



26th January 2021

Dear Member

In a normal Season, the Knapp Cup weekend marks the start of serious Top racing. The Services would be in town to join a race that often throws up spectacular spills, as scratch riders struggle to learn the perfect Shuttlecock entry line from Top.

Instead, in this very abnormal year, those of us who woke to snow in England last Sunday will have read the eagerly awaited Greenland posts about some very competitive weekend Junction riding: Alex Ionesco's first Junction fall since 1988, and a new member of the ultra exclusive Stream Corner Club. The Knapp Cup is undoubtedly one of our most beautiful (and valuable) trophies to win. Fashioned by Tiffany in 1901, silver gilt on copper (unusually), the detailing of icicles, the Run and Cresta riders hanging from its rim, it displays craftsmanship matched only by our extraordinary arbiters who build and nurture our beautiful ice sculpture in all weathers every winter.

Charles Cornwallis Knapp, is celebrated on this Season's annual badge, to coincide with the 100th creation of his brain child, the Annual Report. He is also the man who drafted the 1907 Run survey with which we are so familiar. He only started riding in 1899 aged 47 after a distinguished career building railways in India. He won the Cresta Cup outright in 1909 using his most peculiar starting technique - witness the picture below. In 1933, the stunning trophy, renamed The Knapp Cup, was presented to the Club by his daughter after his death. A remarkable man, a remarkable trophy!

The Membership Secretary will shortly send out details of how we will conduct the AGM on Friday 19th February which I hope will be a wonderful virtual gathering of our global membership.

Ahead of that meeting there are four topics I'd like to address:

1. Why did the Committee decide to open The Cresta Run this Season?

We are one of the oldest and most famous winter sports in Switzerland and we have long enjoyed a valuable partnership promoting St Moritz and Celerina to attract international visitors to the Engadine. The Committee firmly believe we have a responsibility to all our friends in the St Moritz community, and, of course, to our wonderful Membership. When we made our decision in October we were hoping Swiss Covid rates would fall and the quarantine period removed for British and international visitors. Both of these happened, but unfortunately we had not bargained for the variants which subsequently emerged, making international travel to St Moritz virtually impossible. It is terrific seeing so many riders still having fun, even if the majority of us are green with envy!

2. What is the process for Membership Applications this Season, given the difficulty of meeting Members who can support?

Even if candidates have not ridden the Cresta this Season, applications are very much encouraged and will be processed in the usual way, but only ONE signature of either the Proposer or Secunder will be required on the form. A new requirement this Season is for each applicant to list four additional Members, one of whom should be on the Committee, who will support their application favourably.

Application forms are available from the Clubhouse and from [Harriet](#) and should either be handed in personally or emailed to [Andrew Mills](#) before midnight on Sunday 28th February 2021.

3. How can you support the Club to fund this Season's loss?

The Hon Treasurer will set out the financial position at the AGM by when we will have a clearer picture of riding numbers. Without the Services we decided not to open Top, to shorten the Season and we budgeted a loss anticipating a 75-80% reduction in rides. I'm delighted that we are being given additional financial support from the community over and above the contributions we usually receive from St Moritz and Celerina..

Also, it will come as no surprise that many Members have kindly offered to support the Club with donations equivalent to what they might have spent had they come to St Moritz.

The Hon Treasurer is not advocating a compulsory Members' levy as he hopes next Season to run a valuable auction of promises/Member donations.

However, in addition to the usual applications for Active Full Membership, what he would welcome is applications for conversion to Life Membership, especially as he is deliberating considering a price increase. Active members should not apply until they are 30.

4. How can Members make donations?

Any member is welcome to email [Harriet](#) with a voluntary donation, however small, and it will be put on your bill. What I would also encourage all Members to do is make a donation to our team whose earnings have been decimated this winter... Matteo in the changing room, Luigi, Mario and Giuseppe in the Clubhouse, Enzo and his Sunny Bar Team, the Arbeiters. Few Clubs engender such loyalty and they especially deserve our support at this very difficult and uncertain time. When emailing Harriet can you please specify how you would like your donation split so that the recipients know whose drink to pour first, or helmet or runners to polish next Season.

We head into this weekend thinking of the Morgan, the largest Cup on the Run, and the Bott Cup, arguably the prettiest. Reminding ourselves it is our oldest handicap we can all make up our own, have three fantastic rides and imagine we are winners!

See you at the AGM

Yours ever
James