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Who got the most snow 2012-13?

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The winter of 2012-13 in

The snow quality equation

What is the Foehn?

Avoiding rain

Avalanche awareness

Archive



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Snow report - Friday 1 February 2013

It's a messy picture in the Alps right now with a huge variety of snow conditions, especially in the north. Snow cover is not an issue, it's still above average for most, but snow quality has been affected by the recent mild weather (and rain), particularly at lower altitudes in the north.

The good news is that it is going to turner colder tonight with fresh snow to lower levels by the morning, especially across the northern Alps. It will turn milder again on Monday and Tuesday but a more sustained wintry spell is forecast mid-week onwards.

Austria

It's been a very mild week in Austria with a little snow at altitude, but plenty of rain lower down. Not surprisingly the best conditions are in higher resorts such as **Obertauern** (180/220cm) where it is snowing today (Friday) and lots more is expected over the next few days.

Lower down, the going has been heavy in Söll (55/135cm), but here conditions are expected to improve with rain turning to snow tomorrow.



Rain is expected in Kitzbühel but it should be snow by tomorrow - Photo: www.kitz.net

France

It's been snowing above 1300m and now 1700m in the northern Alps this morning (Friday) with huge snowfall totals expected at altitude over the next 48hrs. Lower down the going has been heavy in recent days due to mild temperatures and rain, but it will turn colder everywhere by Saturday with snow down to 600m or so. In theory it will be a powder fest in Val d'Isère (127/278cm) once conditions improve, but, compounded by strong winds, avalanche danger will be sky high so great care is needed over the next few

It's raining in lower resorts such as Morzine (70/260cm) today, but here too it will turn to snow overnight with better (if rather cold and windy) conditions expected over the weekend. Generally speaking there will be less snow in the far south of the French Alps, but there will be no escape from the wind, especially at altitude.



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Snowing in Val d'Isère this morning - Photo: www.valdisere.com

Italy

Italian resorts have missed most of the rain/snow that has affected the northern Alps in recent days and so, generally speaking, snow conditions are more consistent. This is true in **Selva** (55/145cm) where on-piste conditions are still excellent even if off-piste things are less than perfect in the recent mild weather. It's a similar story further west in **Champoluc** (30/110cm) where pistes are described as "excellent".

A drop in temperature is expected in all Italian resorts tomorrow (Saturday) with fresh snow in many places.



Drier on the south-eastern side of the Alps today. This is Livigno - Photo: www.valtline.it

Switzerland

Snow cover is still excellent across much of Switzerland, but rain has affected snow quality in some of the lower resorts, particularly in the north. No such worries in **Zermatt** (70/205cm) where it is snowing today (Friday) with further snow and colder temperatures expected over the next 24hrs.

Lower down, **Wengen** has suffered of late in the warmer weather (and rain), but here too winter will return tonight with plenty of fresh snow this weekend. Watch out for strong winds (everywhere) at altitude and a marked increase in avalanche danger.



Heavy snow at Randa near Zermatt today.

Rest of Europe

It's also been mild in the Pyrenees, but snow depths are still impressive in Andorra's **Arcalis** (200/270cm) with heavy snow expected to return tonight. In Bulgaria, **Bansko** (80/180cm) is skiing well at all levels and it's also good news for Sweden's **Åre** (40/75cm) where 10-15cm of snow has fallen over the last few days.



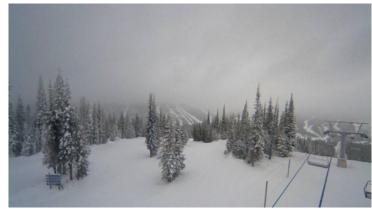
Fresh tracks in Åre (Sweden) this week - Photo: www.skistar.com

USA

Lots of new snow has fallen in the Rockies - especially welcome in Colorado where many resorts have been below par to date. **Vail** (94cm mid-mountain) has seen at least 50cm of fresh in the last few days, with more on the way before the weather settles down again on Sunday. There's also been new snow for **Jackson Hole**, where the mid-mountain base is 203cm, and for **Snowbird** (also 203cm).

Canada

There has only been a trace of new snow in **Whistler** this week, but on-piste at least conditions are still excellent with a 182cm mid-mountain base. More snow is forecast next week, but with mild temperatures there could also be some rain at village level. Further inland there was heavy snow early in the week in **Fernie** where conditions are also good and the upper base is now 246cm deep.



Good conditions continue in western Canada. This is Sun Peaks - Photo: www.sunpeaksresort.com

Next full snow report on Wednesday 6 February, but see $\underline{\text{Today in the}}$ Alps for daily updates

