

Peninsula Ski Club

Autumnal Newsletter



INSIDE:

- *message from the president**
- *upcoming events**
- *ski quiz**
- *Tom and Steve weigh in on skis**
- *Tom's summer photos**

Message from the President

There is a chill in the air! Hats, Scarves, Gloves, here we come. I know everyone is anticipating a great ski season 2023 and it is getting closer and closer. It beats the arrival of the peanut butter box! (if you've seen the chewy commercial on TV, you are in the know.) While our scheduled trips are nearly full, we want to encourage networking within the club to expand our season's ski offerings. In my old girl scout lexicon, we want to find out if your trips are open to tagalongs.

- With that in mind, several of us are heading to Mt. Snow Sunday, Feb. 12 to Friday, Feb. 17th. We are staying at the Mountaineer Inn, which is under new management. Sadly, Ned and Royal have retired from Innkeeping. Mt. Snow is on the Epic pass.
- We fully anticipate short notice trips to Snowshoe and Wintergreen based on snow conditions, plus news of any openings due to cancellations. Be sure you are signed up for short notice trips on the website to receive notification: under the members tab on the home page, click on "interests" to add yourself to this list. We can also list your trip on the website calendar of events.

New member and trip captain recruitment November-January. We've got exciting speakers yet to come and with our short notice opportunities, plenty of skiing to offer new members. Now that you know how to "air drop" our business card, get going! If you get talking about skiing with new acquaintances, let them know about us. We are inviting you to get the word out to your social media contacts, and through your family, work, faith, interest groups, gym rat networks. Jeff Edmondson of WAVY TV 10 is our guest speaker for January. The meeting will start at 6:30 pm at Anna's to accommodate his work schedule. Prospective members are invited to attend one meeting for free, so let's pack the house.

Board of Directors update. Ladies and gents, this year concludes my 2nd two- year term as president and I plan to step down. I will remain as Past President, and be on hand to guide your new president. Tom Crockett, our webmaster, has announced that he plans to step down in 2024. He will also fill a term as past webmaster to orient and assist the incoming webmaster. I need everyone to consider themselves a prospective member of the nominating committee, and give serious thought to stepping into these important positions yourself, or nominating a willing member.

Dorrie Thompson

ABOUT THE COVER PHOTO

In July, I took my aunt to see her first cousin, Marie, who lives in an assisted living facility in Brooklyn Heights. As you can see, Marie has a view of Manhattan that is unbeatable. From the southern side of the building, Marie can also see the Statue of Liberty and Staten Island.

Cathy Margiotta

Editor

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Hiking and Birding Beaverdam Park in Gloucester

Saturday December 3, 2022

9:15 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

We'll meet in the parking lot at the main entrance to Beaverdam Park at the end of Roaring Springs Road for a day hike along the reservoir. Winter waterfowl are often in residence at this time of year and we'll have a few opportunities to look for them, so bring your binoculars and/or camera.

The full route is a six-mile out-and-back around the east arm of the reservoir with a lunch stop at the primitive campground about three miles in, but the Morgan Bridge at the east end of the reservoir is a good half-way marker for a shorter (three mile) hike. There are many other turn-around spots as well for even shorter routes, so you can do as much or as little as you want.

If you plan to do the full hike, pack a lunch and some trail snacks along with a water bottle. Portions of the trail will likely be muddy, so choose your footwear accordingly. Allow four to five hours for the full six-mile hike at a comfortable pace, including a leisurely lunch break and a few birding stops.

Plan to arrive at 9:15 so we will all be present and ready to hit the trail at 9:30. **SIGN UP AT PSC's WEBSITE**

PSC Holiday Social

It's time to celebrate the holidays with your Peninsula Ski Club friends!

Thursday, December 8, 2022

**Doors open for setup at 5:00
Arrive with food items by 6:30
Dinner starts at 7:00**

**Jewish Community Center
401 City Center Blvd.
Newport News, VA 23606**

Correctly answer these eight questions to enter a drawing for a \$25 club certificate.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Who was the first American to win a gold medal in skiing at the Winter Olympics?
a. Billy Kidd
b. Andrea Mead Lawrence
c. Gretchen Fraser | 6. Who made the first metal ski pole?
a. Martin Madshus
b. Otto Lang
c. Steven Schmidt |
| 2. What is the oldest ski area in the United States?
a. Sun Valley, ID
b. Howelson Hill, CO
c. Von Trapp Ski Hill, VT | 7. The oldest ski resort in Virginia Is?
a. Massanutten
b. Bryce
c. Wintergreen |
| 3. When was snowboarding invented?
a. 1965
b. 1970
c. 1946 | 8. What ski resort installed the first chair lift?
a. Alberg, Austria
b. Chamonix, France
c. Sun Valley, ID |
| 4. The word "ski" is derived from a Norse word that means?
a. Sliding
b. Stick of wood
c. Snow | |
| 5. The oldest ski manufacturer is?
a. Madshus
b. Volkl
c. Telemark | |

DIRECTIONS: All of the answers are available through Wikipedia or general online search. To enter the drawing, bring a printout with your answers marked to the Holiday Party. If you are not attending the party and want to enter, send your answers to me at whiteface23@peninsulaskiclub.com

no later than Tuesday, 06 December.

Choosing the Right Ski: Different Tools for Different Jobs

Tom Crockett

I've been skiing since the mid-1980's, but in the decade since Susan and I joined the Peninsula Ski Club, I've learned a lot more about equipment and technique. One of the most interesting and helpful revelations has been how much variety there is in types of skis, how differently even very similar designs can perform, and how personal the choice of skis can be.

When I first started skiing with the club in 2013, I was still on a pair of Dynastar parabolics from the 1990's which I really liked, particularly in comparison to the old straight skis that I had owned previously. Susan bought these for me as a Christmas present and I found them so much easier to ski, requiring just slight pressure with my big toe to initiate a turn. They were great!

But ski design had moved on and several club members were politely aghast at my outmoded equipment. Having skied on my Dynastars at Jackson Hole in our first and at that time only western trip, I knew they weren't great in powder but I was skeptical that new skis would do much for me in East Coast conditions. Nonetheless, at the behest of Steve Liberman, Leonard Credeur, and Jim Colbert, I went to the demo shop (for the first time ever) at Mount Snow one afternoon and tried out a couple of pairs of Nordica skis in what would now be considered either the "carving" or "all mountain narrow" categories. I found that I could ski on them just fine, but they were heavier, stiffer, and required a bit more effort than my trusty Dynastars, so I took a pass.

But the next year we were at Telluride, and it was increasingly clear that I needed skis better suited to deeper and softer snow. I demoed a couple of pairs of all mountain skis from different manufacturers that were nearly identical with respect to length, width, and shape. One pair felt great—a noticeable improvement over my Dynastars—but the other skis had a mind of their own, unpredictably wandering off in random directions. By lunchtime I was relieved to turn them back in to the shop.

I bought the skis that seemed like an improvement, a pair of **Nordica NRGY 90's**, which fall into the "all mountain narrow" category. My buddy Steve brought them home for me in his double ski case, which had room for an extra pair. Thanks, Steve!

The NRGY 90's have a number of characteristics which have served me well. They're light and flexible (good since I'm also light relative to my height) and extremely stable, giving me the confidence to carry a lot more speed than I was previously comfortable with. They're also versatile (that's why they're called "all mountain"), performing well on groomed runs and even better in a few inches of fresh powder. But these skis really excel in crud (loose, bumpy, piled up snow), turning with ease, riding over it, or plowing straight through it; take your pick. I attribute this at least in part to tip and tail rocker and the rounded tails which don't get hung up in the crud piles. While 90 mm underfoot is considerably narrower than a true powder ski, they

provide enough floatation for my light frame that I can get by in deeper snow. On the minus side, they can be a bit chattery at speed on groomers and hardpack, but the main limitation is edge grip on steep, icy faces. In these situations I need to pay attention to keeping my weight directly over the skis, staying in a “comma” position to force the edges into the ice; or, as our ski pro Cathy Margiotta would say, “grip with the hip”.

During the 2018 season I decided to try out some carving skis, looking for something with better edge grip that might be useful in the hard, icy conditions which are often found in East Coast skiing. This type of ski is typically characterized by a narrower waist, little or no tip and tail rocker, more pronounced sidecut, and squared-off tails, all designed to maximize the amount of edge in contact with the snow during a carved turn. I demoed five pairs of skis at Snowshoe and Stowe, and found two that felt good to me, although in very different ways: Head Supershape i.Titans and Blizzard Latigos.

I did not expect the i.Titans to be particularly appropriate for me, since they are much heavier and stiffer than my NRGY 90's. But after skiing on them for awhile, I discovered they had great edge grip and the harder I pushed them the better they felt. It's harder to describe the sensation from the Latigos; they were just plain fun! I would go over a little bump or steer around an obstacle and those skis would just pop into place, making me laugh and leaving me with a big grin on my face. I decided this must be what SKI magazine is talking about when they rate a ski's “playfulness”.

I went home from Stowe and started searching the web for some place to buy a pair of Latigos, but discovered they had been discontinued and there were none to be found anywhere— except maybe at the demo shop at Stowe. I procrastinated for a couple of months, keeping an eye on my other choice, the Head i.Titans, and when the end of season sale price dropped to half of list, I just couldn't restrain myself, picking up a pair from REI for just \$599, including integrated bindings.

Having skied on the i.Titans for several seasons now, I have not been disappointed. Like the NRGY 90's, they are very stable, reasonably forgiving of my mistakes, and provide a confident ride. They have superb edge grip and great control on hardpacked snow and ice— the main thing I was looking for in a carving ski—which I attribute to the extreme sidecut (very wide shovel relative to the waist). I've been out skating around on frozen groomers having a blast on the i.Titans while the icy conditions were sending many of my compatriots back to the lodge. And to be clear, I attribute this to the skis rather than skier!

But I find the sweetest spot for the i.Titans when I tip them up on edge and really lay into the downhill ski. Some of my most memorable runs of recent years have been on these skis, carving massive arcs on big, wide groomers, but they also work well following tight lines along the edge of a piste. I've even played around with them in the trees with some success (meaning I managed to not injure myself; I'm really not a tree skier). But true to their category, these skis are specialists and they do have their limitations, bogging down and requiring a lot more effort with just a couple of inches of fresh snow on top of a hard base.

When I go on trips now, I'll take both pairs of skis if I have room since conditions can change day-to-day or even hour-to-hour. The NRGY 90's (my "crud busters") really come into their own in the precise conditions where the i.Titans (my "arc machines") start to degrade, so they complement each other beautifully—different tools for different jobs. But if I don't have the space, the NRGY 90's go with me west, and the i.Titans come with me in the east, hedging my bets for the prevailing conditions in each locale.

Since purchasing these two pairs of skis, I've also rented a few times, notably at Mountain Travel Symposia where "performance" rentals are included as part of the package, and also on the BRSC trip to Japan, where we were advised to minimize the amount of luggage we brought. None of the rentals have worked as well for me as the skis I currently own. MTS at Whistler was particularly challenging with respect to ski selection. With 7,500' of vertical, that mountain has several climate zones from top to bottom, with correspondingly varied (and ever changing) snow conditions. A truly versatile all-mountain ski is essential, and the first pair of rentals I tried couldn't handle the icy sections. I quickly swapped those out for a different pair which worked better, but I really wished I had my tried and true Nordicas with me.

All of the above is a round about way of proposing that, even if you like your current skis, there could be an alternative out there that will take you to the next level. The particular skis I mention here have, of course, been discontinued in favor of newer models, but presumably there are options out there with similar characteristics. While reviews might provide some guidance, my experience suggests that what matters most is how a particular pair of skis works for you, based on your body mechanics, experience, skiing style, and terrain/snow preferences.

I have been surprised at how much variation there is in the performance and feel of even very similar ski designs, and have therefore become a firm believer in the importance of trying out several different pairs of skis before making a purchase. The skis I use now have been game changers for my skiing, but if I had just purchased something off the shelf without trying them out first, it's extremely unlikely I would have ended up with skis that work as well for me as these do. I hope and expect they will last me a good long time—or at least until ski design takes another quantum leap forward, at which point we should all be able to ski like Olympic contenders.

WHAT SKIS SHOULD I GET?

By Steve Liberman

Many of you, my fellow ski clubbers, already have your skis and you're stickin' to 'em. Great. But some of us are looking for new skis. Why? Well, in my case, my "eastern" skis are old enough that the springs in the bindings are worn out and the shop can't set them. Also, skis have improved dramatically in just the last few years; they make skiing easier and more fun. Another reason special to our club is that we have our pro Cathy so we're getting more skilled and are able, even eager, to ski different terrain. If not for ourselves, we have fellow PSCers, friends, family, and casual passers-by asking us "what skis should I get?"

I know you can research this to your heart's content on the interweb, reading articles and reviews or looking at YouTube videos. It can be overwhelming though; there are so many choices and nobody manufactures a bad ski anymore. Maybe I can help since I have already spent many many many hours combing through all those articles and videos and spoken to several shops and online sources.

There is no best ski for everybody. There isn't even a best ski for any individual skier. Each skier is different, each skier will experience different conditions, and each skier will have varying terrain preferences. For each skier there are at least half a dozen, maybe even a dozen, skis that will hit the spot.

Effective ski choice will depend on factors about the skier and about the skis.

Factors about the skier to consider:

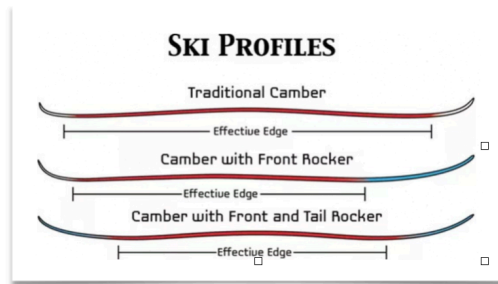
- Present skill level and perhaps skill level aspired to
- Height and weight
- Terrain skied the most and perhaps terrain aspired to
- Aggressive vs. more relaxed vs. cautious
- One pair of skis or a "quiver" of more specialized skis
- Ladies might want ladies' specific skis
- Age if it's for a kid, NOT if for an adult

Factors about the skis to consider:

- Waist width (the narrowest width under foot)
- Length
- Turn radius
- Stiffness/flex
- Weight
- Profile*

- Type**
- Price/quality
- Graphics (admit it; the way skis look influences choice)

*Ski profile is the shape of the ski viewed from the side.



**Ski type refers to the intended use.

Traditional skis have curved tips, almost full-length camber, and flat tails. Today this profile is mostly used in carving skis at the narrower end of the spectrum – about mid-60mm to mid-70mm waist width. These skis specialize in aggressively carving turns at speed on hard-packed groomers. Some might have a little tip or tail rocker to add a little versatility and forgiveness. They are generally stiff, but some are a little more flexible to make them accessible to less experienced and aggressive skiers. Now days, this type of ski will have technology to damp vibrations that are generated by speed.

The majority of recreational skis sold today are frontside all-mountain skis. When in doubt, if you're a typical eastern skier or western frontsider, these are going to be your best bet. They have front rocker (you might see this called "early rise"), substantial camber, and some tail rocker. The waist width will be about 80mm to 90mm, maybe even a little wider. These are for skiers who mostly do groomers, but who want the versatility to do other terrain. They're good to great in crud. They will rail carves and float in powder if the skier knows how or wants to learn. They come in a wide range of stiffness and weight to suit any skier. They also come in a wide range of quality and price.

Also very popular, especially in North America, are freeride all-mountain skis. These have the same profile as frontside skis but are wider – about mid-90mm to 110mm. These versatile skis will do groomers very well but are intended for the powder minded. Here's where the manufacturers believe that a little lighter and more flexible equal better performance. Since the market for these skis is generally more experienced skiers, the quality and price tend to the higher side.

There are other specialty types such as powder and park skis. If you're good enough to ski these, you don't need any advice from me.

Skiers often talk about the length of a ski. Actually, unless you grossly under or overshoot, it's hard to go wrong on this. Anywhere from mouth high to an inch over your head will do. Experienced skiers who want to go fast on groomers would benefit from longer edges for better grip. Those same skiers might want long powder skis to get more surface area for better float. Skiers of any skill level might want short skis for more control and shorter turn radius.

One more thing to consider: buy skis "flat" separately from the bindings, or buy a system with both. In my mind, a system is preferable if available in the ski I choose.

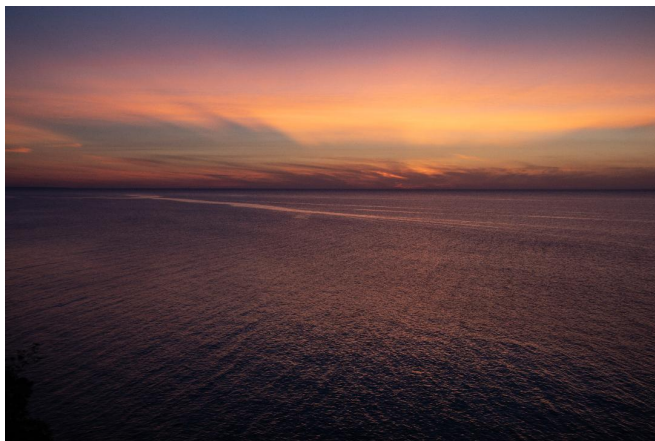
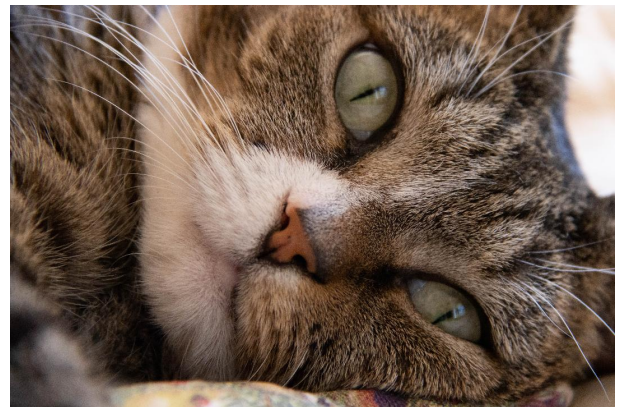
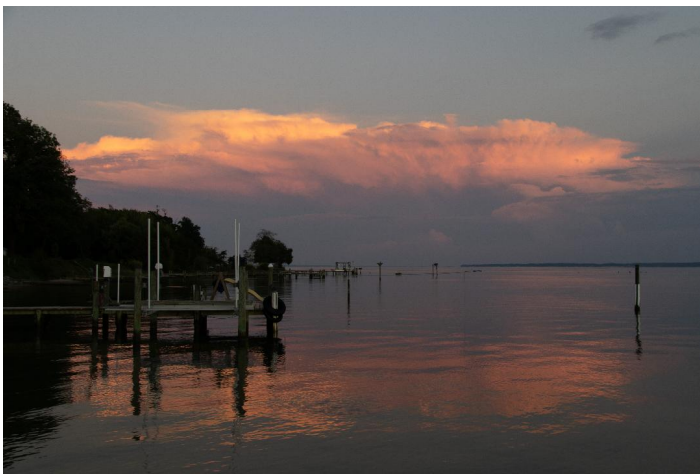
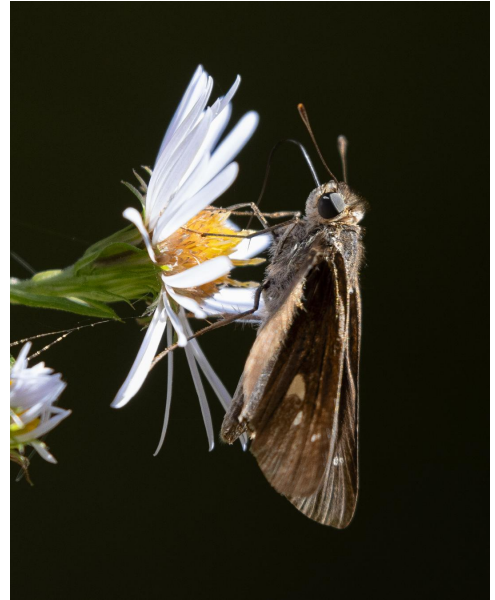
Though it's more difficult to do these days because of the pandemic and supply chain problems, I think it's borderline essential to demo (test drive) skis before buying. This is most convenient at the mountain's own shop or shops in their village. Call ahead to check availability and maybe even make reservations.

One last thing: getting the right skis for you can make a huge difference in your enjoyment and success. However, they make little difference if you don't first have properly fitting BOOTS.

HAVE FUN AND STAY SAFE! People say that to me all the time, but sometimes I just can't seem to do both at the same time.



Steve with his K2s and Tom with his i.Titans. At Stratton Mountain last year.



Tom was the only one to submit photos. From top right: A tree swallow at Beaverdam Park; An Ocola Skipper at Popoman Swamp in Essex County, VA; A thunderhead cloud at sunset over the Rapahannock; Koshka the cat; Sunset on Lake Ontario near Rochester, NY