

Summer Racing in the UK 2009

In the latter part of 2009 and start of 2010 I ran a quick small survey to gain some feedback about the summer racing in the UK during 2009. The survey is here <http://www.skizog.co.uk/survey>.

Why did I do this? Simple there was nothing else out there for people to pass comments on especially anonymously. Speaking face to face is good but many people don't really say what they want to say so decided to provide this mechanism. I am involved in running races both locally and nationally and I want to know what people think and I know others want so with not much publicity we have the following results.

If you would like any more information or have any feedback drop me an email to bernard@lindseygang.co.uk. These are the results as of 13th March 2010.

2009 - Which of the races did you attend during the year?

British Indoor Series Grand Prix Series	16
Snowsport England Club Nationals	46
Snowsport England Grand Prix Series	27
Snowsport England Indoor Races and Champs	24
Your Local Regional Races	52

2009 Focus

Both	20
Mostly Indoor	9
Mostly Plastic	34

2010 - Which of the races do you intend going to during next year?

British Indoor Series Grand Prix Series	22
Snowsport England Club Nationals	42
Snowsport England Grand Prix Series	31
Snowsport England Indoor Races and Champs	33
Your Local Regional Races	50

2010 Focus

Both	19
Mostly Indoor	17
Mostly Plastic	27

Are you happy with the level of consultation about the race calendar and race format from SSE?

No	18
Yes	44

Age Group

CH1	1
CH2	5
I am a coach	2
I am a parent	26
JN1	6
JN2	3
MAS	13

Mini 1
SEN 6

Sex

Female 29
Male 34

The following questions were provided in a way which allowed people to enter their comments, rather than selecting from a pre-determined list.

QUESTION: 2009 - Please provide any extra feedback about the season

Clashes reduced the number of racers at each race and made them less competitive

Too busy and too many races.

The calendar was too full. Parents/racers had to pick and choose which races they attended, based on whether it was good for seed points or not . The indoor races were attractive as the nearest thing to snow some will get opportunity to ski on. The added attraction of prizes for the Indoor Series was quite a pull for some kids and also peer pressure. The failure of the SSE GP series to not present any prize at all was disgraceful. SSE need desperately to capture sponsorship if it is to successfully compete with the Indoor series.

Finances and school exam timetables also took their toll on the numbers of entries. Finances and the lack of young entrants into the sport reflect the of minis entering this year.

lots of choice is good but too many races means SSE events attracting lower numbers and so getting to point not cost effective, bearing in mind fees to SSE

There are soo many races, loads of them clash with others so it sometimes hard to decide which ones to do.

Really good season...Only disappointment would be tne clashing of some indoor races.

we did a few gp`s but could have done with some guidance as to what to next ! There is no real guidance as to the progress through the levels

Will support SSE races but not Graham Beck as I feel they are not run for "All".

Well organised - but too many - would have liked to have seen a couple of weeks in August when the Calendar was suspended

Enjoyed the introduction of snow at Hemel onto the calendar and looking forward to seeing Milton Keynes also offering a date.

The ERSA series went well but we will not go to the shorter slopes in future. Having one race and then the champs after a long gap seems disruptive.

The CN's are much too drawn out; the gap between run 2 and 3 should be a lot shorter.

A Bit to long and would liked a gap in August for a rest
The combining of indoor snow and plastic points

A lot of indoor races, which all fell in the same month in different parts of the country. More could be done to co-ordinate, even if they are organised by different parties.

ERSA is a great league. Highly competitive and a great introduction to ski racing
By having a concerted single Race Calendar that lists all the Indoor Snow Series' in the UK in advance each with a link to the Organising clubs website.
too many races! and the Grand Prix series was a bit of an anti-climax we got no prizes for coming top 3 in the series.
Local races ERSA team races etc... participants don't like relay races (find them confusing and one sided to one persons mistake) They prefer head to head
I prefer to do the Lsersa and Club Nationals, as i feel the pace and timing of these races has the best balance, allowing enough time to service the skis between races. This also allow enough to rest and recuperate.
We mostly did plastic races but attended a few indoor ones as well. On the whole my son prefers plastic and gets better results and was therefore a bit disheartened when people who got their points down on the indoor circuit were then chosen for the England dry slope squad over him because he did not manage to get his points down under 50 and they did but indoor!!
Way too many races on. None of the races i attended, Cn, Grand Prix or Regional had as many skiers as in previous years and the atmosphere with only 80-100 people was not as good as previously.
I didn't race this year because I come with my nephew who was in year 11, and too many races were at GCSE exam time for him to be able to attend and I couldn't afford to use my car to travel to races alone.
On the whole the season was excellent. There were a couple of irritating clashes at the end of our season caused by the regions accommodating ESSKIA so I would like to see that organisation make a decision whether they want to fit in with SSE / regions or not and if not then not get upset when regional events / champs are scheduled at the same time as theirs.
i thought that the LSERSA series was very well run, although i would question the extra tier of head-to-head racing that was introduced at some of the races. the race days are long enough already for the minis (the category my children raced in)

QUESTION: 2010 - What would you like to see done differently next season, how could the calendar or the races be improved?
ensure that there are No clashes and that gaps in the national calendar are left for regional races
Less races - more working together from the regions Consistent policies between regions
More consultation across the board between the regions/SSE and British Indoor organisers. More consideration given to exam timetables and the needs of the regions who provide the seedbed of CN and GP racers - a fact many seem to forget about .
2010 the children will focus on the indoor series due to peer pressure and also that skis last longer than on plastic ! A big incentive indeed for parents !
More structure, more pathway, more direction

SSE races should cost less to organise. SSE races should be advertised by the organisers the way they want (ie not the "standard" invitation that we are now required to use

i personally think it would be fairly difficult to make the calendar much better. Most weekends have a club national and/or a grand prix.

For all those organised in putting together races particularly indoor races to work together.....remember these races are organised for the RACERS !

Avoid indoor and outdoor GP races on the same day!

Having the main races on dates when no other race is being held.

Have progression from Regional to CN\GP then All England.

Indoor gates for SSE set to FIS regulations to enable skiers on FIS length skis (155cm) to be able to negotiate the courses. It is too expensive to have FIS skis and another set for tighter indoor courses. If you try to ski a tight course on longer skis then sme gates have to be skidded.

Races spread out so esp. LSERSA and SRA are not both on same weekends - a national/regional way to do a more spread calendar.

Races - generally very good but do begin very early when have to travel far and are finished rather early if such early starts!!

Less Races - Calendar is too congested

Too new to this to make a valued comment!

As Hemel members we are going to concentrate on a mix of plastic 40% and indoor 60% next year (2009 was 80 /20). We would like to see a spring plastic series (April to mid July)followed by all the indoor racing from August to November

To have a separate seed point list for the indoor snow races as it is unfair on the people that do not have time to train on indoor and then come and see people that only race on indoor snow have better points on the BARTS list.

Have a full GP series on plastic ie seven races as i really like Pendle

Would be nice to see indoor, then outdoor, then indoor etc, so that racers can do either or both.

I like them spread out, it was good this year that some were in Sep as I work weekends so it is difficult to get time off, plus it allows you to do other family things apart from trog around the country to ski slopes.

I would like MK to run an indoor like Hemel. It would be nice to get skiers exposed to the two environments.

By having a single countrywide linked calendar. Also deresticting entry to those who don't have lots of points to encourage ne entrants.

make sure that say for example if you have 3 races in Wales. you spread them out rather than having to go to Wales 2 weeks in a row. Also make the Grand Prix series a bigger event.

As most ERSR Races are on Plastics then hopefully the Champs will be on Plastics as well

I found all other aspects of these events good and well organised

Try not to have three races all on top of each other, more spread out list of race dates

There needs to be better communication of both verbal and written types for the Dual slalom & team events as these are confusing for all racers (particularly the younger racers) of when it is their turn to race.

Also it is pointless and a waste of effort/time/ski prep/usage to race other team members of the same club.

The Southern region races are too frenetic with no resting/ servicing time between races and again greater communication is needed by the commentator to avoid confusion.

Bigger prizes and more sporting goods for the 1st place.

I would like to see a separate seeding system for indoor races.

Just less races. Most of the formats are good but there is way too much on!!

I like the way that there was no clash between plastic and SSE indoor races so this should continue. This would be a disaster for the sport in this country. In terms of regional races the SRSA series was great but the LSERSA series needs a complete refresh if it is to keep racer numbers up and in particular to stop racers leaving at lunchtime.

There are too many races to attend all as there are several clashes in the calendar. My daughters are off different ages so do not always compete in the same series of races which is very difficult to manage. Can the season not be stretched out to cover more weekends.

QUESTION: SSE Races - if you took part in Club National or Grand Prix races what did you think of the races?

Undersubscribed

Good - and great competition for the relevant age group

Some were better organised than others. Some old faces doing the officials' jobs. GP series desperately need sponsorship to provide prizes as incentives for parents and racers to participate. Parents also need to see a potential return for the expense incurred!

The standard of racing at CN level was much lower this year due to the absence of the older racers.

Mainly both were undersubscribed and so made for less interesting races. Notable reduction in the minis and the standard of skiing !!

(Indoor CN & GP) Level of competition much lower than British Indoor series. Points from plastic and snow have no bearing on each other and so should be separated.

They were gd.

most were well organized. Although there could be some sort of prize for the top 3 in each category.

Generally well organised and good fun - The indoor races need improvement, but this will come from running more races in the future. The dual slalom at Milton Keynes was a disgrace, many people I spoke to felt it was a rip off and it was.

well ran races how ever I think that the courses are becoming more about who can stay in tight straight courses as opposed to skiing, I would like to see more off set courses where it becomes a test of who can work the ski and generate speed through the turn as opposed to just fast feet which is what combinations are for.

OK

Good, run through smoothly with no major hickups but I would say that in some of the grand prix series the number of racers is overcrowded.

They were well run and reasonably well attended.

They are great to aspire to this level of racing, but they seem understated with little to reward the entrants. perhaps prize money or prizes in kind further down the line from the 3podium medals would encourage lesser skiers to take part

Very organised and efficient

Well organised - no problems from our perspective

As above; much too long a day for the amount of racing. Organisation not as good as for ERSA's

shorter gap between 2nd and 3rd run and trying to get different course setters as it was mainly the same people at most races

Club Nats very good, grand prix good.

Fine. It is a shame that some were on the same w/e (different days but in vastly different parts of the country, ie Stoke and Gloucester I think this year.

My son entered the Ed Drake race as a taster to CN racing(open ticket). It was a great experience. This helped a great deal as the ERSA champs was in a CN format which is quite different from the summer league.

well organised

fine

Club National format is good, and prizes are better , but could still be improved upon.(see above)
The age groups need modifying to make them fairer for all ages(young and old alike)and to ensure all racers are racing their peers.

Therefore this is the reasoning why i have stopped doing Grand Prix's/All England/British.

I thought they were well run but poorly attended at certain venues.

Ipswich was very good, that was the only 1 i attended. I like the formats and the races.

The races are fine but there needs to be a review on the attitude of some officials. The races at Southampton are a pain because of over sensitive health and safety generally but this year the racers were not even allowed to warm up on the race slope for most of the session.

Excellently organised but do we really need the long lunch break - would prefer an earlier finish or an earlier start as often there is a long way to travel on a Sunday night.

QUESTION: British Grand Prix Indoor Series - if you took part why and how could it be improved?

No improvement required although allowing course inspection from the side may make it easier
Top 30 reversed, juniors and above on the same course, kids on the same course.
This series is top rate - no improvement needed
my only problem with indoor races is the viewing areas. There are not many places for parents or fellow competitors to watch.
Very well run and organised, the best races of the year.
good races would like to see the courses more like snow courses
The races are very, very well run already. I would drop the ski length rule.
Because it is more competitive with more of a challenge to succeed. The races were run through smoothly with no major hiccups, but I would say that in some of the grand prix series the number of racers is overcrowded.
In terms of a competition they are spot on and really enjoyable offering a high level of competition. The only issue is attending races in August when training on snow and the issue of May half term onwards due to exams for older GCSE exam aged children.
We did not but will next year.
i did not do it as i do not like skiing on my 155 snow length skis and if we were allowed to ski on 150 length then i might consider doing these races.
Should not be run the same as plastic, as snow conditions change from first run to last run. Should go more on the lines that alpine races are run.
Slightly more challenging courses, its harder because of ski regs but that's all.
Same comments as above, if this was fairer for all I would be keen to participate. Clubs should start thinking about encouraging the Racers and not thinking of the races as a money making exercise.
Will never do these races as not affiliated to SSE.

QUESTION: How could the consultation about the race calendar be improved?
ensuring that there are sufficient gaps for local races by communication with the regions
Ensure less clashes - regional races are suffering, need more funding - so less clashes mean more can be loyal to home regions who need the monies
better communication between SSE and the clubs/regions especially for the National races. Set a timetable and keep to it. Publicise proposals earlier to give clubs time to introduce new officials and organise themselves, even attract sponsors.
When putting in a request for a slot in the calendar, there is no info available or channel open to find out what weekends other clubs have requested races. There are not enough racers out there for races at different venues on the same weekend to be viable
By working together with other organisers for the benefit of the racers.

Try and have a progressive season from Regional events leading up at the end of the season to the grand finale the National Champs.

There are too many races to attend them all, so local races will be more attended.

Ask the racing community rather than do what fits for SSE.

Continue more winter plastic races - like SRA this year - for those of us who work we can not race in winter on snow easily - as a teacher I have no choice of holidays etc!!

Not sure of process - maybe that could be improved

What consultation?

what consultation?

A single calendar that list all UK wide races with clickable links to each organiser, well planned a long time in advance. If you fail to plan then you will plan to fail.

i have already mentioned, spacing races out because of where they are, and maybe put plastic races beginning of season and indoor towards the end or vice versa.

More regional meetings and more consultation/assistance with the Coaches of the clubs

I guess by contacting the regions to send out surveys so that you don't have to do them Bernie. In an ideal world everyone would have their say but collecting the data takes a long time so i can understand why this hasn't happened.

You could offer a "none" box for the "Which of the races did you attend for the year 2009?" section of this survey. I had to select something which didn't apply because this option was not available.

The regions should be involved in the process or at least given earlier site of the draft calendar so that all have a chance to sort dates out earlier.

As a recent race secretary for a club I did not feel there was any consultation and it was this is the date - when it proved difficult to do this date we were told tough there isn't any others.