

Marmot in March 2016 Tour Report

Ninety-three members booked into the Best Western Jasper Inn on Sunday afternoon to begin a lovely 4 days of March skiing at Marmot Basin. With dry roads all the way, everyone arrived in a good mood and ready to meet their skiing buddies at the Welcome Reception. Liquid refreshments flowed, stories were traded, and the welcome buffet - including more wings than even this group of hungry seniors could polish off – kept us fueled. Seven new members, as well as a few guests, joined us for the tour.

Monday morning was warm and sunny and, although there was not much snow in Jasper, the conditions on the mountain were quite acceptable. More than a few groups even forsook a morning coffee break to take full advantage of the good snow and warm conditions. New snow over the weekend enticed the hard core skiers to find untracked snow on the Knob and in the trees and bumps on Eagle. The groomed runs were sufficient for the rest of us and kept us happy. Monday evening saw many members head off to patronize the various establishments in Jasper or have a supper party in their rooms. The socializing on these trips adds to the enjoyment and is a big reason why this club is so successful.

Tuesday was almost a carbon copy of Monday, although a little cooler. The weekend snow was pretty well skied off by the end of the day on the well-used runs but everyone still had a good day of skiing. More socializing followed.

Wednesday – wow! Although the sun was shining in town as we left for the hill in the morning, it was soon apparent that we might be in for a treat. A snow squall seemed to have settled over Marmot and we arrived on white roads to fresh blanket of snow and a continuous snowfall all morning. Visibility was touch-and-go at times but the new snow was heavenly to play in and fresh tracks could be made all day. Even Basin Run, a collector run which gets skied off quickly most days, was fun. You know that you are in skiing heaven when you can't hear your skis! No icy chatter or noisy edging, just the soft smooth shoosh of floating through the snow. Definitely the best skiing of the week judging by the ear-to-ear smiles on everyone. An outstanding day was capped off by another great meal put on by the Inn Grill in the Jasper Inn. Skiing to exhaustion and a great meal – what a combination!

Thursday saw a lot of our group heading home in the morning. It was the coldest and least comfortable day of the week – we are no longer acclimatized to skiing at -11C – so those who stayed took more frequent warmup breaks. Regardless, it was still a good day of skiing and enjoyed by all.

The time I wish I had not forgotten my camera at home: On Wednesday afternoon, seeing Muriel sitting on a picnic bench outside the upper lodge with her skis still on, head back basking in the warm sun, left leg propped up on her raised ski, smile on her face. What a picture of contentment and enjoyment of life!

Your hosts would like to thank everyone for a great week of skiing and socializing and for not having any major accidents (black eyes and bruised hips notwithstanding). Stories will be told for years to come about forgotten boots (or boot), birthday celebrations, and epic headers.

See you on the slopes next year or, for the bikers, on the trails this summer.

Mike and Robbie