

# **SUB-COMMITTEE ANALYSIS OF MEMBER RESPONSES**

## **May 2018**

### **Membership Categories**

At this stage we do not propose a change in membership categories in order to incorporate Active Lady riders. Ladies that are invited to ride will ride as SLs, with all the implications that entails – they must arrive and sign-in each day as per male SLs and will pay riding fees as per male SLs (including the annual initial charge for the first five rides). Non-Active Life Members (NALMs) have special status in that they may access the Run as SLs at further opportunities to Ladies that are not NALMs, as outlined in the notice posted by the Secretary.

### **Races**

As with other races, SLs of any kind may ride by invitation of the Secretary.

### **Changing Room and other facilities**

There were roughly equal numbers of letters expressing concern at changing in the company of Ladies as there were letters pointing out that this should not be a problem given the Skeleton precedent and that people can change at their hotels before walking over if this is a problem for them.

No changes will be made to the Changing Room or other facilities, at this stage. In keeping with other sporting clubs in St Moritz such as the SMBC, riders would be expected to share the Changing Room. Ladies and Gentlemen are advised to arrive in clothing in which they are happy to ride if they are concerned by this.

### **Physical Capability & Toboggans**

All riders are required to demonstrate that they can carry the toboggan they propose to ride. This requirement will not change. Toboggans will be of an appropriate design, as laid down by the Run & Safety Committee.

### **Finances**

Members in favour pointed out that there are quiet weeks that could do with more riders. It was also pointed out that it may well become politically impossible for the Kurvereins to continue funding a sport that only supports 50% of the local population, as confirmed by comments made by the representative from Celerina.

On the other side, a few Members said that they did not believe it was worth the financial benefit of Services riding to have to take Ladies riding in exchange.

By using the quietest times on the Run when we seem consistently to have capacity (early January and late February) for family / mixed riding, we minimise disruption while enabling maximum benefit in revenue generation.

### **Physical Capabilities & Pressure to Ride**

Arguments in favour of Ladies riding the Cresta varied from pointing out that Ladies are now competing in National Hunt steeplechase (jump) horse racing in the UK and have done so for many years, racing Skeleton at the Winter Olympics, playing Rugby at a professional level and for their

countries, and taking part in many other dangerous sports / activities and as such the decision over their physical capability should rest with them.

There was a concern raised over Ladies being coerced into riding, and that the number of accidents or injuries may be higher for Ladies, although others have pointed out that Ladies are adults and able to make their own decisions.

### **Run Capacity**

Some Members raised the issue that the Run is already at or close to capacity for much of the season, and so allowing Ladies to ride will compromise on the amount of riding available for Gentlemen.

By putting the Ladies riding times at periods when the Run is historically under-subscribed, we avoid this problem.

### **Modernisation and Tradition**

A large majority of Members' letters expressed that it was time that the Club adapted and evolved to allow Ladies more access to the Run again. Some pointed out that with a purpose to "promote tobogganing generally", and a much older history of Ladies riding the Run, this was in-keeping with a traditional point of view. Others were more explicit that it was time that the Club arrived in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and found it anathema that we were not giving more opportunity to Ladies to ride.

There were a few letters that expressed a wish that the Club remain a domain for men only, claiming that the traditions of the Club have largely been defined since the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War in a male environment.

Providing more opportunity for Ladies to ride while maintaining a male Club for the majority of the season is a compromise that allows a middle ground between these opinions.

### **Character / Atmosphere**

This was the main reason that the few Members against increased Ladies riding gave for their position. Some Members expressed a worry that the atmosphere in Top Hut, the Camion and the Clubhouse would change in a negative way. It is felt by these Members that being male-only is an essential essence of the Club atmosphere.

There were also a large number of Members that pointed out that this change would be slight, given the number of people likely to be involved, and some believe the change will be for the better. It was also mentioned that most of our time at the Club is spent in the company of Ladies. Many Members noted that the spirit of the Club was defined by its Members and that Ladies were already a part of this membership. Others pointed out that the Club is a Tobogganing Club, not a Gentleman's Club, and as such the character will not be altered by allowing Ladies in.

By maintaining mixed and Gentlemen-only weeks on the Run, people will be able to choose whether to ride alongside Ladies or not, and as such the atmosphere that they would prefer to encounter.

### **Precedent from Other Clubs / Sports / Services**

People raised the precedent set by clubs and societies, varying from Leander (rowing), The Royal Yacht Squadron (sailing), City of London Livery Companies, golf clubs, and other sailing clubs that had opened up to Ladies participation without suffering ill effects. One thing that was mentioned by some was the advantage of a gentle process of change at a pace defined by the Club rather than fast

or externally driven change. Some Members also noted that opening up the British Services Weeks to Ladies had been a success.

A few Members also mentioned that there are some Swiss clubs that have not changed and that their membership still seems happy with this situation and as such there is no need to change.

By opening up the Run to more Ladies riding we are following the precedent set by many sporting clubs and societies, while doing this at our own behest and with a compromise meets best practice of gentle change.

### **USP**

Several of the Members that wrote against increased Ladies riding expressed the opinion that the men-only situation of the Club was part of its USP and as such should not be changed. There were however a considerable number of Members that wrote in disagreeing with this position, stating that our USP is our unique sport and Run and not its men-only facet.

### **Family Involvement**

The theme of the Club being a family Club and the joy of allowing family members to ride alongside each other was recurrent in many of the letters. It was also pointed out that in modern families, parents are increasingly equals in both decisions and income, and therefore a male-only holiday is tricky or impossible for these families, which meant that many younger families were unable to justify a holiday in St Moritz.

By having a family week in the last week of the Christmas holidays in early January, this wish will be met.