

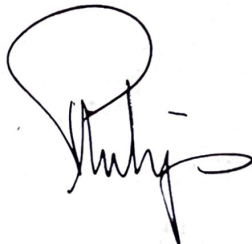
# Foreword

It seems to be a characteristic of the British to take a perfectly ordinary, even juvenile amusement and convert it into a highly organized, competitive sport or recreation. I imagine that small boys all round the world have picked up a stick to hit at a stone, but it took the Scots to convert that innocent pastime into golf which has now become big sporting business. The English did the same with football amongst many others, and although rugby was not started there the Welsh have made it into a national ritual. The beginnings of the Cresta followed the same pattern, but with the added twist that the conversion from pastime to sport was made by a collection of invalids. No wonder the Continentals are convinced that the British are raving mad!

I can only say that I am all for this sort of madness, and although I have never even seen the legendary Cresta, I had no hesitation in presenting a Challenge Cup for the Inter-Service Team Championship in 1957.

Up till World War II the British were allowed to get on with their amusement more or less unchallenged, but in recent years the Continentals seem to have decided that there must be something special about the Cresta Run after all and the sport has now become truly international.

The St Moritz Tobogganing Club has been going for ninety years and certainly deserves a history to itself. Some of the characters and goings-on in the Committee are in the best traditions of British eccentricity, but it is the Cresta Run itself which is the heroine of the book. It has given so many people so much pleasure and fright, so much excitement and satisfaction, and now through film and television its own particular magic is reaching a so much wider audience that it is time for the full story to be told. I am sure this book will be enjoyed as much by the uninitiated as by the devotees.



H.R.H. The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.