50 to 100 metres short of the usual ski off point. The snow from the main ski trail to the rocks was noticeably thinner on the way back than on the way out.

Soon enough we were standing on a Porcupine Rock, lurching and taking in the views of the Thredbo Valley, Lake Jindabyne and the trig tower on another Porcupine Rock.

We debated the merits of the best route back. From experience, Ken did not want to follow the Wheatley Link all the way to Perisher Gap. Neither of us wanted to return down Rock Creek. So we followed the Wheatley Link partway until we could get off and into the Betts Creek valley.

Coffee at Perisher Gap preceded the run down the internal resort trail back to Perisher Resort, and home.

Best Bits

- Skiing off the flanks of Mt Wheatley into Betts Creek. The best snow and the best turns were here.
- The coffee hut at Perisher Gap has a tame crimson rosella scrounging for food. It was a joy to see a flying ruby so close.

Worst Bits

- 2 falls today.

Snow Report

Recent fresh snow on a thinning base.

Map of the Day

We'd been there so many times that we used the maps in our heads. Any map covering Betts Creek and Perisher Valley will do.

Ken Moylan

Ken's Strava map of the ski tour.



Mike Hinchey, looking over the Thredbo Valley, from the Porcupine Rocks. On a Club trip, Perisher -> Porcupine Rocks -> Mt Wheatley loop -> Perisher. Sunday, 10 September 2023. Photo: © Ken Moylan.



Trip Report — The Mt Guthrie Traverse — Sat 23 September

You may well ask how did that happen. How did a programmed trip to the North Ramshead become the Mt Guthrie Traverse? On the eve of the programmed trip Penny Rossiter was advised that snow above Thredbo was sparse but the road to Charlotte Pass was open a week early. So we headed to Charlottes but not being prepared for a Snowy River crossing we then weighed up our options and Guthrie looked more promising than Kangaroo Ridge,

Unfortunately it had been minus 6 in Cooma the previous night and Penny had trouble sinking her edges into the steep slope. So she withdrew to the lower slopes and checked out the snow over the Snowy on foot. Ken Moylan, Gale Funston and Mike H continued but eventually opted to climb the last 50m up to the Guthrie #1 summit on foot for 'little lunch'.

From then on it was open going. After a short walk across a shrubby slope we gained the main Guthrie snow field and climbed up to the #2Guthrie summit and trig for lunch.



*As of 23 September the snow cover over the Snowy River looked extensive.
Photo: Mike Hinchey*

That was followed by an exhilarating run down to the roadside with Ken showing some masterly telemarks. Then there was nothing else for it but a slog up the road side back to the car arriving at an unusually early finish.

We were not quite done with the day and

opted to do the Sawpit Ck Waterfall walk on the way back to Jindabyne and coffee. As of the 23 September the snow cover over the Snowy River looked extensive and offers some late season sport yet.

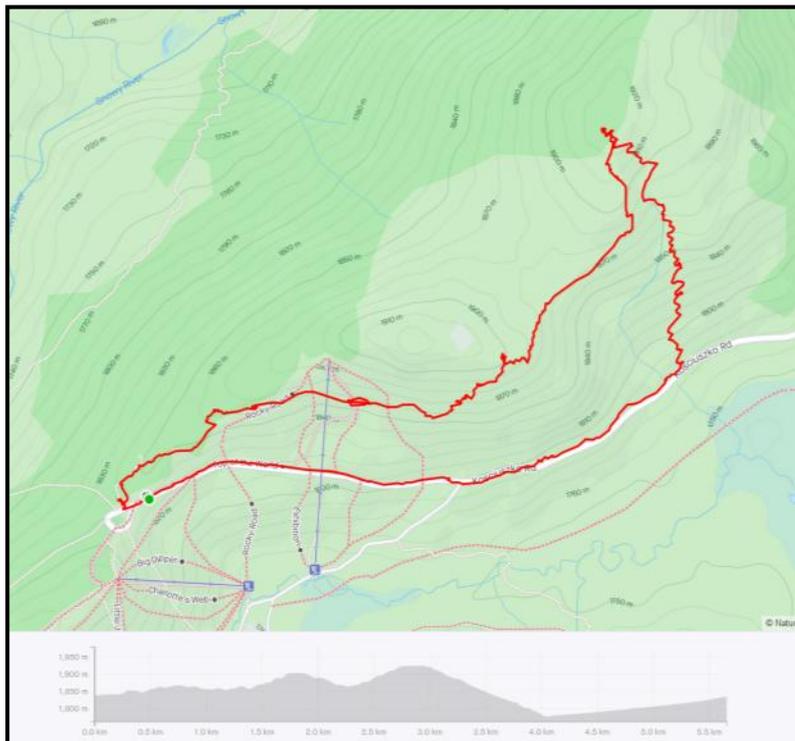
Mike Hinchey



An exhilarating run down to the roadside with Ken showing some masterly telemarks. Photo: Mike Hinchey



The main Guthrie snow field. Photo: Mike Hinchey



Strava route of the Mt Guthrie traverse.

Ken Moylan, Gale Funston and Mike H opted to climb the last 50m up to the Guthrie I summit on foot.
Photo: Mike Hinchey

Ski Tour & Event Program

Date	Event Description	Leader
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Ski tours will be advertised in Off-Piste, at the Social Meetings, on the Club web site and via email to members. The web site will be updated with any new tours as soon as they are advised.

Saturday & Sunday,
4 & 5 November **Main Range Camp**

Will head out from Charlotte Pass and camp overnight near Snowy Bridge, below Seaman’s Hut, which provides a good base to explore the surrounding area. Mostly flat terrain in to the campsite along the Summit Road. After camp is set up possible destinations to explore on foot could include Mt Kosciuszko, Etheridge Ridge or Lake Albina. Rescheduled from mid October. Will be a walking trip, not a skiing trip.

Summer Walks

The Club will again schedule some walking and camping trips over the summer break. If you are interested in leading a walk, single day or more, please email our tour coordinator, Bill Stanhope, at cccctours@gmail.com

cccctours@gmail.com

The summer walks will be included in the next newsletter in November.

Trip Report — A Visit to Carruthers Peak — Sun 8 October

On Sunday, 8 October 2023, Ken Moylan and Gale Funston went for a ski from Charlotte Pass to Carruther's Peak and back.

The Route

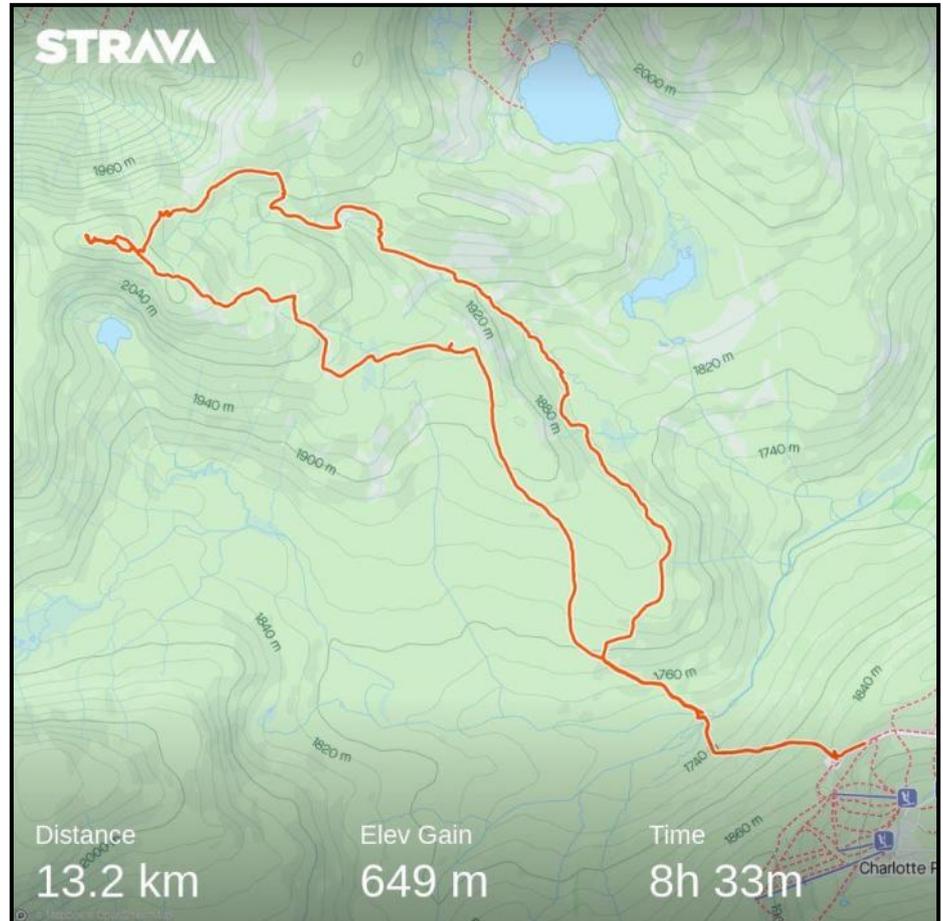
From Charlotte Pass, down the grey brick path to Foreman's Crossing, and rock hopping to the other side. The Snowy River and Club Lake Creek were much lower than normal, which made for some easy rock hopping. The snowy lead that normally lies beside Club Lake Creek was melted — that route unskiable. From Foreman's Crossing, we saw that the Carruther's Creek lead had shrunk to disconnected patches — not worth skiing up. So we followed the Lakes Walk Track.

Almost 2 hours later, after morning tea, we at last donned our skis. Snow leads took us to the top of Carruther's, with a walk over and around the dry top. Lunch was taken behind a small rise, just below the summit, out of the wind, taking in views of Mt Jagungal, Mt Kosciuszko, the Western Faces, and all places in between.

Soil Conservation Creek looked to be the funnest way. Running down the snow was great, making our way around cornices, over strips of snow with water loudly running underneath, up & down natural half pipes, until it wasn't. We skied past where the paved Lakes Walk crossed the creek, because the snow was just too nice. Unfortunately, the snow stopped well before the Snowy River and we found ourselves wading through calf- and knee-high scrub. After some cross-country bush bashing, we got within sight of Foreman's Crossing and a skiable drift back to the formed path. And then back to the car.

Best Bits

- Skiing down the little travelled Soil Conservation Creek.
- Seeing the first of the new season's wildflowers.



(Continued on page 9)

Looking out to the West, over range after range. Taken from near the top of Carruthers Peak. Sunday, 8 October 2023. Photo: © Ken Moylan.

(Continued from page 8)

Worst Bits

• Knowing that this will be the last ski for me this season. The walk ski ratio is just too unrewarding for the ski.

Snow Report

Where it was, it was lots of clean, fresh snow, mostly on the remaining base or quickly disappearing.

Map of the Day

Thredbo 1:25000.

Ken Moylan



Gale Funston skiing into Soil Conservation Creek. Carruthers Peak is in the background.

Photo: © Ken Moylan.

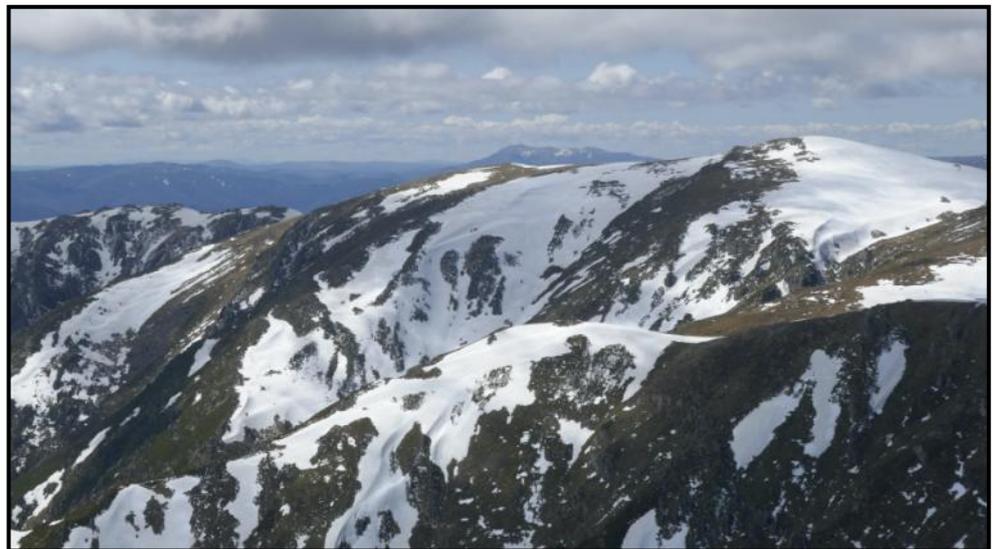


Ken Moylan telemarking down into Soil Conservation Creek.

Photo: © Gale Funston.

Looking towards Mt Jagungal, from Carruthers Peak.

Photo: © Ken Moylan.



Holmenkollen

On my recent trip to Norway I visited the Holmenkollen Ski Jump in the hills on the northern outskirts of Oslo, an easy 25 minute train journey from the centre of the city followed by a 15 minute walk.

Holmenkollen has been a ski recreation area since the late 19th century, with its famous ski jumping hill hosting competitions since 1892. Next door to the ski jump is the biathlon stadium and large network of cross-country ski trails going through the nearby forest.

The Holmenkollen Ski Festival is held every March and attracts tens of thousands of spectators to witness ski jumping and other Nordic events, It is considered the second national day of Norway.

Underneath the ski jump is the world's oldest ski museum, which opened on 2 Dec 1923. The Ski Museum displays 4000 years of skiing history, including rock carvings, skis from the viking age, modern racing and cross-country skis, and skis used during the historic polar expeditions of Fridtjof Nansen and Roald Amundsen. Unfortunately whilst I was there the museum was closed for renovation but will reopen in Dec 2023 to celebrate its centenary.

I was able to catch the lift to the top of the ski jump, which provides great views of the surrounding area. There was also a zip line set up from the top of the jump to the bottom of the hill, which provides the closest experience to going down the ski jump, however I gave this a miss!

It would be great to revisit during winter to ski the trails or to experience the atmosphere there during a competition.

Alan Levy



The Holmenkollen Ski Jump on the left and the Biathlon stadium on the right. Whilst I was there athletes were roller-skiing around the cross-country tracks and practising shooting at the biathlon range.

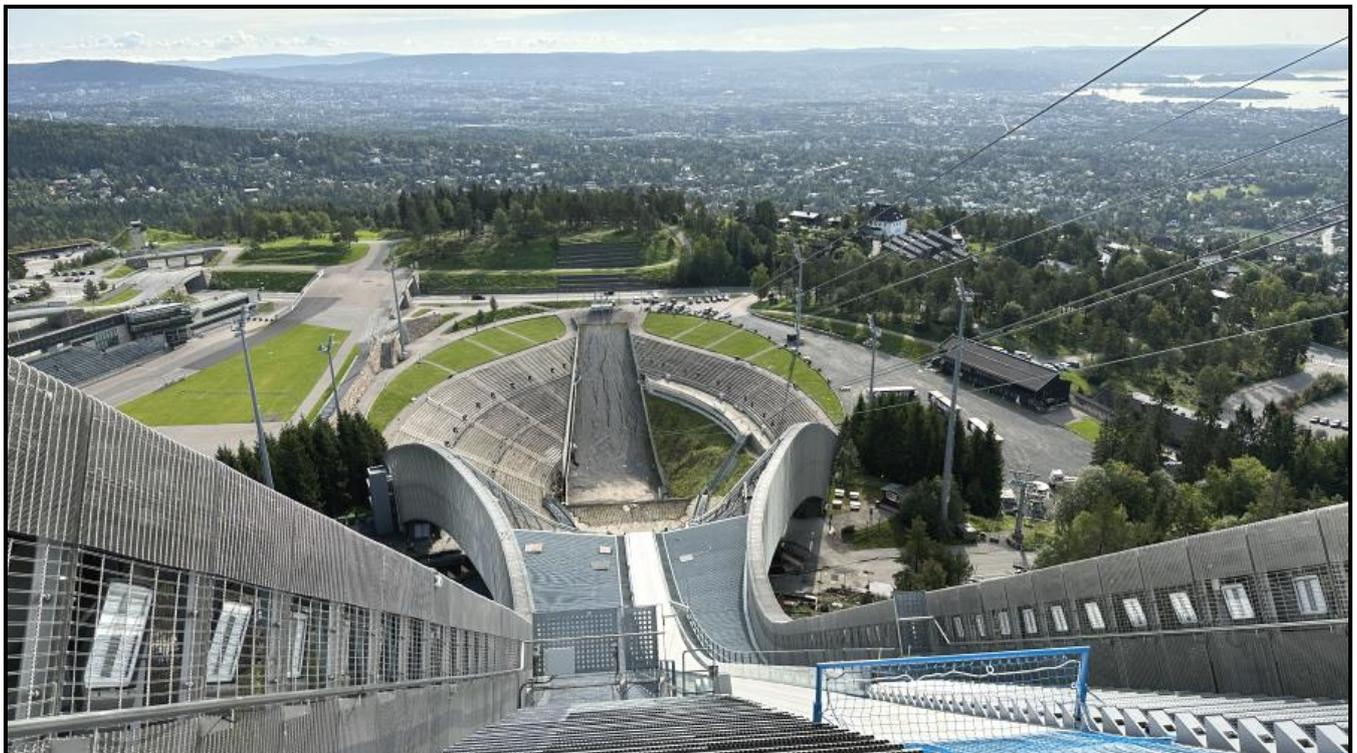


Statue at Holmenkollen showing King Olav V on a skiing trip with his dog.

Olav V reigned as the King of Norway from 1957 until 1991. He was a keen cross-country skier and often participated in the ski-jumping contest at Holmenkollen in his youth.



Olav V skiing at Holmenkollen in 1963.



View from the top of the ski jump, with Oslo harbour in the distance. Cross-country trails and biathlon stadium are to the left.



HP Inc.

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**Fun and fitness
in the snow**

Club Committee Contacts

Position	Name	Email	Phone
President			
Vice President			
Secretary			
Treasurer			
Membership Secretary			
Tour Coordinator			
Kosciuszko Tour Coordinator			
Meeting Coordinator			
Newsletter Editor			
Webmaster			



Club Safety Gear for use by Tour Leaders

The Club has two 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 or Ken





Mike Hinchey skiing down a flank of Mt Wheatley towards Betts Creek. On a Club trip, Perisher -> Porcupine Rocks -> Mt Wheatley loop -> Perisher. Sunday, 10 September 2023. Photo: © Ken Moylan.