

Harford Ski Club Ogden 2020 trip report

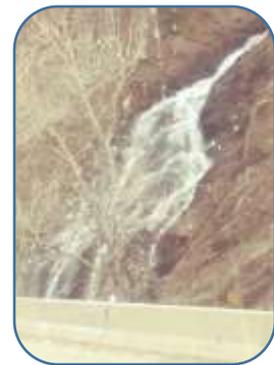
Feb. 29 – March 7, 2020

Trip Leader: Anne Webb

While many of us have been very disappointed with the lack of snow at home this Winter, those of us who went to Ogden on this trip were delighted to ski in fresh powder on our first day! What a fantastic introduction to what turned out to be a fun filled week with plenty of snow, amazing scenery, lovely weather and comradery that is unique to our Harford ski club trips.

There were many first's on this trip (at least for me): First trip with powder on day 1, first time the club skied at Snowbasin, first time the club had a yurt for day use and overnight ski storage, first time some locals and former club members joined us at our destination, and first time leaving a grocery stop. We finally found a grocery store to our liking the second time around!

All of our travel went well on this trip. Southwest served us well with no delays and no lost luggage. Our bus drivers from Le Bus were on time and very professional. And our daily shuttle drivers to and from the resorts were extremely friendly and accommodating. We enjoyed lots of conversation and scenery on the shuttles and also gave us time to make our dinner plans on the way home. The drivers made a couple special stops for us to drop off rental skis and most importantly, the mid-week liquor store stop!



We kicked off our arrival with a welcome reception, enjoying the delectable gourmet cupcakes from The Cupcake Shoppe and Bakery. One dozen of these

cupcakes weighed as much as a sheet cake and were about 4 inches tall with the icing (yum!)



Sara Wayman, our most hospitable host from Powder Mountain, joined us and added to our door prizes, and provided lots of info on Powder Mountain. We felt really welcomed at Powder Mountain, greeted every morning with Sara's smiling face in the Adventure Yurt, which she extended to us for our day use and provided overnight ski storage.



The Mountain Guides went above and beyond their level of service by helping our injured skier get to the ski patrol and stayed with our group for the entire first day (not to mention giving Pat a push to avoid her favorite activity of polling). Visibility and ability to get familiar with the mountain was poor the first day and the guides really helped us to get around and thus further enjoy the fresh powder that came down all day. All told we had about 6-8 inches on the first day.



To our surprise we heard that Powder Mountain sold out that Sunday. They do limit ticket sales there and our spots were guaranteed since we had purchases multiday group tickets. Despite being sold out we had no lift lines, saw many empty seats on the lifts and have uncrowded trails, sometimes filled only with our club members. The only places that seemed crowded were the lodges, with lines waiting for the scrumptious tacos at the Hidden Lake Lodge and the happy apre' ski folks enjoying the live music in the Powder Keg bar.

Day 2 was a bit chilly but a blue bird day at Powder Mountain. We enjoyed groomers with excellent conditions and still found powder off the sides of the trails and of course the trees. We had to be careful in some of the trees due to ice/wind storms that left debris prior to our arrival, but there were plenty of tree runs to choose from.

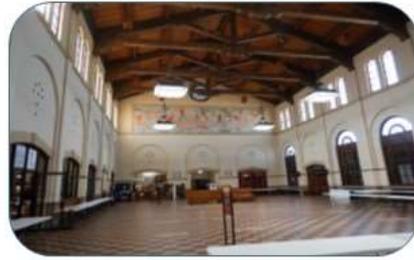


Day 3 was back to some misty, slightly wet and frosty goggle conditions, but the cloud level rose and the precipitation gradually went away as the day went on. The afternoon was the best skiing that day.

We finished off Day 3 with our Group dinner at the Union Grill. We had a section all to ourselves. The three course meal was DE-licious, many of us enjoying salmon or beef tips and most took part of the desert home – the 5 pound bricks of delectable bread pudding, smothered in caramel sauce and topped with whipped cream, which lasted the entire week! There were 21 of us and seating was a bit tight for those in the long booth seat along the wall. Alena had the pleasure of being ‘Little Miss Muffet who sat on her Tuffet’, or in this case a hassock. Every once in a while the lid would slide off and she would have to catch herself. Although we had only 1 wait staff the service was excellent! After just 1 hour we had enjoyed our first round of beverages, our appetizers, the soup or salad, and we all had our main courses in front of us. No other restaurant in town had our meals out that fast even with much smaller groups.



Day 4 was a day off for most of us, although some enjoyed another blue bird day at Powder Mountain, utilizing the public transportation, and Sara once again saw to it that we could get lift tickets at the group rate. Many of us strolled around Ogden, some taking in the former Union Station train station that is now a Train Museum which included a Browning gun museum and an antique car museum.



Our last two days were picture perfect blue bird days at Snowbasin. Some of us were able to shed our goggles for sun glasses and our ski jackets for vests! Although these 2 resorts are close in proximity and provide some of the best skiing in Utah, the atmosphere they provide are quite different! The lodges at Snowbasin are pristine, with lush carpet, gorgeous chandeliers, dining room style table and chairs, huge fireplaces and marble European style bathrooms. Think of Sun Valley, as they and Snowbasin share the same owner. There was lots of outside seating on glass enclosed patios and no one managed to get locked in a port-a-potty/Johnny (unlike at Powder Mountain); there was plenty of access to lush bathrooms at Snowbasin.

Luckily some of us headed to the Strawberry area first, a more wide open area serviced by a gondola. After taking a few runs there we headed up to the John Paul Express and the Olympic / Allen Peak Tram. We were lucky in that the Strawberry Gondola starting having issues and eventually closed for the day and remained closed for our trip.



The Allen Peak Tram (aka 'the bucket') didn't run the next day at all due to winds. Glad our timing allowed us the opportunity to take our spectacular pics when we did. We got the view that the men's downhillers had at the 2002 Olympics. Our braver skiers went down from the top; others took the 'NoName' cat track around the back to avoid the 70% pitch at the top of 'Grizzly'.



On our last day at Snowbasin our injured and non-skiers ventured up the Needles gondola to join us for lunch up top in the Needles Lodge. Even those skiers that

slept in (Chris!) joined us. We enjoyed gourmet food, fantastic views and managed to get a group pic out on the patio. Most of us finished up on the long groomers of Sweet Revenge and Wildcat Bowl. It was really hard to stop skiing that day, knowing it was likely the end of the season for most of us, but a good ending it was! Even the wild turkeys circling the lodge gave us a nice send off.



The Marriott was our home for the week and we made good use of the large lobby for our Welcome Party and Pizza Party, the locked ski storage room, the hot tub and swimming pool, and the yummy daily hot breakfast with take along fruit for the day. They did a real nice job providing us a special to-go spread for our early Saturday AM departure (amazingly Chris was the first one at this breakfast!). The proximity to 25th street provided many good restaurants within walking distance like Roosters, The Hearth, Craft Burger, Lucky Slice Pizza, the Union Grill, and we couldn't miss the Farr Better (Yes Anne – Farr Better, not Fart Better) Ice Cream shop that has been in Ogden forever.

Our injured and non-skiers, Sandy, David and Hanns enjoyed their time in Ogden. Drama Queen that she is, Sandy was accompanied by her two body guards: Deadeye David, from the Jewish Mafia and Hard-hearted Hanns from the German Terminators. In return for their services, David asked Sandy to accompany him and Hanns on their daily trip to the gym. They needed someone to count their pushups for them. Even in her drug addled state, Sandy was able to count all the way to 5 for them! They even ventured out to the Hill Aerospace Museum. They especially liked the SR71 reconnaissance plane and the B52 and B51 bombers. Those of us skiing enjoyed the occasion fly over courtesy of the Hill Air Force base. The engine noise was way behind the fighter jets giving proof to their speed. I can only imagine what the view was like from up there! Bill and Hanns enjoyed their tennis match at the Ogden Athletic Club. Happily for both it ended in a tie, despite Bill's preparation of a large plate of carb loaded food for Hanns at breakfast!

We had a couple of 'Small World Syndrome' events on this trip. Former HSC member Sally Hoedebecke was on the airplane with us from BWI to Dallas and sat next to Bob Gross. Fran D'Amico, a former club member, happened to be staying at the Marriott and joined us the earlier part of the week for breakfast, bus rides, skiing, and even returned Sandy's skis back to the rental shop. And our last day of skiing at Snowbasin, when checking out the Nastar course, we ran into Jim Morgan, retired employee at ATK (now Northrop Grumman in Elkton), who knew some of our former HSC members.

And last but not least, I have to mention the now infamous 'John Kane Dash'. Poor John, while we were all seated on the bus ready to depart Powder Mountain, he was making a last pit stop after downing his beer at the Powder Keg. As he was seen walking across the snow covered parking lot to our bus, a very ornery former trip leader instructed our shuttle driver to roll the bus forward slowly. The driver complied, actually did a perfect job, and of course John panicked and started to run, carrying his ski boots over one shoulder, flagging the bus driver with the other arm, and the laughter on the bus was ear piercing! But John knew who the culprit was and we will have to see how that pay back plays out in the future. Until next time...

