

COLD FACTS



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NEWSLETTER OF THE ILLAWARRA ALPINE CLUB LIMITED

Volume 50 - MAY 2010 - Number 2

Cover Photo: (top left) Viola Hallahan relaxes with family after being awarded the 2009 IAC Club Person of the Year award. Congratulations Viola! Other images are of members helping out on recent working bees on National Park huts.

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Messages from the Editor

Thanks to all of those hard working people who have contributed articles and notices to this edition. It's your input that continues to create interest for others.

Once you have finished with Cold Facts and desire more light reading, you might be interested in this article on the Australian Alps:

<http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/journal/australian-alps-travel.htm>

Please continue to contribute to cold facts by sending your snippets to coldfacts@iacski.com

From the president

Fellow Illawarra members, welcome to a new Illawarra season. Your AGM was held Tuesday 27 April and I can report only one change to Committee for the coming year. Personally I would like to thank the membership for their continued faith in myself, it is an honour and privilege to be the President of our Club.

One Director has stood down this year, Gaye Tarrant, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Gaye for her work in her short time on Committee. She took on the legacy left by the enormous shoes of Mike DiLeva, and did so with quiet efficiency. A second baby and the need to get back out into the workforce meant reduced time to devote to IAC, but we thank her for her efforts. Over recent months we had co-opted Susi Eager into the Treasurer role, giving her an excellent opportunity to "practically develop" her MYOB skills.

More importantly, this years' meeting was the best attended in years, some 50+ members being present, including three new members.

The AGM was briefed on the new membership in-take, the membership demographic analysis that had been undertaken, its outcomes and the short-term "IFC" (Illawarra-Financial-Crisis) that we found ourselves in at the end of last year. The combination of these "events" saw your Committee take the decision to invite new members to our Club.

We established a set of evaluation criteria, based around existing usage, age bracket, children and occupation. We had some 24 "primary applicants", of which 20 were offered membership. To date 17 have taken up this offer, raising some \$92K. This has enabled us to re-establish our "sinking fund", an interest bearing account, current balance \$120K; and pay our business loan down to a balance of less than \$1,000 owing.

To date Julie reports some 2100+ bed nights booked for 2010, with 390 (almost 20%) of those from our new members.

President:

- Geoff Mettam - Huts

Vice Presidents:

- Phil Warren - Lodge Management / Environment-Parks
- Jonathan Mandl - Club Captain

Treasurer:

- Susi Eager

Secretary:

- Fiona Montgomery

Committee:

- Tony DiMilia - Maintenance
- Julie Irvine - Booking Officer
- Craig Fairweather - OH&S / Environment-Parks / Risk Management
- Duncan Oliver - Supplies
- Adam West - Cold Facts

Club Person of the Year

It gives me great pleasure to announce Viola Hallahan as our Club Person for 2009 (refer cover photo). As our "Web Mistress" she has done a power of work in organising all things "e" - email / web page / vacancy updates / broadcasts of ColdFacts / AGM notices / virus and spam protection / security / and coming soon, a new web-based booking system.

I am sure you will all agree that Viola is a worthy recipient.

Lodge Managers

Kirk Donkin has been re-appointed as manager for 2010. He will have his original "side-kick" back this year, Gabrielle Danswan (Gaby), so we welcome her once again to our Illawarra home.

Fees / Subscriptions

As of our Committee meeting on 4th May we had 82 members who had not paid their annual subscription. This equates to an outstanding balance of approximately \$13,000

Subscription invoices were sent out in January. Members, I cannot stress enough the significant cash flow impact this has on your Club. Subscriptions were due on the 1st February. Your Committee cannot accurately formulate budgets if members continue to ignore their "subscription responsibilities". If you haven't paid your 2010 fees then please do so, IMMEDIATELY.

Lights

Please turn them OFF. Although we don't want to see "green" on our ski slopes, we most definitely want to be "green" in our Lodge operations. Craig Fairweather is looking at a number of options around our costs and our "green-ness", including solar power, but up-front, we need to do all the little things, like turn off the lights. The main bathroom lights, in particular, are the chief offenders here, so remember, please turn them off.

Enough from me for the moment. See you at our lodge and on the slopes

Geoff Mettam

From the Booking Officer

The first snow of the year has arrived and the bookings have been coming in fast. If you haven't already booked, you had better move quickly. Check out the vacancy page on our web site to see what dates suit you best. Our web chief updates it twice a week. I have 2209 beds booked, out of a possible 3680 (60%), which is really good for this time of year.

Did you know we have two sets of school holidays during this season? Saturday 25th September is the start of school holidays at the end of Term 3. Kirk and Gaby will be in the lodge ready and willing to supply fantastic meals to any who would like an inexpensive ski holiday. Ski lift tickets are usually discounted as well. Why not organise a group of friends to have a relaxing holiday with someone else doing all of the work.

When placing a booking, could you please consider not departing on a Saturday. If you take the Friday night, it cuts out people trying to stay at the lodge for the weekend. Departing on a Friday or the Sunday gives me the best chance to fill more beds in the lodge.

Just to remind you my phone hours are 7pm - 8pm, Monday to Friday. Email is still the best and quickest way to contact me.

Thank you all for your prompt payments.

Looking forward to a great season.

Julie Irvine

bookings@iacski.com

Ph: 0424 617707 - 7pm to 8pm Mon to Fri.

From the Club Captain

The signs are there and conditions perfect for 'the perfect (snow) storm' to start the season from the opening weekend - let us pray...

Thank you for the many enquiries on the Junior Racing Development Program. In 2010, we will have a team of 12 (so far) to train and represent our proud competitive history.

I'm always approachable for enquiries and future planning - so don't hesitate to think 2011, 2012, 2013 for your keen under 9 snowsports 'athletes-in-development'.

I need to attract the attention of our young at heart adult membership to support our representation in the Senior Interclub event on Sat 14th August. The morning will cover 2 runs in Giant Slalom, followed by Snowboarders making 2 runs on the same Alpine GS course. The afternoon offers a 2.5km XC (either skate or classic technique) event which all are welcome to compete in. Combined points can be won for multiple events entered, and the Alpine and Nordic combo has always been a traditional IAC strong-suit. On paper and in Membership subs, we have the No.#1 Senior team out of any Club in the Perisher Range. Our problem is in getting the support from potential competitors to be available for that day, on that weekend.

From our past 10 years of IAC Racing support, investment and training we have seen extraordinary talent come through our Juniors, now our Seniors who we make this call out to.

Please - check your calendars and holiday plans at Uni or work to join a great weekend of snowsports and camaraderie with more fun than you remembered it could be!

Call me on 0451 309 176 or email racing@iacski.com

Over to you!

Jonathan Mandl

0451 309 176

racing@iacski.com

Noticeboard



The Perisher Snowy Mountains of Music festival runs on the June long weekend – June 11-14 - the opening of the Australian Snow Season. For more info go to <http://www.snowymountainsofmusic.com.au>

Tin Mines Easter 2010 - Work Party Report

The brumby controversy is in full swing – to cull or not, and, if so, how? The brumbies seem to know it and, save a couple of brief sightings, kept themselves fairly well out of sight. But under the cover of darkness they came to check us out as we slept not so soundly in our tents. The weather was at its autumn best and the countryside looked as lush and green as we've ever seen it thanks to some good summer rain.

Ranger Rob (Gibbs) had already arrived and off-loaded material and equipment for the work party. The advance party of Pat Edmondson, Col Wooden (who provides excellent support to our Club work parties) and myself arrived a little later having been "delayed" at the coffee shop and further delayed chatting to hikers along the fire trail explaining why we were travelling in comfort while they trudged along with heavy packs!



Photo: IAC work party settles in at Tin Mines

Everything was prepared for instant action by the time the remainder of the party arrived at morning tea time on Good Friday. Craig Fairweather and family, Sue Edmondson, Karen Irvine and David Irvine and family made up the remainder of the party. Fortunately for David and Julie (and the rest of us at Tin Mines) they had realised Sunday night's dinner was still at home in the freezer while on their way to Canberra. A quick call

to Jon Mandl for directions to a late night supermarket short-circuited impending disaster – and restored their reputation.

Fresh from a bush skills workshop in Victoria (I think he could have run it) Pat was keen to implement a new method of re-stumping that he had been considering for some time. After the obligatory safety talk the troops were soon at work digging out the dirt around the five posts, cutting off and removing the rotted stumps. (The walls had been braced prior to this to prevent any nasty cave-ins). The formwork was carefully engineered from empty 10 and 20 litre oil and paint cans and proved to be very effective. Outside the Park's concrete machine was kept busy while steel pegs were connected to the uprights and later cemented into place. This should minimise the need to replace posts in the future on the scale that we've recently experienced at Cascades. Pat is writing a technical article on the method for the KHA newsletter so others can benefit from this trial. Again Ranger Rob provided fantastic support.



Photo: Julie and Tracy show the latest fashion for drain diggers



Photo: No OH&S concerns here - Pat restumps in comfort.

Meanwhile outside, Julie and Tracy were busy swinging the mattock. The water supply (a hand-cut drain starting about 100 metres up behind the Mess Hut) had dried up due to the growth of reeds in the drain. And what a team Julie and Tracy made with some able assistance from sons Blythe, Louis, Tyler and James who helped remove the reeds and fine tune the water course. Husbands Craig and David also supplied a little extra help when the going got a bit tough.

Poly-pipe was laid in the drain in an effort to avoid seepage around the hut and the trench backfilled to protect the pipe during harsh weather conditions. By the end of Easter we enjoyed crystal clear water collected from a little dam at the corner of the Mess Hut. The necessity to sieve water through our teeth or take a long walk to the nearby Ingeegoodbee River was a thing of the past.

Of course, no work party can survive without good catering backup. And Karen Irvine certainly did an excellent job providing mouth-watering meals not normally associated with camping. Not to be outdone Tracy and Julie proved they were just as capable on the culinary side of things as they were at swinging the mattock and whipped up a mouth-watering batch of scones in the camp oven. They also led the field in the fashion stakes with their fancy gumboots – in fact, there were no other entrants.

In an attempt to revive campfire concerts Pat put everyone on notice prior to Easter they would be required to present an act. Failure! The kids and the Fairweathers came up with some pretty good jokes; Karen Irvine did a good job of remembering Banjo Patterson à la Roy Taylor; Pat played his mouth organ but found to his dismay that the younger generation have no idea about campfire songs and the rest of us just ducked for cover. We've got 12 months to improve before the next one.

As the quote says "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy...." So I led a walk to the Tin Mine Diggings on Sunday morning. The boys had a good time scrambling around the mullock heaps; Tracy was ecstatic when, from the back of the group, she spotted a brumby in the distance and the rest of us just enjoyed being out there.

Being Easter we had quite a few visitors through the site. They were very impressed with the work Illawarra Alpine Club is carrying out in the Pilot Wilderness area although (understandably) a few were less impressed with the noise a work party naturally creates. However, Easter is one of the few times that Club members can take enough time to make attending a work party worthwhile.

Those of us who have been contributing to hut work parties over many years greatly appreciate the Committee's support with the purchase of some basic catering gear. Much of this will be stored at the Ed's place at Jindabyne (and some at my place) to make it easier for those involved in the preparation and transport involved in work parties.

NB. More photos will be posted in the Huts section of our website.

Rhonda Boxall

Editors note: [Narelle Irvine passed on this link which shows more images of members being involved at working bees at the huts](#) (this direct link only available in pdf version of CF). The above links to content on <http://khuts.org>

"Gav Gets Married!"



Photo: Gav and Stef's wedding day.

Gavan Fletcher, holding a love of skiing since the age of three, has travelled to America since the age of eighteen to live in the snow fields. Through following his passion and living his dream, Gav met American snowboarder Stef! Gavan and Stefanie Fletcher were married on 23 April 2010 in New Hampshire, America. It was a beautiful wedding. The rainclouds cleared ten minutes before the outside ceremony commenced and was followed by an outside reception at the Abeniqui Country Club. The night was filled with food, champagne and lots of dancing! Gav and Stef are now living in Vermont as a happily married couple :-)

Jenna Fletcher

Back to Perisher weekend – Easter 2010

In summary, a fun weekend; come along in 2011!
Fun Run,

The highest Fun Run in Australia, from Perisher Gap to the Chalet, was held on the Saturday morning. At the start of the Run there were 65 registered runners, (there were probably another 5 ~ 10 who arrived just before the start and did not register) all were given numbers so it was easy at the end to correlate their names with times. Roughly double last year's entry numbers.

The Ski Patrol gave the Paramedic support with guys manning the drink station and, fortunately they were not needed for their other skills.

Male winner was Ben Bell (Imbac) in 22.53 (about 4 minutes faster than last years winner). Female Kerri-Anne Reid in 31.15. Male Child in 30.16 was Andrew Reid (12 years old wow!!) and girl Naomi Dodd 9 (Kiandra) in 44.33.

11 lodges with participants were Imbac, Kiandra, Snow Country, Aurora, Narraburra, Illawarra, Cowra, Rugby, Trissana, Mawabu, and Highway.

It was a bit disappointing in that there were around 40 lodges occupied over the weekend. Some lodge members had found out about the Run through the web site Cool Runnings and not from their clubs. This is a common problem as the word is not getting out from our club contact people to their members. NPWS gave out

program flyers on Friday to cars entering for the weekend.

About 120 at The Man on Saturday evening for the presentation, (snacks provided by SLOPES with Sundance Bakery providing a good variety of food). Kitchen manned and serving/cleaning carried out by Aurora members.

Prizes were provided by NPWS with Dave Woods (NPWS) and SLOPES conducting the presentation event.

Fire Brigade were on show at the hotel in the late afternoon. They handed out sample bags to kids.

Duck Race

The highest duck race in Australia was held on Saturday afternoon. A total success, after a frustrating Friday afternoon testing various sites with ducks getting caught in reeds, under banks, in eddies and blown up stream with the wind it was run from the lower ski tube bridge to the bridge from the car park to North P. This section is not bog and is good for spectators. The turn up, cheering and enthusiasm were great. 60 ducks, and could have had 100+. Sold them for \$2 each and after deducting cost (\$65) the \$101 profit was donated to the Volunteer Ski Patrol. We had "duck prodders" for any that got caught and in one dead pool Dave Woods was out with nets pushing the water along. Kids (plus adults) kept their ducks after, in all a lot of fun.

Events on the Easter Sunday were guided bush walks by Dave Woods, those of our group who went were amazed at his knowledge and enthusiasm.

With both the Run and Duck Race everyone commented on the enjoyment and would be back next year. Suspect numbers will more than double. Hoping to organise a Drake RACE!!!!

It would be good to see other clubs helping, only one other offer so far. Special Thanks to Dave Woods of National Parks for his abundant enthusiasm.

Back to Perisher Week SLOPES Organiser - David Read, Aurora Ski Club

Ski lift prices

In Saturday's Financial Review there was an article on ski lift prices and comparisons world wide.

We chased the source and here is the link to enable you to have a look.

Here is a link to the 2010 ski lift prices survey:
<http://www.australialpineclub.com/newsLetter/AAC-liftpricesMR-100415.pdf>

The relativity is obviously influenced by the exchange rates, which is why noon on 15 April has been used in all the previous surveys, which also means data is available for both northern and southern hemisphere ski lift prices.

You won't be happy to find that you have the highest lift prices in the world at Perisher and steadily running higher than the CPI increase slope.

Graeme Anderson

Aeropelican to Fly to the Snowy Mountains 26 February 2010

Aeropelican is a Newcastle based independent regional airline, which currently operates services to Sydney from Newcastle, Mudgee and Narrabri.

Aeropelican operates a fleet of BAE Jetstream 32 Turboprop aircraft and the new Snowy Mountains service will be operated using these aircraft.

The new service to Snowy Mountains Airport will commence on Friday 11th June 2010, with three return flights daily from Sydney to the Snowy Mountains Sunday-Friday, and two return flights on Saturdays during the winter months.

For more information visit <http://www.perisher.com.au> and look for "latest press releases"

Rabbit Control Program - Perisher Range

Rabbit control programs are planned to be undertaken across the Perisher Range resort area over the next few weeks to reduce the impact of rabbits on rehabilitation programs and threatened species. Rabbit populations have been located in and around boulder fields which is the preferred habitat of the Mountain Pygmy-possum and in areas of heath which is preferred habitat for Broad-toothed Rat, both threatened species.

Rabbit numbers have expanded this summer with consistent rainfall increasing available food. Depending on the distance from infrastructure control programs will include a combination of baiting using pindone treated carrots or ground shooting. Signs will be erected during the implementation of programs to notify the community.

If you would like further information please contact Mel Schroder on 64505611.

Mel Schroder
Environmental Management Officer (Monitoring)
Parks & Wildlife Group - Resorts Section
Ph: (02)64505611 Mob: 0428118498
<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/alpineresorts/index.htm>

New Snowcam at Blue Cow

Mountainwatch.com is pleased to announce the arrival of their Blue Cow camera, adding yet another live streaming snow cam to its Snowy Mountains camera inventory.

Located at 1,890m at the Blue Cow Terminal the new camera offers views of Mt. Blue Cow on to Guthega Peak and all points in between. Mountainwatch.com cam will provide real time streaming images all year round which will be great for winter but also great for summer to view hiking and biking conditions.



The Committee wishes to remind members and their guests that Illawarra Alpine Club is a "NON-SMOKING CLUB", and as per general community standards, smoking is not permitted within 6m (20ft) of the lodge building. It is therefore not permitted to smoke on any balcony, outside the front door, in front of the Siberia lower door or anywhere else within that 6m (20ft) boundary.

This rule is applicable in both the winter ski season and SUMMER months

At the recent food weekend working bee, it was disappointing to find evidence that the Club's non-smoking policy had been ignored by members and / or guests staying at the lodge through the summer. There is an obvious fire hazard when flicking butts off the balcony into the dry bushes below, not to mention the fact that our Lodge resides in a National Park which should be kept free of litter of any kind. Summer visitors are required to leave the Lodge in a clean and tidy state, and this has not been the case this summer.



Photo: Cigarette butts and packets left outside the lodge during a summer stay. Discovered at the recent working bee.

The most dangerous part of the behaviour over the summer is the number of butts that were found under the balcony - obviously having been dropped off from above. If any of these had smoldered in the dry grass and caught alight, there is a very real risk that we could have lost our Lodge to fire this summer. This careless and thoughtless behaviour defys belief and has exposed the Club to severe financial loss.

If you need to smoke, winter or summer, then please respect the Club rule and move away from the Lodge to do so, and dispose of your litter thoughtfully.

IAC committee

In the News

First snow falls in the mountains

BY NINO BUCCI

7th May, 2010 - Canberra Times

The first snowfall of winter has warmed hearts at Perisher. Snow fell on Tuesday night and during Wednesday at the ski resort.

Perisher's marketing and hospitality general manager, Gary Grant, said it was likely between one and two centimetres had fallen.

"It makes us feel like winter is certainly coming and really puts us on a high. But at the same time, it scares the hell out of us because we realise there's so much more to do."

Mr Grant said the first falls of the year were usually recorded around Anzac Day. But he said above average summer rainfall meant the slight snowfall delay would not have an adverse impact.

"Early snow helps the cooling process, which has been given a head start because we've had moist ground because of the rain over summer," he said.

"The wetter the ground, the easier it will be for it to ice up when temperatures get cooler."

The season opens on June 11, the start of the Queen's Birthday long weekend.

The Snowy Mountains of Music Festival will help open the season with an eclectic mix of live acts performing over four days.

Mr Grant said Perisher's snow-making equipment would fire up from mid-May.

Brumby issue reignites

DONNA JOWETT-POULOS

18th Mar, 2010 - Summit Sun

Brumbies will not be shot in the Kosciuszko National Park according to National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) regional manager for the Snowy Mountains Dave Darlington.

Since the release on Monday of a report predicting huge growth in Brumby numbers from now until 2012 there has been discussion both locally and in the national media about the planned introduction of either aerial or ground shooting to cull the wild horses.

The report by Dr Michelle Dawson called the "Aerial Survey of Feral Horses in the Australian Alps" was conducted in April last year from a helicopter and was prepared for the Australian Alps Liaison Committee. The survey is the latest in a series of surveys which began in 2001 and then repeated in 2003.

The report estimates that there are approximately 7,679 horses in the Australian Alps National Parks which extends from the ACT through NSW to Victoria. The report does state that this figure could be 25.4 per cent greater or smaller.

This is an increase from the estimated 5,200 horses in 2001 and predicts that the population will increase to 13,800 by 2012.

Following the release of the report the Colong Foundation for Wilderness immediately called for aerial culling of the Brumbies.

"The ban on aerial shooting of horses was introduced by the NSW Government in October 2000, as a knee jerk reaction to bad media after feral horses were shot in

Guy Fawkes River National Park. In the light of this new report all sides of politics should now support the Colong Foundation's push for humane and scientifically based pest control", said Keith Mur, Director of the Colong Foundation for Wilderness.

The scientific model used by Dr Dawson to generate the predicted numbers has been questioned by many local horse experts. There has also been local disbelief with the current numbers that have been stated.

Clive Edwards from the Bush Users Group questioned the accuracy of the methodology used in the report on national radio this week when he suggested that only 340 actual horses were sighted but the final figure has been modeled to 7,679. The report bases its figures on the average number of horses in a group and then multiplies it by the number of observation areas.

The survey methods used in the report has been based on similar techniques used in the USA to track wild horses and in Africa for large animals.

Breeding rate predictions have also been questioned by horse experts with a mare having to give birth to more than one and a quarter foals each season to reach the predicted total.

"Not possible," said Leisa Caldwell from the Snowy Mountains Horse Riders Association.

"The report has not been peer reviewed either," said Mrs Caldwell.

"The brumby population was successfully managed by the local community for 160 years.

"It was not until the 1980s when we were stopped from going into get horses out that it has become an issue.

The real problem is with the feral pigs and wild dogs.

"This is where they should be looking to spend money. Not shooting horses." She said.

Peter Cochran of Cochran Horse Treks based near Yaouk is also "concerned about the probity of the process".

His horse back adventure business and tourist clients are in daily contact with mobs of Brumbies and the figures in the report are "absolute nonsense", according to Mr Cochran.

Mr Cochran sees the report as "factually wrong" and ammunition for the aerial shooting argument.

Dave Darlington said people could be sceptical about the science but there is a clear trend in the survey results.

"There are definitely some areas where horses are now more abundant and in other places we are seeing them for the first time," he said.

Mr Darlington has called for a continuation and increase in the current trapping programme that uses yards and salt. He did suggest that their methods need to become less labour intensive and capable of bringing more horses out of the park.

"We need to bring more horses out – more often", he said.

The area south of Dead Horse Gap is one location where removal of horses started in 2002 and is now showing success, "but we are not going to see change overnight", said Mr Darlington.

The NPWS currently remove around 300 horses each year from the park and of those 25 per cent are rehoused. The other 75 per cent are sent to the abattoirs. Introducing "brumby running licenses" for local horseman to enter the park and remove horses is not an option according to Mr Darlington. Insurance, safety issues and the legalities now involved has removed that as a wider option for capture of the horses.

Cooma's Janine McWilliams rides on the Snowy Plains whenever possible and sees Brumbies regularly. She was shocked by the suggestion that there should be aerial shooting and also found the estimated numbers hard to believe.

"When we are in drought conditions you would be lucky to see five in a herd. There have been a few more this year but feral pigs, foxes and wild dogs are a much bigger problem.

"They also make fantastic pony club mounts for kids. We should be able to catch them and use them – not shoot them", said Ms McWilliams.

Mr Darlington did say that experienced horse people who are genuinely interested in re housing a captured brumby should contact their office.



Rhythm Snowsports Cooma - OPEN 24 hours, 7 days during Winter

www.rhythm.net.au

Ph: (02) 6452 2303

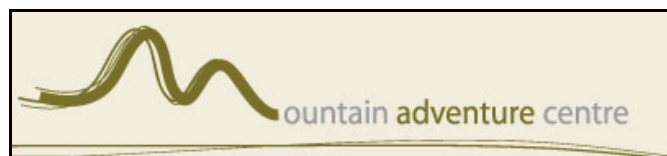
Email: info@rhythm.net.au

8 Sharp St, top of northern end of the main street.

Rhythm are proud sponsors of the 2009 IAC Club Championships



A D V E N T U R E



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Opening Hours – Winter 2008

Monday to Sunday 7:00 - 7:00pm

Friday nights open till Midnight when snow falling

***Paddy Pallin are the suppliers of Cross Country hire equipment to the Illawarra Alpine Club Junior Development Squad**