

ERSA Chair Report – 2010

What an excellent, challenging, exciting but overall a fun first year as Chair of the region. So much has happened over the past twelve months that I can only scratch the surface here.

Over the years the region has been very successful with the alpine racing and it has focused all its efforts in this area and the alpine racing continues to be our main focus. However the region needs to continue moving forwards looking at how we continue to provide value for money for parents and racers, while at the same time promoting other snowsports within the region. So the focus of this year has also included looking to the future, not just this year, but the next five years! The sport is changing and one of the challenges is to ensure we keep ahead of the game.

The economic climate and the ever increasing number of indoor snow centres has had an impact on the way the racing has progressed this year across the country. However we have had a VERY successful summer league this year;

- Run a total of 8 summer league races, the most we have ever done
- Run the first regional race at Milton Keynes
- Run a very successful first summer league indoor race at Hemel, the most racers Hemel has had for one race
- Returned to Tallington Lakes for a second time
- Returned to Bassingbourn, which has undergone club house development

There have also been three SSE Club Nationals and two SSE Grand Prix in the region, next year the plan is to run five Club Nationals and three Grand Prix. So plenty of opportunities for members to race at local national events as well as the regional races.

Unfortunately at the start of the year we had the news that SnowSportGB would not survive, not even through to the Olympics. Fortunately with the help of several individuals those preparing for the Olympics were still able to take part. So far the demise of SnowSportGB has not really had an impact on the region and with formation of the new governing body, British Ski and Snowboarding (BSS), soon afterwards we can hope that things progress in the right direction for our top athletes.

SnOasis continues to progress, although slowly, but it is certainly getting closer. This past month has seen SnOasis gain a five year extension to the planning consent, they have restructured the build and it will now be done in phases, starting in early 2011! I recently met with Godfrey Spanner, the mastermind behind SnOasis, to discuss progress on the venture and talk about the region and some of the plans they have for the development for all snowsports. It is clear from talking to him he has very high ambitions and the closer it gets, the more opportunity there will be for athletes in the region. If all goes to plan we should see the ski slope open in 2014.

A lot of other work has taken place in the region such as;

- Improved communication to clubs, racers, parents
- Release of the new ERA website
- Use of the Facebook group
- Publishing of a periodic newsletter
- Improved feedback from people at the races
- Ability for parents and racers to leave feedback on the website
- Continued work on the ERSA 5 year development plan
- Improved ties with the national body and the Sports Development Officer for this region

- Improved working with other regions
- Better statistical information relating to previous years

Winter Season

It was a very busy winter season for the regions racers. A little late starting with the cancellation of the BARSC races due to lack of snow, but at least things kicked off with the Anglo Scottish in Les Houches. It was good to see so many racers and parents from the region out there and we saw some excellent results. With so many races taking place over the winter it is difficult to cover everything

Of course the added bonus this past winter was the Olympic games taking place and the chance to see a lot of different snowsports taking place in such a short period of time, excellent inspiration if you ever needed any! Both the English and British Champs were successful events for ERSA members.

Well done to the following regional racers for making the GB Children and Junior teams

Jessica Anderson
 Yasmin Cooper
 Megan Jenkins
 Alex Madden
 Florence Bell
 Robert Poth
 Harriet Steggles
 Max Baggio
 Matt Thompson

Summer League

This has been our most successful season for many years, despite the concerns about the way the economy has been going. We have improved the organisation of the races and we are continuing to look at ways we can improve things. Some of the highlights of the season are;

- First regional race at Milton Keynes and very successful
- First summer league race at the Indoor Hemel centre
- Attendance throughout the summer league still very good and plenty of younger children taking part
- Excellent committee involvement in the region
- In the background the ERSA database has been redeveloped

Why are the races s success still? Lots of reasons, but fundamentally everyone is still having a lot of fun, a great social scene and hopefully we still manage to provide excellent value for money.

Success for several members of the region as they were selected for the England Artificial Squad;

Caroline Powell
 Sophie Skipper
 Daniel Curtis
 James Grant
 Michael Molloy
 Stuart Riches
 Max Wheatman – Norfolk

Also great success for the regions top freestyler Tom Coe from Norfolk who has performed very well throughout the season.

All of this wouldn't be possible without the considerable efforts of many people in the region. I would especially like to thank Ian Mawson, Steve Lambert, Lesley Yeung and Janet Jenkins for their continued support in the background and on race days, but also thank you to all the race managers from each of the clubs who have helped to improve the summer league. Of course there are many other people involved in the region from the coaching through to the parents, but too many to list here, but thank you to everyone.

There is still a lot that needs doing in the region and plenty of areas to develop and ensure we provide people with value for money in the racing. We are also looking to develop our ties with the schools in the region, although this is long term goal. I also want to ensure that we provide more information and encouragement for other SnowSports taking place in the region. Over the winter months some of the feedback I have had is that people would like to do something else, so listen out as we are looking to arrange two fun races, one just before Christmas and the second one February / March time.

Keep an eye on the ERSA website for much more news over the next year on all these areas. But I do need more content and information from you out there. If you have something you would like to have posted on the ERSA website send it over to chair@ersa.co.uk.

Finally I would just like to thank everyone for their valuable feedback and contributions this season and look forward to the forthcoming winter season and the summer season next year.

Bernard Wright
ERSA Chair