

# 2020 SSNZ Alpine Forum Minutes

Sunday, 18 October 2020 10:00 AM

**Meeting Subject:** Snow Sports NZ Alpine Forum

**Meeting Date:** 18/10/2020 10:00 AM

**Location:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82250721012?pwd=N251R3E2VnVMMGU4NnJ2UUkwNFp1dz09>

**Link to Outlook Item:** [click here](#)

**Invitation Message**

**Participants:**

**Snowplanet:**

- [Jono Howson](#) (Accepted in Outlook)
- Duane Barakat
- Justin Stoddard
- Patrick O'Reilly
- Chris Mosaed
- Noel Simpson
- Chris Bonham
- Garth Hinton
- Dean Lark
- Adrian Farnsworth

**Zoom:**

- [Hannah Hazeldine](#) (Meeting Organizer)
- Peter Duff
- Flick Wallace
- Lena Peraudo
- Ros Cronk
- Melissa Vistoli
- Erika Harris
- Cameron Wilson
- Jan Shearer
- John Harman
- Matt Johnson

**Apologies:**

Simon Brown, Jo Dundon, Adi Bernasconi

## Minutes

### Welcome and Report from SSNZ CEO, Jan Shearer

This year has been somewhat different for all of us and the impact this has had on the organisation and our goals is significant, however I believe with the help of our partners we have made the most of the opportunities we have had. A big thank you to the continued support of our resort partners Cardrona and NZSki who managed to operate which allowed our teams to continue training – to the envy of the rest of the world. The other resorts also ran Junior Interfield and National Points level races and this all contributed to us running a reasonable race season for the NZ athletes and coaches.

One of the biggest lessons we learnt was how important it is to be ready and willing to adapt to change within an uncharted and fast-moving environment. However, despite the challenges of today, we are preparing for the opportunities of tomorrow as we navigate our pathway, delivering our services and work through this Olympic cycle.

Earlier in the year Alice Robison won the Emerging Talent Award at the 57th ISPS Handa Halberg Awards, which was a well-deserved win.

On the SSNZ pandemic response:

- Our priority was to get our people back safely – Asia, America and Europe
- Do the right thing – quarantine
- Maintain a performance mindset during lock down – off snow S+C focus
- Safe progression back to snow
- Optimistic Mindset – If we are the best in the world at manging this period we will get a jump on competition
  - Massive progression window
  - Requisitioned core funding – facilities
- Number of season firsts
  - Feature build
  - Core Funding supporting Alpine HP

Staff engagement during lockdown, working from home, CV-19 Alert Level compliance

### Announcement of the ASC board appointed and elected members

Erika Harris and Simon Wi Rutene have been appointment by the board of SSNZ and Jono Howson and Cameron Wilson are our elected members, all for another 2 year term.

### Report on behalf of SSNZ and the Alpine Sport Committee (ASC) from ASC Chair, Jono Howson

#### Domestic and International Season Overview

As with our other codes, Covid has defined our 2020 Domestic season. This has been our second difficult Alpine season in a row. Last year we struggled in New Zealand with regional challenges due to no snow or too much and a good part of the domestic calendar was postponed or cancelled. Despite significant challenges we were able to run the National Champs and ANCs with NZSki, Winter Games and WSSC Tech Series at Cardrona. When the snowpack failed in Australia the ANC sub-Committee and our newly appointed FIS representative, Fiona Stevens, were able to transfer additional ANC races back to New Zealand at Cardrona to save the Series. At the tail end of the Northern Hemisphere season Covid struck and pulled down the balance of the FIS calendar and the Alpine World Cup Finals at Cortina. End of season training and equipment testing on the glaciers did not take place. Athletes and their teams returned home to

lockdown and an uncertain future. Despite all this there were some significant achievements for New Zealand highlighted by our young superstar Alice Robinson. Her technical achievements and bravery at Sölden and Kranjska Gora are game changing. Alice at just 18 years of age starts the new season as the number one Woman GS skier in the world going into Sölden last night. She has pushed technical skiing to a new place in the women's game.

This year, with the rest of the world unable to travel to New Zealand, we ran an old school calendar with no FIS races. It has been a success, given the circumstances and a season of a different kind. Next season is the year before an Olympics and under normal circumstances we would expect all the best Alpine racers in the world to be here competing at our ANCs, National Champs and the FIS Tech Series. We will have to see what happens with the progress of Covid, how the 2020/21 FIS season goes and prepare to welcome the world to New Zealand or (as may be likely) be forced to conduct another local season.

### **ANCs and FIS**

Despite best efforts, and after optimistically calendaring the ANCs and FIS National Championships we had to cancel these races due to Covid restrictions. Under normal circumstances FIS races may not take place unless all athletes from any country are free to enter. With that not being possible the FIS introduced a temporary rule to allow the ANCs and our National Championship to take place (as a FIS event) as long as there was a trans-Tasman bubble and we could welcome competitors from Australia. As we all know the bubble did not materialize and we had to give back our codex for all races.

We had planned for this at the ASC. With NZSki we decided to run a consolidated National Championships, National Junior Championships and Youth Series event shifting the dates to three days in early September. Part of the rationale for this was to bring all age groups together (which isn't achievable under normal circumstances) and to help NZSki manage a limited event calendar with a fraction of their normal race crew. We also invited the Alpine para athletes to join us. The event was a success and felt more like a festival. It hasn't been run like this for a long time. We awarded National Championships in all disciplines for our senior athletes, Junior FIS athletes, Youth cohort (U14 & U16) and para athletes. This was also the first Alpine ski racing in the Southern hemisphere and the first for the world 2020/21 season.

### **National Ski Team Programming**

Preparation for our National Team athletes leading into the 2020/21 season has been uncertain and the FIS has worked hard to establish their Covid management protocols (FIS snowflakes/passport app). The final World Cup, Continental Cup, FIS and Children's calendars are up as of October 3rd, but are shortened and quite different in character. North American World Cup events have been cancelled, the NorAm's are still trying get a calendar up that isn't provisional, and consular visa restrictions, insurance shortfalls, along with Covid management protocols pose significant hurdles for athletes and their teams to get going. Long standing events have been changed for the first time since World War II, men and women's events are being kept separate and finally speed and tech events have been split.

This past winter Alice Robinson's coach Chris Knight and her American Speed coach and serviceman could not get to New Zealand. Despite our best efforts we were unable to obtain exemption visas for the coaching team and in the end Alice flew out to Italy a month early. Unlike normal years she will not be able to return home until April after the World Championships.

Although I'm not able to confirm the planned calendar commitments of our National team athletes as the calendar has only just come out, I can confirm the following are competing or hoping to compete/qualify at World Cup, Europa Cup, Alpine World Championships, Chinese Speed Test Event, Beijing Winter Olympics 2022:

1. Alice Robinson: has started her campaign at Sölden and is looking ahead to the World Championships and is the only NZL Alpine athlete taking part in the Chinese Speed Test event. She will compete in all GS and SG events if possible. On present form she will qualify for the Olympics and alone has qualified New Zealand for the Nations Cup Parallel Team event at the Olympics. Alice is our only HPSNZ carded Alpine athlete (Elite Podium) and Nic Cavanagh has brought her coach Chris Knight inside the SSNZ HP programme with a two year contract. He is one of the best Alpine coaches in the world, so this is a significant achievement.
2. Piera Hudson: Piera is currently world ranked at 47<sup>th</sup> in SL and 24<sup>th</sup> in GS. She and her team are trying to get offshore to begin her campaign. Her goals this year are to make the flip at World Cup and meet the new NZOC criteria for Olympic selection. She intends to attend the World Champs. Due to the efforts of our new FIS representative Fiona Stevens, there will be a little financial and structural help for our WC athletes. The winners of ANC races get an automatic start at World Cup and free lodgings at World Cup events. This year we did not have an ANC Series due to Covid but Fiona drafted an excellent proposal tabled at the FIS Alpine Committee meeting requesting that we use the 2019 results. This was carried as it also suited many of the larger Alpine Nations.
3. Willis Feasey: Still ranked inside the top 100 GS skiers in the world with 24 points, Willis has received a private offer to support him this winter. Last year he travelled in the US with limited resources and no coach. This year he has a coaching job in Austria, will be supported (lane space/coaching/TCM) by the Zampa Brothers and can campaign again. His goals are to make the flip at a World Cup event, get inside the top 60 in the world again and qualify for the World Championships.
4. Jack Adams: Jack has stepped into the Alpine C Team after we managed his transfer from Snow Australia. His father is Ngāi Tahu Iwi and qualifies under the FIS ancestry regulations. He is also our Overall Alpine National Champion this year. His goals are to get to Austria and train as he has always done. The changes to the visa regulations have made that difficult until recently. His main goal is to make the flip at Europa Cup and qualify for the World Championships.
5. Our other National team athletes are either offshore (Norway/ USA), hoping to qualify at Continental Cup level, or not racing currently.

### **Youth (U14/ U16)**

The Youth category runs as part of our National Points competitions (U14-U21) under our domestic rule book New Zealand Competition Rules (NZCR). We have made many changes to this category over the past 3 years and in its current form run points events as a Youth Series at Coronet Peak, Mount Hutt and what should have been the North Island Champs at Whakapapa before RAL shut down their events team due to Covid and other challenges. The Series culminated in the Snowvision NZ Alpine Youth Champs at Cardrona, which despite weather challenges, was completed as a champs on September 27<sup>th</sup>. The Youth selection panel met 5 days after the event and the following young skiers have been offered a spot on the NZ Alpine Youth Squad. They may not be able to travel to Europe this year, but we have named the squad to recognize their achievement. Membership is healthy here especially at U14 where we have over 70 registered athletes.

Olivia Key U16 Girls 4 <sup>th</sup> Seed	Luke Wilkins U16 Boys 4 <sup>th</sup> Seed
Ruby Fullerton U16 Girls 3 <sup>rd</sup> Seed	Jesse Mutton U16 Boys 3 <sup>rd</sup> Seed
Jessica Finnegan U16 Girls 2 <sup>nd</sup> Seed	Hemi Meikle U16 Boys 2 <sup>nd</sup> Seed
Mikayla Smyth U16 Girls 1 <sup>st</sup> Seed	Alec Jackson U16 Boys 1 <sup>st</sup> Seed
Nina Holbrook U14 Girls 4 <sup>th</sup> Seed	Toby Jackson U14 Boys 2 <sup>nd</sup> Seed
Alaska Speedy U14 Girls 3 <sup>rd</sup> Seed	Bayley McDonald U14 Boys 1 <sup>st</sup> Seed
Mathilda Watterson U14 Girls 2 <sup>nd</sup> Seed	

**Interfields & School Races**

We have expanded Interfield races as a category and included school races this year for those events that agree to SSNZ membership for all participants and to conduct their events according to NZCR. Race fields ranged from 30 to over 120 and continue to be a healthy category. We are working hard to develop a nationally accredited timing team, conduct race official courses, and support our large racing community and the resorts that hold national calendar races. This follows the general strategic priority to balance the number of Interfields, and Youth events to afford more time for training during our short New Zealand season.

Resources:

<https://www.snowsports.co.nz/assets/Sports/Alpine/Resources/SSNZ-Alpine-Strategy-2022.pdf>

<https://sportnz.org.nz/resources/active-nz-survey-2018/>

**Rules Proposals for consideration by the ASC**

Summary of Rule Proposal	Summary of Discussion
<p>A change to the SSNZ constitution to align the policy for membership of a SSNZ affiliated ski club is a pre-requisite for both National and FIS registration with the policy in the other SSNZ codes.</p>  <p>Rule 3.1.5</p>	<p>Jono Howson introduced the proposal as Margy Pohl was not present to speak to it.</p> <p>JH: As this is a constitutional amendment this would be a matter for the Snow Sports board rather than the ASC. ASC's role is technical; to manage the rules of the sports, set policy and follow the Alpine strategy.</p> <p>The club structure is the foundation of our sport. It is where our assets are able to accrue, to benefit future generations, build a local ski racing community and establish ROCs. The coaching programmes for the most part are also supported by that structure.</p> <p>Patrick O'Reilly (NSC): In that framework where is the space for independent coaching providers?          JH: there is space for them to operate and train athletes, but not at the expense of the clubs that run the races and represent the members – challenges aside as raised by MP. It would be better to address those challenges than risk collapsing the club structure.          The club are especially important at the junior level to keep intellectual property and physical assets which benefit the community and endure beyond a single coach.</p> <p>Garth Hinton (QAST, Coberger Academy): Is the club structure the reality of what's on the ground in NZ? Where does Nils Coberger sit in this?          As none of our clubs have Northern Hemisphere training options our athletes are forced to split their seasons rather than have consistent coaching.          JH: Our primary job is to encourage and support a domestic structure in New Zealand that makes it possible to partner resorts with NZ based clubs and other entities as they see fit. Offshore is not our responsibility and I would argue that isn't a developmental priority at the level of Children's racing (U16 and below)</p> <p>GH: Could they register their provider as a club without needing to be registered as an incorporated society?</p> <p>JH: There is a discussion to be had about the form a club takes. Societies have strong advantages in terms of membership representation, taxation and the dissolution of assets, but again this would have to be an SGM of AGM constitutional change at Board level.</p> <p>JH: FIS Athletes, according to the FIS rules do not have to be a member of a domestic club, but we require it in our SSNZ constitution. There is room to think about the utility of this at FIS level given the nature of post 16 athlete travel and training, but it would be a mistake at junior level to not require club membership. Aside from everything else these volunteer organizations do they must be the hot houses of early development through their choices in training programming. The National Body cannot control that.</p> <p>The independent providers, with some exceptions, tend to be those with no anchor to the domestic ski racing community. We are protecting the sport for the long haul by ensuring structure to the pathway.</p> <p>Noel Simpson: There is a broader problem that needs to be discussed before a reasonable solution can be decided. Margy's proposal is a starting point for that discussion but the proposal itself is not one that can be accepted/or not as it is written right now.</p> <p>JH: there should be further criteria as to what constitutes a functional, valuable club past just ticking the box of being an incorporated society. This would also require broader criteria be enshrined in the constitution.</p>
<p>Snow Sports NZ should approve the ROC 2 days out from an event</p>  <p>rule 6.2.2.2</p>	<p>JH explained the background for this proposal.          Travelling volunteers have felt they are not supported as well as they would like to be by the resident ROC.</p> <p>JH: Although SSNZ must approve the local ROC at the beginning of the year, it would not be possible to approve or sanction these bodies before each event. There is no way to sanction and replace an ROC - no #2 ROC waiting in the wings, and arguably the job of SSNZ or the ASC is not to interfere with a volunteer body but to assist with training and upskilling. Agreed that the backbone of an effective ROC are well trained/experienced officials and well supported gate keepers. If gate keepers are not feeling supported that message need to get through to ROCs and we can work</p> <p>Hannah Hazeldine: the way in which SSNZ can support the ROCs is through race official and timers training and providing a TD to each event who is there to act as mentor/coach as well as oversee the event is run to a fair and high standard.          The proposal is not within our remit to make it a requirement 48 hours out.</p>

<p>Starting Order for the 2nd Run of a National Youth Championship</p>  <p>Rule_Proposal_Form ...</p>	<p>Flick Wallace, Wanaka Ski and Snowsports Club introduced the proposal to return to the previous format of all women and all men to be flipped and rank in time order from the first run regardless of age category. Chris Mosaed raised the counter point. The championships is competing within their category so to keep it fair they need to be racing against their peers. This is also the policy used in other nations.</p> <p>FW: we need to prepare our athletes better for FIS racing and the age category format does not prepare them for how hard starting at the back of the pack can be.</p> <p>CM: the race is not the preparation, the training and how they learn the new equipment is how to better prepare them.</p> <p>GH: example of the Far West USA, uses U14-U19 just on points order. However, for our weaker athletes this a real detriment as they would be running last and might be really off put being so separated from their peers.</p>
<p>The draw for the Super G for National Youth Championships</p>  <p>Rule_Proposal_Form</p>	<p>FW introduced the proposal which is aimed to simplify the draw process for an NYC Super G. In 2020, the athletes 1-3 in U14 were given their choice. Then all other athletes run in start order. This worked well. The group discussed whether it could be run just in points order.</p> <p>FW: U14 girls would still like to get to choice their top 3.</p>
<p>Application for National Youth Championships to be counted for National Points</p>  <p>Rule_Proposal_Nat P...</p>	<p>FW introduced the proposal</p> <p>JH gave some background. The 2 run format (champs) is incompatible in penalty with our 1 run races. This was original the only expectation in a season with ample national points races. However in a season like 2020 we are very short of national points scores for our Youth athletes. This proposal has merit. We take on board the comment at Snowplanet to use the second run as well</p>
<p>NZ Youth Course Setting Regulations</p>  <p>Rule Proposal_...</p>	<p>Lena Peraudo: to move back to using the international course setting rules. The slope at Cardrona is so shallow that the distance between gates needs to widened to allow the % of vertical drop to be followed.</p>

## General Business

<p>North Island Primary and Secondary Schools Racing</p>  <p>Rule_Proposal_Form ...</p>	<p>JH: NISSC is owned by the Laurenson trust and sanctioned by the school sports board. It is not currently and is not likely to become a SSNZ sanctioned event. NIPS has been purchased by RAL and should have been run by then this year. However, due to covid-19 RAL took the decision to cancel all their 2020 events.</p> <p>Ros Cronk: 3rd party training options are still up for discussion for 2021.</p> <p>On the topic of 'school event' SSNZ members, Noel Simpson proposed to form a working group/ sub-committee on for schools engagement.</p> <p>JH: agreeing totally with growing the grassroots and our work with schools and strong working relationship with RAL. Let's let SSNZ and RAL work through the technical obstacles to working together and remember that it is an RAL event. After that maybe a sub-comm would be useful and can address it then. We will commit to talking to Noel about his ideas about building on this opportunity, which the ASC recognise as a very important opportunity for our sport.</p>
<p>U19 Racing</p>  <p>Rule_Proposal_Form ...</p>	<p>JH: Up until 2018, we didn't have a discrete strategy for Alpine. We now do and it sits on the website. It is fundamentally about the athlete pathway, which is for a competitive athlete a move into FIS at the U18 age groups. The Sport NZ research 2018 shows that this issue is not unique to snow sports, but happens across every sport. National Points to Masters is also an options for those choosing not to push for the competitive pathway. The national points and FIS races are not mutually exclusive, the FIS athletes can and always have had the option to come and compete at National Points.</p> <p>GH: it's a branding issue, the message going to the athletes is that if you don't go to FIS there is no point carrying on. But the message could/should be that they can enter the U19 NP races right up until NCEA exams start.</p> <p>CM: its mainly a programme issue. The communication needs to come from the coaches in the programmes</p>

## Calendar

<p>Scheduling matters arising in 2020 - covered in JH's opening statement.</p>
<p>2021 Calendar of Events – Prelim internal draft has been shared with the ROC's and Programme Directors.</p>
<p>With the addition of 2 Indoor National Points race at Snowplanet in February and May, the end of Season NP List Publication date to be moved to May</p>

## Any other business

WSSC request that the Minute of the Alpine Sport Committee Meetings be distributed to the clubs.

This will be implemented beginning after the next ASC Meeting.

## Next Meetings

Autumn Alpine TD and ROC Update – Queenstown 17th June 2021

Queenstown Alpine Forum - Queenstown 17th October 2021