



THE FIRST SKI TOW IN BRITAIN

Scottish Enterprise has Achieved a Remarkable Engineering Feat in the Highlands for the Benefit of Winter Sportsmen

Those who go to the Alps and other Continental winter sports centres expect to find ski tows for their convenience as a matter of course. But Britain has been sadly lacking in these essentials, which save so much time and energy and enable skiers to give of their best by starting their runs without being tired by long climbs carrying their equipment. Now the omission has at last been rectified in one of the best British winter sports centres—on Meall a' Bhuiridh, in Glen Coe, in the Highlands of Scotland.

The Scottish Ski Club have carried out an astonishing feat of construction. Its members spent four years in planning and research before they were ready to set about a most formidable task. The necessary building material and equipment had to be taken from the old Glen Coe rail some 1,300 ft. up an old track, and only a "Weasel" type of tracked carrier was found to be capable of doing this. Then from the base terminal the overhead tow was stretched upwards over about half-a-mile in an ascent of some 1,000 ft.

The cost is reckoned at about £5,000, raised mainly by members and from the Scottish Council for Physical Recreation. Probably double this sum would have been required but for the generosity of various manufacturing firms, which offered much of the equipment either on an on-hire basis or for nothing.

Now, as a result of this co-operative spirit and the enterprise of the Scottish Ski Club, those visiting Meall a' Bhuiridh next winter will find the tow ready to give 240 lifts per hour, or one every fifteen seconds. It is the property of the Scottish Ski Club and its use will be confined to members. One of the reasons for this limitation is that it avoids liability for income tax, but subscriptions to the Club is modest and new members are welcome.

The tow will undoubtedly make skiing more comfortable, and it may well help to raise the standard of British skiing in international competitions.

Until about a quarter of a century ago, British skiers could compete on equal terms with those from any other country. The decline in their standards since then may be due to the lack at home of such modern facilities as lifts and tows. These are essential for the maximum practice. Glen Coe may start a British skiing revival.



AN AID TO SKIERS IN SCOTLAND: Above—A general view of the line of the ski tow coming upwards from its base terminal on the slope of Meall a' Bhuiridh, at the eastern entrance to Glen Coe. In its construction, which has cost £5,000, the Scottish Ski Club has overcome great difficulties. Left—A member of the Scottish Ski Club demonstrates the use of the "chair" which will tow skiers over about half-a-mile in an ascent of 1,000 ft. Below—The base terminal is constructed over the hut housing the 34-h.p. Diesel engine which provides power for the tow. The first ski tow in Britain will be ready for use next winter and be available to members of the Scottish Ski Club.

