

# Yad Moss News

## September 2021



Sunday 3rd January

Like everywhere else it's been a frustrating year at Yad Moss. During the Autumn we undertook a lot of Covid preparation work fitting a Perspex window to the ticket office, clearing out the club room and placing the picnic tables outside, weighed down against the wind with large rocks! We stocked up on cleaning products and hand gel and then as the 'Covid Tiers' began to escalate we prepared to target day tickets sales at local postcodes only.

We reckoned that using the Poma in the fresh air of the high Pennines would present a very low risk of catching Covid at Yad Moss. The national restrictions seem mainly about the journey getting there.

The first weekend of skiing came quickly. On Saturday the 5<sup>th</sup> of December we enjoyed great visibility but on snow that was breakable crust. By the Sunday the snow had improved but the cloud didn't lift until later in the afternoon.

The next skiing day was on Sunday the 3<sup>rd</sup> January and it was excellent. The night before we got more



Not all the snow at Yad Moss is powder



snow than forecast and the sun came out freeze-drying the fresh snow. All the runs were complete and we enjoyed good off piste skiing.

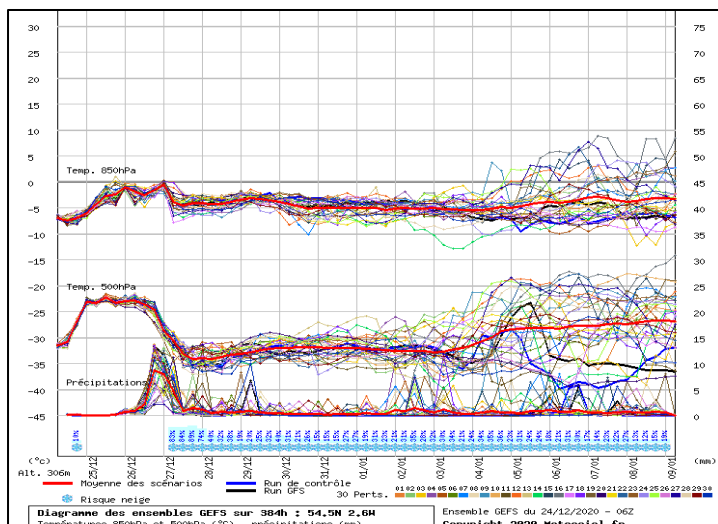


January 2021



Things were going well and the weather was looking good into January. The models were showing good medium term agreement for cool air and precipitation which would likely mean snow up at Yad Moss.

And then, unexpectedly, we were instructed to shut down as National Lockdown No3 was announced, effective from the 5<sup>th</sup> January..... And that was that!

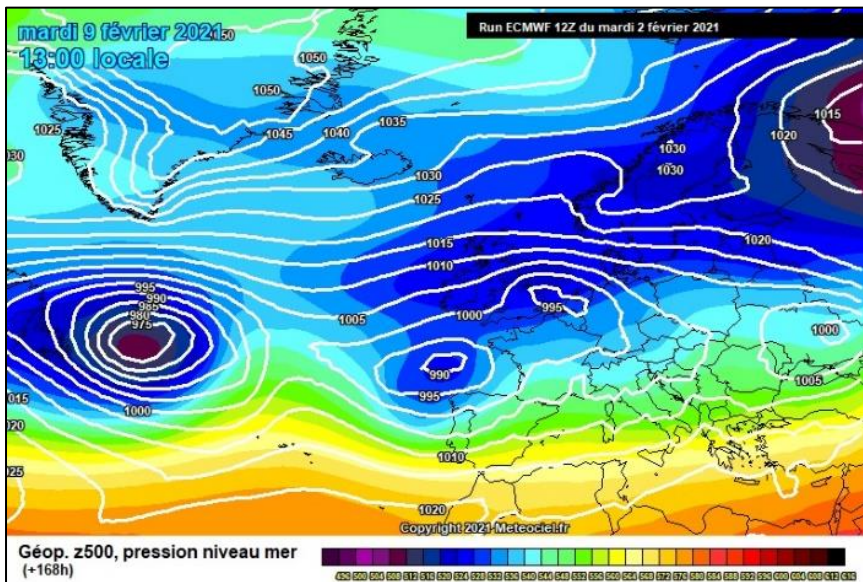


Conditions starting to build. The day before lockdown.





As February arrived high pressure became established over Greenland pushing low pressure through the Channel and feeding cold air in from the continent. This brought bands of heavy snow off the North sea and at Yad Moss this drifted down from the summit across the west facing runs.



Unfortunately we could only watch from the webcam and occassionally we couldn't do that because intermittent spells of calmer weather meant the wind generator couldn't turn and the batteries ran flat.



North easterly snow. The perfect direction at Yad Moss

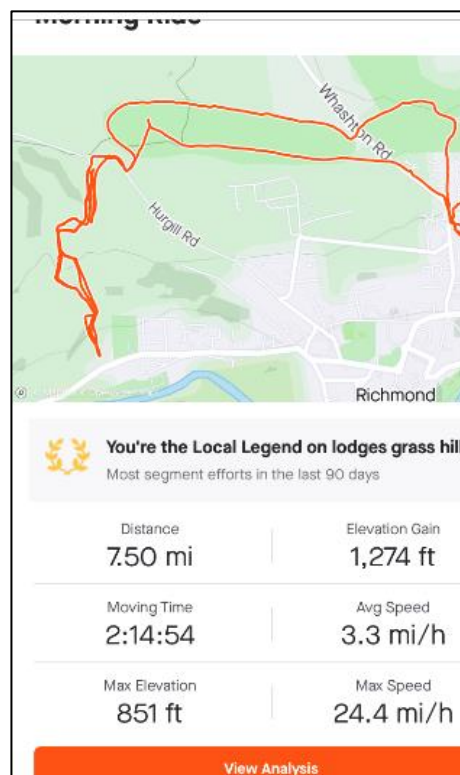


Sunset Boulevard. Loaded

Snowsports enthusiasts looked around to see what other options there might. If you were lucky you may have found some sloping ground and skiable snow nearer home. Putting skins on in the garage and heading out by headtorch was all good fun but not really adequate compensation for what we were missing.



Westfields, Richmond North Yorkshire



Meanwhile up at Yad Moss, and in the words of the 1980s TV Gameshow 'Bullseye'; *'look at what you could have won!':* ☹





Heavy snow filled in all the runs from the summit right down through Hengill gulley to the road. The north east wind had whipped up full depth drifts on the south side of the fences. From the top of the tow it would have been ski anywhere conditions. Unfortunately, the only skiing we were doing was at home under our own steam although as you can see in these pictures a few locals were out touring, sledging and walking up the hill.

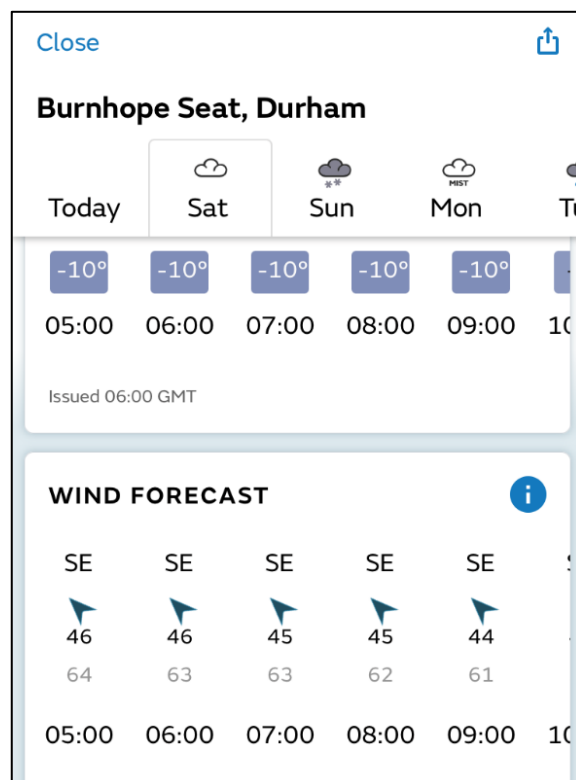


February 2021

Perhaps it was inevitable that the Pandemic would coincide with a classic Pennine winter. The same happened with Foot and Mouth in 2001. The engineering team visited several times between January and March to start the generator, turn the motor, release seized brakes and charge up the batteries. There is no doubt we would have enjoyed many days of great skiing and boarding at Yad Moss this last season.

By mid-February the forecast at Burnhope Seat was predicating savage winds and very low temperatures. At minus 10 Celsius with 60mph winds the air would have felt an agonising minus 47C and the frost would have been penetrating. The dry south easterly gales moved a lot of snow round onto the north side of the fences.

In the Cheviots, one of the big drifts that built up during this period outlasted snow anywhere else in England and didn't melt until the 1<sup>st</sup> July! At Yad Moss the last patch of snow persisted in Darngill gulley until well into May.





Hartside Pass 14th February



In April the Covid restrictions were finally relaxed and in the hot sunshine we thought winter was over. Then May arrived and it began to snow again. The Lake District Ski Club enjoyed a particularly big fall and managed 3 extraordinarily late days skiing, unique across Europe.

And so ended the frustrating season of 2020/21. At Glenshee and on Cairngorm the snow had been epic but they also had to close their lifts after an early start. In the Dolomites skiers missed one of the best snow seasons in years although as in Scotland some of the locals were able to enjoy some very tranquil touring.

Summer arrived and it was time for the work parties to begin again. Fortunately, we are not in the middle of any big projects and because we didn't run very much we didn't break anything so the tow is working just fine. The jobs this summer have mainly been fence repairs, painting and standard maintenance of the equipment. In the Autumn we plan to do more grass cutting on the basis that if we can't make the snow deeper, we can at least make the ground a bit lower!

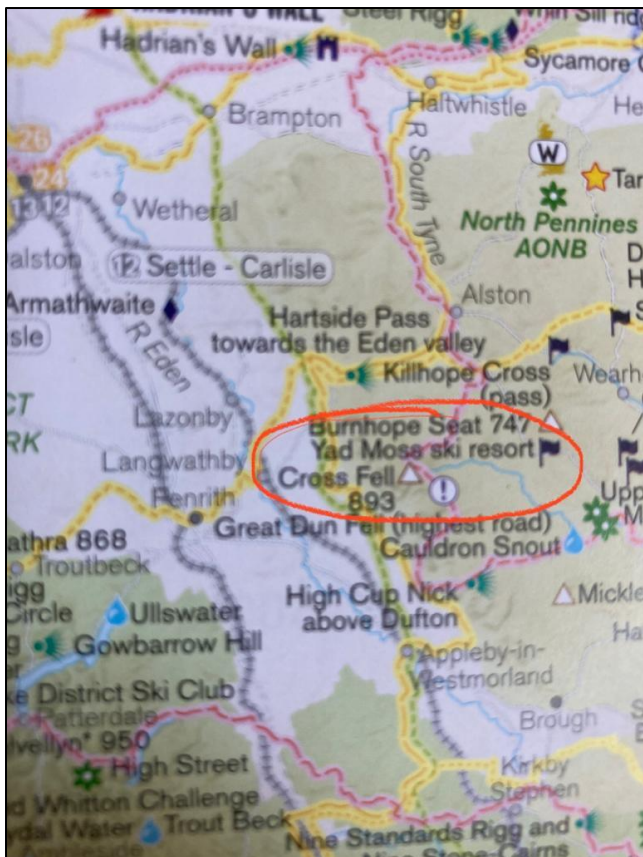
In June we met up with the three other real snow sports clubs. These comprise Allenheads and Weardale in the North Pennines and the Lake District Ski Club over at Raise. The agenda included



items of collective interest such as insurance and membership software. One of the more visible benefits of joint working is the reciprocal season ticket arrangement which enables you to ski during the week at any of the other ski clubs for just £10 a day. A big thank you to our friends over the hill at Weardale for hosting the meeting and showing us around your impressive facilities. It's good to talk and it's great to be part of something bigger.

Long live the Northern Powderhouse!





Talking of something bigger, Yad Moss seems to have found its way onto the 'Great British Adventure Map' where it is now identified as a.... RESORT. We'll get the sun loungers, Martini Umbrellas and Aperitifs ready!

### Northern blocking

Not a part of the 'levelling-up' agenda, but rather an occasional feature of our weather. The persistent advance of climate change is a real and existential threat to snow sports. This year may however be indicative of a theory which links the rapid warming of the Arctic to increased northern blocking and cold air outbreaks. The theory goes that a warmer Arctic is leading to a weaker Jetstream. A weaker Jetstream meanders around more which means that it can lie to the north or the south of the UK for longer periods. When it lies to the north we get rain and mild air. But when it lies to the south, high pressure builds to the north blocking the mild westerly airflow and we can get a prolonged spell of easterly weather, which often means skiing at Yad Moss. It's just a theory but we'll clutch at it for now!

### Thank you

We are particularly grateful for your support this year. Despite not being able to generate day ticket income we still have a lot of costs to meet in terms of insurance, maintenance and running the club so thank you for sticking with us. Without you the Club couldn't survive.

We are always keen to welcome friendly new volunteers. If you have electrical control or engineering skills and would like to get involved in the 'Mother of all DIY projects', we would love to hear from you. Other skills and plain old fashioned enthusiasm are equally welcome! Running your own mini ski area is unusual, but great fun and a good talking point. If you would like to find out more why not come along to a work party and help out. Email us for details; [secretary@yadmoss.co.uk](mailto:secretary@yadmoss.co.uk)



And lastly here is a rather cool picture of our Treasurer on his way to go skiing in 1961, complete with Lambretta 125!

We wish you a safe Autumn and hope for good conditions again this winter. Season lift tickets are now available from the website; <http://web108.extendcp.co.uk/yadmoss.co.uk/join-us/>

### Did you know ?

- A 'Yad' is a **Pit Pony**. They would have been common in the numerous lead and coal mines on Alston Moor. A small coal drift in the side of Hengill leads in the direction of the ticket office
- A short walk beyond Pylon 7 is the summit of Burnhope Seat (747m). It marks the border between Cumbria and County Durham. From the Trig point there is a **line of sight** to:
  - the Merrick in the **Galloway hills**, Scotland (89 miles to the NW)
  - The **Moffat hills**, Scotland (60 miles to the north)
  - Cheviot in the **Northumberland National Park** (50 miles NNE)
  - **The North Sea(!)** at Craster, Northumberland (60 miles NE)
  - The **North York Moors** (55 miles to the East)
  - Pen Y Ghent, Whernside and Wild Boar Fell in **the Yorkshire Dales**, (40 miles to the south)
  - High Pike, in the **Lake District** (29 miles to the west)



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