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Snow report

Updated: 7.30pm Thursday 29 January 2015

The much anticipated "big storm" is well underway and delivering serious quantities of snow to the northern French Alps in particular. This snow will spread east to affect many other parts of the northern Alps overnight but, with one or two exceptions, will be lighter and patchier in the southern Alps - notably in Italy.

Given that the north-eastern Alps had the lion's share of the snow earlier in the week, we can safely say that the entire northern half of the Alps will be in excellent shape once the weather settles down.

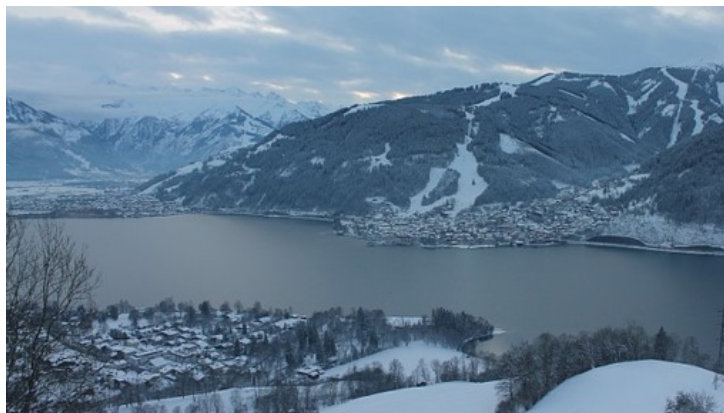
The southern Alps can still offer plenty of decent skiing, particularly on-piste and at altitude, but generally speaking snow depths here will remain way below average for late January. There will, however, be some exceptions this rule - **La Thuile** and **Courmayeur**, for example, are expected to see significant snow spill over the French border. There may also be some surprises for the far eastern Dolomites.

Note also that settled snow depths in our country by country snow report were this morning's depths (Thursday 29 Jan), so will increase dramatically in some quarters over the next few days, particularly in the north-western Alps.

Austria

Many parts of Austria have already seen significant snowfall this week, including the low resorts of the Tirol and Salzburgerland such as **Kitzbühel** (50/75cm) and **Zell-am-See** (30/115cm), both of which now have excellent snow conditions at all altitudes.

The greatest snowfalls from the current storm, however, will be in the western Austrian Alps where **Lech** (100/160cm) will already have seen 30cm of new snow by Friday, with more forecast.



The latest storm is yet to hit Zell-am-See, but there is still plentiful snow from earlier in the week - Photo: foto-webcam.eu

France

Huge snowfalls are in progress this evening over the northern French Alps. The greatest totals are likely to be in the Haute-Savoie, where accumulations since the start of the storm in the likes of **Flaine** (100/180cm) and **Avoriaz** (120/170cm) are likely to exceed 1m on Friday.

The further south you go, the less intense the current snowfall - though it is all relative - and only the extreme southern French Alps are likely to miss out completely.

All in all then, conditions will be excellent once skies clear, though avalanche danger off-piste will remain sky-high.

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Big snowfalls in progress in the Haute-Savoie. This is Les Contamines/Hauteluce - Photo: lescontamines.net

Italy

On the whole, Italian resorts will miss out on the heaviest snow from this storm with just 5-20cm here and there, and some places even staying dry.

The main exception to this rule will be the far north-west, where significant snow should spill over the French border and improve the modest depths in the likes of **La Thuile** (25/70cm) and **Courmayeur** (20-90cm).

The far eastern Dolomites, from **Cortina** (35/120cm) eastwards, may also catch some heavy snow later tonight.

Elsewhere in Italy there is plenty of decent skiing to be had, especially at altitude - for example, **Cervinia** (45/220cm) - though many lower resorts such as **Selva** (10/90cm) are still heavily reliant on artificial snow.



Courmayeur is one of the few Italian resorts that should see significant snow from the current storm - Photo: regione.vda.it

Switzerland

So far only the western Swiss resorts such as **Verbier** (41/70 cm) and **Villars** (40/100cm) have seen heavy snow from this latest storm.

Further east, however, resorts such as **Engelberg** (75 /335 cm) and **Davos** (55 /185 cm) saw significant accumulations earlier in the week, and all areas (apart from some parts of the extreme south) should see further snow tonight.

Overall then, it's a very promising picture once skies clear, but beware of the very high avalanche danger, particularly (but not exclusively) in the west.



The Portes du Soleil are expecting huge snowfalls over the next couple of days. This is Morgins - Photo: telemorgins.ch

Rest of Europe

The Pyrenees are also due heavy snow which means excellent conditions here too once the weather settles down. Currently the settled snow depths in **Pas de La Casa** are 70/110cm depending on altitude, but these will increase dramatically over the next few days.

Bulgarian resorts are also generally in good shape – **Borovets** (80/110cm) has seen fresh snow over the last few days with lots more in the forecast.

Up in Scandinavia, the deepest snow is in Norway, particularly in the western resorts where **Voss** (110/195cm) continues to add to its already impressive depths.

Closer to home, Scottish resorts also have plenty of snow, though highly variable weather is not allowing predictable lift openings in the likes of **Glencoe** (40/150cm).



Plenty of snow, but variable weather in Scotland. This is Glencoe - Photo: winterhighland.com

USA

Colorado resorts have seen little if any new snow in the last week but, on-piste at least, conditions remain good in the likes of **Vail** (107cm mid-mountain base) and **Winter Park** (112cm).

It's a similar story for **Jackson Hole** (170cm mid-mountain) in Wyoming, and **Alta** (193cm mid-mountain) in Utah, with little of any substance in the immediate forecast.

Canada

Whistler (122cm mid-mountain) hasn't seen any snow in the last week, and has base depths considerably below where they should be for late January and highly variable conditions, particularly off-piste.

Conditions are again more consistent inland, with 170cm of settled snow up top in **Revelstoke** and 122cm in **Banff**.



Good snow cover (as you would expect) in the Banff/Lake Louise region - Photo: skibanff.com

Next full snow report will be on Monday 2 February 2015, but see [Today in the Alps](#) for daily updates