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Latest snow report

Updated: 1.40pm Thursday 25 February 2016

In theory, snow conditions remain pretty good across most of the Alps, although there are exceptions, especially at low altitude. In practice though, it has been quite a difficult week for most skiers due to the changeable weather and (for most) a distinct lack of sunshine.

Snow depths are close to or a little above average at altitude in the north-western half of the Alps (e.g. **Mürren**, **Crans Montana**, **Verbier**, **Avoriaz**, **Chamonix**, **Val d'Isère**). However, below 1500m, cover remains thin, and even very thin in the likes of **Morzine** and **Mégève**, which have seen too much rain this season, and have had difficulty riding out the numerous mild spells.

Away from the north-west, snow depths are generally below average, but the difference between high and low altitude is somewhat less pronounced.

One thing is for sure, snow conditions have been much more variable in the Alps since half term (which was generally excellent), with fluctuating temperatures and a mixture of rain, wind and snow. We have seen the back of the excessively high temperatures that blighted many parts of the Alps on Sunday and Monday, but it still isn't notably cold, which continues to frustrate the lowest resorts (such as **Morzine**).

There is more snow in the forecast though - initially falling across the northern Alps today, before all eyes turn towards the south, where big snowfalls are expected this weekend.

Across the pond, there hasn't been a huge amount of snow to report, with the most consistent snow conditions at altitude in Colorado and Utah...

Austria

Snow conditions in Austria are generally good at altitude, but more variable low down due to fluctuating temperatures and, in places, thin cover. **Bad Gastein**, for example, claims 20/130cm of settled snow depending on altitude, but is actually quite green at valley level.

For the best snow conditions you need a resort with plenty of skiing above 2000m, such as **Lech** (120/205cm), **Obergurgl** (35/190cm) or **Ischgl** (30/90cm) - **Ischgl** being a classic example of how you should never judge a resort by its figures. Snow depths here are often quite modest, but snow preservation and quality is normally excellent.

The forecast for this weekend is very mixed, with heavy snow in the south (Osttirol, Carinthia) on Sunday, but **Föhn** conditions in the north, which will further erode any low-lying snow. Early next week it should turn colder again everywhere.



Only patchy snow cover in some of the lower Austrian valleys. This is Bad Gastein - Photo: gastein.com, 25 February 2016

France

At altitude, the northern French resorts have some of the deepest snow in the Alps right now. **Flaine** currently has 115/300cm, for example, while **Les Arcs** has 130/300cm, with further snow falling today (especially in the Haute-Savoie).

Below 1500m, however, the snow pack has been thin all season, with resorts such as **Morzine** continuing to struggle lower down. The resort may claim 30/90cm depending on altitude, but the reality is that there is next to no snow at resort level, unusual for late February.

Snow depths are also below par in the southern French Alps, where **Risoul** has 70/90 cm, but in most cases there is still plenty of decent skiing, at least on-piste.

The forecast for the weekend is complicated, with heavy snow in the southern Alps perhaps spilling over the Italian border into some northern parts on Sunday (e.g. **Val d'Isère**). However, for many northern Alpine ski resorts (e.g. **Portes du Soleil**) there will be an **Foehn** episode that will cause snow conditions to deteriorate further at low altitude before it turns much colder again early next week.



Snowing again today in the northern French Alps. This is Les Saisies - Photo: lessaisies.com, 25 February 2016

Italy

There is plenty of good skiing still on offer in the Italian Alps even if snow depths remain below average in most regions, and most of the skiing is on piste.

The one area that does have a lot of snow is the north-western Aosta valley, where **Courmayeur** has 95/210cm and **La Thuile** has 70/290cm.

Further east, there is less snow. **Livigno** currently has 43/93cm, while **Selva** has 35/75cm.

The weather is set to get very interesting this weekend, with heavy snow in many Italian ski resorts, especially on Sunday.



Above the clouds in the Monte Rosa region, where lots of snow is expected this weekend - Photo: monterosa-ski.com, 25 February 2016

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Switzerland

Swiss ski resorts have some of the best snow in the Alps right now but, like everywhere else, mild weather has created some issues lower down.

Generally speaking, the best snow conditions in Switzerland are at altitude in the north and west, with some Swiss resorts having some of the deepest snow in Europe. **Engelberg**, for example, currently has 30/350cm depending on altitude,

while **Mürren** has 77/305cm.

The thinnest cover is in the far south-east, where snow depths are 43/86cm in **St Moritz**, and more generally at low altitude, with just 17/85cm in **Adelboden**, for example. However, both these resorts still offer plenty of good skiing, especially on-piste.

The forecast for this weekend is mixed with heavy snow in the far south, especially on Sunday, but Foehn conditions elsewhere in Switzerland, which means further snow loss low down.

Later on Sunday, and particularly early next week, it should turn more wintry across the board.



Snow cover is a little on the thin side in Bivio in south-east Switzerland, but more is due later in the weekend - Photo: bivio.ch, 25 February 2016

Rest of Europe

The Pyrenees haven't seen a huge amount of snow during the last week, but conditions are holding up well at altitude, with 90/130cm in **Arcalis** (Andorra) and 90/175cm in **Baqueira Beret** (Spain), with lots of snow forecast this weekend.

Meanwhile, the drought continues in Bulgaria, where **Bansko** (65/100cm) hasn't seen any snow since the middle of January.

There is better news in Norway, especially in the west, where **Voss** (95/240cm) has seen nearly 1m of snow in the last week alone.

Scottish ski resorts also have plenty of snow, by their standards, with current depths of 50/100cm at **Nevis Range**, depending on altitude.



Great conditions at Glenshee in Scotland - Photo: winterhighland.info, 25 February 2016

USA

There is plenty of good skiing to be found in Colorado, even if the off-piste has been variable during the recent mild weather. **Vail** saw a dusting of new snow on Tuesday, and has a 142cm mid-mountain base. **Telluride** (also 142cm mid-mountain) saw 13cm of fresh on the same day.

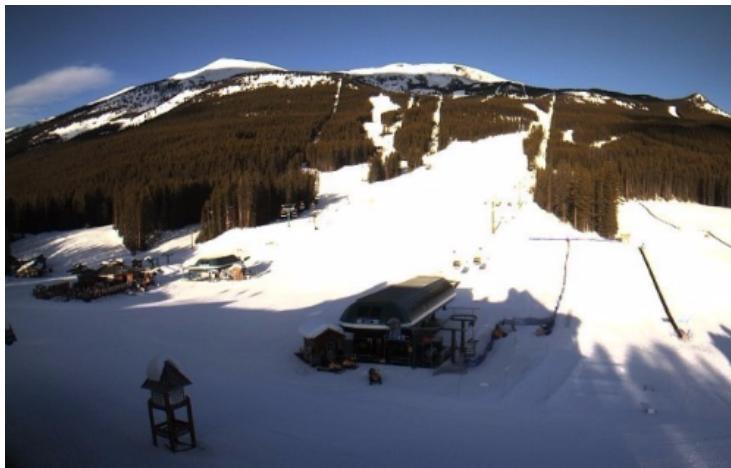
Snow conditions are broadly similar in Utah, even if snow depths are more impressive. **Snowbird** currently has 216cm mid-mountain.

Over in California, snow depths are 266/419cm in **Mammoth**, but the very mild weather here means that snow conditions are much more spring-like.

Canada

It's still mild in **Whistler** (249cm mid-mountain) which means variable snow conditions, despite good cover. Cooler, snowier weather is expected over the weekend, especially on Sunday.

Further east, **Banff/Lake Louise** (140cm upper mountain) hasn't seen any snow this week, but still offers excellent piste skiing, with a dusting of snow expected over the weekend.



Decent enough snow conditions in the Banff/Lake Louise ski area - Photo: skilouise.com, 25 February 2016

**Next full snow report will be on Monday 29 February 2016,
but see [Today in the Alps](#) for regular updates**