# **WE KNOW SNOW**



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#### **Snow report**

Updated: 12.30pm Monday 8 December 2014

The weather has turned colder, there has been a little snow here and there and there is more in the forecast - but will it be enough to get the Alpine season back on track?

Probably not just yet is the honest answer – not least because of an unfavourable shift in the medium term forecast. A few days ago we were odds on for widespread heavy snowfalls later this week and/or this weekend. However, in the last 72 hours things have unravelled somewhat and those game-changing dumps keep getting pushed back.

That said, this week's snow report is not all doom and gloom - there will be some snow around this week and for the first few days at least it will also stay cold which will allow those snow cannons to function at something like full capacity. What's more there are still some resorts that haven't had a "problem" this year including **Zermatt, Saas-Fee** and **Cervinia**, to name a few.

In the short term, some snow is due over the next 24 hours, mostly tonight and across the northern half of the Alps where it will fall to very low levels.

The areas likely to benefit most will be closest to the northern foothills, from the Portes du Soleil through the northern Swiss Alps (e.g. **Villars, Wengen, Engelberg**) and into much of Austria (away from the far south). However, even here, accumulations will be relatively modest, generally 10-20cm, perhaps a bit more in one or two very favoured spots.

The more internal valleys as well as much of the southern Alps will see less snow with some places missing out altogether.

## Austria

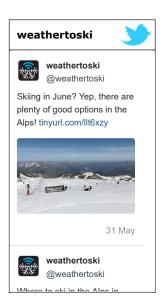
There was a little fresh snow over the weekend, heaviest in the south (e.g. Carinthia) but not nearly enough to excite the majority of resorts, particularly those low-lying ones such as **Söll** (0/5cm) where it is all still to do. Even **St Anton** has now put back its provisional opening to Friday due to a lack of any meaningful snow.

Most of the skiing in Austria is therefore still confined to resorts with glaciers, where on-piste conditions in the likes of **Sölden** (0/182cm) and **Hintertux** (0/185cm) remain good.

The best of the non-glacial options are <code>Ischgl</code> (0/40cm) and <code>Obergurgl</code> (9/95cm) both of which offer around 70km of pistes, but more snow would be welcome.



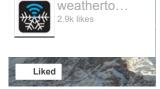
A dusting of snow in the lower Austrian resorts, but much more is clearly needed. This is Zell-am-See - Photo: foto-webcam.eu



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There was a dusting of snow here and there over the weekend, but except for some parts of the far south, e.g. Isola 2000 (20/100cm), nothing of any real substance.

Of the big name resorts, **Val Thorens** (40/80cm) still offers the greatest extent of pistes, but the 3 Valleys as a whole remains unconnected and much more snow is needed to get things properly on track.

It's a similar story in **Val d'Isère** (0/30cm) and **Tignes** (0/50cm) where the skiing is mostly confined to their respective glaciers, and cover across  ${\bf L'Espace}$ Killy as a whole is wafer thin.



The Bellevarde sector in Val d'Isère remains closed for now, despite looking in reasonable shape up top - Photo: valdisere.com

#### Italy

There is some good skiing to be found in Italy but only at high altitude and, generally speaking, on a limited basis. One exception is **Cervinia** (30/215cm) which, along with Zermatt, offers 204km of pistes, by far the greatest extent in the Alps right now.

Further east, Livigno (22/134cm) is another good option with 21 lifts open, but for many lower resorts lots of snow is still needed.



Livigno is open and doing better than many Italian resorts - Photo: valtline.it

The best conditions remain at altitude in the south of the country. Zermatt (0/83cm) leads the way with 204km of pistes now open (shared with **Cervinia**), by far the greatest extent of skiing available in the Alps right now.

Two other resorts that are in good shape, at least on the upper half of the  $\,$ mountain, are Saas-Fee (9/215cm) and St Moritz (2/98cm). Below 2000m, however, there is still little if any meaningful snow with resorts such as  ${\bf Villars}$ (n/a) and Wengen (0/30cm) still needing much more snow in order to consider opening properly.



Good snow at altitude in St Moritz - Photo: stmoritz.ch

#### **Rest of Europe**

There has been some snow in the **Pyrenees** which has allowed some partial openings, including in **Soldeu** in Andorra (10/40cm), but generally speaking more snow is needed.

For more consistent conditions right now head to **Scandinavia**, where lots of resorts are partially open including **Hemsedal** in Norway (60/70cm), **Salen** in Sweden (10/15cm) and **Levi** in Finland (25/25cm).

Snow has also started to fall in  ${\bf Scotland}$ , and although nothing is open yet the forecast is very promising.



Snow has been falling across the Scottish resorts, though for now nothing is open. This is Glencoe - Photo: glencoemountain.com

### USA

Colorado resorts have seen little new snow in the last week but (in the main) can still offer some decent skiing thanks to the frequent snowfalls in mid/late November. In **Vail**, for example, the powder has long been tracked out but the pistes are still in reasonable shape with a 53cm mid-mountain base.

It's a similar situation in Utah where **Snowbird** has 79cm mid-mountain, while over in Wyoming, **Jackson Hole** (which saw some of the heaviest November snow) has 109cm.

### Canada

**Whistler** has had a modest start to the reason – only a quarter of the area is currently open with 54cm of settled snow mid-mountain. There is plenty of snow in the forecast this week, but with relatively mild temperatures, most of this will be falling at altitude.

Generally speaking, conditions are more consistent further inland with 101cm mid-mountain in **Revelstoke** and 98cm mid-mountain in the **Banff/Lake Louise** area.



Reasonable snow cover in the Banff/Lake Louise area - Photo: skibanff.com

Next full snow report will be on Thursday 11 December 2014, but see **Today in the Alps** for daily updates

