

JOEL BRADLEY REPRESENTED KATIE'S SKI TRACKS AT THE 9th WILD GIRLS ON SNOW CHARITY EVENT AT SKI RESORT KLOSTERS – MARCH 2008



As you may or may not be aware, Michelle and Martin entrusted me to represent 'Katie's' at this year's 'Wild Girls on Snow' charity fundraising event in Klosters, Switzerland. 'Wild Girls' have been in existence for nine years now and the event is very professionally organised by Clair Southwell, who is a Klosters resident and an ex PA to Prince Charles. It comprises three days of events such as slalom racing with professional skiers in attendance, ice sculpting, ice hockey, a local version of curling called Einstock and lots of dinner events, culminating in a final Gala evening with speeches, cabaret acts and a charity auction. Apart from all the 'Wild Girls' the event was attended by several famous Swiss skiers including Bruno Kernen – an ex-downhill skiing world champion, some very generous sponsors (most notably Ivo from Findustra - a Swiss Banking Company) and several celebrities such as Angus Deayton (who has already donated £1000 as well as spending thousands in the auction itself), Tara Palmer-Tomkinson, Ingrid Tarrant and Ingrid Seward (who featured in 'Hello' magazine's coverage of the event).

'Katie's' were lucky enough to be nominated as one of the two charities that would benefit from the event, whose main fund-raising tool is a charity auction on the final evening. There were a lot of people who paid to attend the event from the UK, Switzerland and even Canada who all added to the three days of fun.

The theme of the event was 'Ice' and after the first night's drinks party and dinner, day two saw 150 or so of the participants heading up the mountain in fancy dress to an igloo high up on the mountain. Group photos were taken and we then went onto a fabulous afternoon of making ice sculptures. It has to be said that our team made minimal effort as Alexia, our unofficial leader, had pre-prepared a Disney castle which was somewhat dwarfed by the 8ft high lumps of ice. The winners of the event were Ivo's team who created a massive ice skate complete with laces. Then we all skied back down the mountain and spent the evening playing ice hockey and Einstock and watching a terrific Elvis impersonator stagger around on skates for the first time. There was also an incredible display of ice-dancing with several of the top Swiss skaters performing their routines. Quite by accident our team 'Disney on Ice' won the Einstock without even realising that we were competing. We also picked up the 'Best Fancy Dress' award which we were particularly proud of especially as our team group shot ended up in 'Hello' magazine on the 18th March.

The last day had us back up the mountain taking part in a full-on slalom which scared the hell out of me. Bruno Kernen was the first to go and unsurprisingly was the fastest. He has retired from skiing and is now involved in taking disadvantaged local children skiing and was very interested in what we are about. He gave me his card and I hope that we can do something in the future together. To put it in context he is pretty much the David Beckham of Switzerland and was recognised everywhere we went.

Our team came third to last as the rather glamorous ladies from our team all stopped halfway down the course to pose for photos, which made us a tad slow...!

The final evening involved a Gala dinner with around 200 diners in attendance. Drinks to start and then after the main course 'Right to Play' and then myself gave a short speech to tell everyone a little more about where their money was going end up.

This was, by far, the most nerve-wracking thing I have ever had to do and I was a bit alarmed to learn that the lady from 'Right to Play' had written and rehearsed her speech. I spoke for around 10 minutes without having written anything down but knowing that it would all flood out. I told a couple of jokes which seemed to lighten the mood and then gave a brief description of what we are all about. It got quite emotional and I think that most of the people in the room were very moved by what I had to say, particularly in relation to some of the stories of bravery that I was able to tell them, about all the 'Katie's' kids from over the years. It must have gone down well as, unbelievably, the auction raised a record amount and we directly received 35,000 Swiss Francs, roughly £17,500, which equates to very nearly half the cost of one of our holidays.

'Wild Girls on Snow' is an enormous boost for us and better still, is the fact that we are nominated for next year's event. Next year will be the 'Wild Girls' tenth anniversary and it promises to be an even bigger and better event than this year. If you would like to know more about the 'Wild Girls on Snow' charity feel free to look them up on the net at www.wildgirlsonsnow.com

I think I will going back next year but hopefully this time Martin and Michelle will be able to come along too, as I think it is important that the 'Wild Girls' meet the real people behind 'Katie's'.

It certainly was a great event and something we should be very proud to have been a part of as it has really raised our profile - which hopefully will lead to bigger and better things for 'Katie's'.

Joel - Katie's Ski Tracks

