

## **Calshot Youth Ski Club - The First 40+ years of youth club skiing.**

Calshot Youth Ski Club had its origins in a skiing activity at Hardley Youth Centre in 1973/74. Skiing then was for an hour on a Monday evening for members of Hardley Youth Club, who paid 20p each time they went skiing. By 1978 the cost had increased to 60p per evening, skiing was oversubscribed, there was a demand for a snow ski experience and the group became Hardley Ski Club.

Hardley Ski Club began in 1979 with 58 members and a ski trip to St Lary in the French Pyrenees. Bardonecchia in Italy followed in 1980. Further ski trips followed with Claviere, Foppolo and Les Arc in 1981 and Valmorel in 1982. By 1982, membership had increased from an amalgamation with a ski group from Applemore Youth Centre and later from Totton Youth Centre. Hardley Ski Club changed its name in 1982 to Calshot Youth Ski Club.

By 1987 the Club had skied at Davos in Switzerland and St Johann-in-Tirol in Austria. Club meetings had moved to a Thursday evening and were for 3 hours on two ski slopes starting at 19:15 from October until Easter and started fortnightly meetings from April to June. In 1988 the Club travelled to St Johann-in Tirol once more for a fun week on snow; membership had increased such that three ski slopes were used for the winter period plus two in the summer until 1991. St Johann-in-Tirol was the venue again for the "annual" ski trip in 1989 but St Anton was chosen for 1991. This proved to be the last Ski Club ski trip.

From 1990 to 2002, the club was privileged to perform a variety of "Pantomimes on Skis" at the Southern Ski Shows which took place in the large hanger at Calshot Activities Centre. Pantomimes included The Yellow Brick Road, Snow White, Alice in Ski Wonderland, Peter Pan, Cinderella, and Clowning Around. Members were also lucky in meeting Franz Klammer and Martin Bell; and skiing with Eddie the Eagle and Ali Ross.

With interest gained from the Southern Ski Shows, the Club began a "Ski Tots" session in October 1991 for an hour from 18:30 on one ski slope until December, then two slopes until Easter. Senior members met for 2 hours from 19:30 on all 3 ski slopes. Fortnightly summer meetings continued as before with the addition in 1993, of Ski Slalom Races.

With a small change in session times, this pattern continued until 1998 (1 hour, two slopes for Ski Tots; 2 hours, three slopes for Seniors). By October 1998, Ski Tots and Senior membership had fallen. The Club began its 1998-99 Ski Season with three ski slopes for 2 hours from 19:00 until 21:15

Membership continued to fall and in 2001 the Club began meeting for an hour on three ski slopes during the winter and on one slope for 4 meetings in the summer. Summer meetings included Ski Slalom medal races. Summer ski meetings ended in the 2003-04 season.

From the 2003-04 season, the pattern of meetings remained at either 2 or 3 ski slopes (depending on membership numbers) for an hour each Thursday, from October/November until Easter, and without a summer series of meetings.

From the 2013-14 season progress and achievement were recognised with Snowsport England Snowlife Ski Awards. Prior to that, The British Alpine Ski Awards recognised achievement with similar levels of progression and star badges. From the 2016-17 season, Ski Slalom Medal Races were run on the main slope from February half-term until Easter.

To celebrate our 40 years, members from the previous 40+ years were welcomed at Calshot Activities Centre on Monday January 2nd 2023 from 3pm to 6pm to meet up and maybe have a slide with current members. Bob Rhodes has begun an illustrated history of the club and would welcome any help from past members – in particular the early years up to around 2000. [cyski@btinternet.com](mailto:cyski@btinternet.com)