



Single girls' guide to skiing

Rachael Oakes-Ash

SO YOU'RE looking for a hot, straight, athletic male who likes to party, and earns a good living? Stand in any lift queue in any ski field worldwide and count the ratio of men to women.

The official statistics put that ratio at 60/40 in the men's favour, which is really in the women's favour should they be looking for a male with a median age of 27. That's just the skiers. Seventy five per cent of snowboarders are male. Translated? Three men to every female boarder.

Schuss — don't tell anybody.

Down South

Australian girls take their pick in the NSW and Victorian ski fields in 2006. We're not talking any shabby stock either, the highest median weekly incomes on last Census night were recorded in Thredbo Village and Perisher during peak season.

For private-school types and corporate-style males still dossing down in Daddy's ski lodge, head to Thredbo. If lawyers take your fancy then do so on August 5-7 for the annual Lawyers Ski Weekend. You'll no doubt find them at the Thredbo Alpine Hotel piano bar.

The baggy pants brigade are found in Perisher Blue for that ski goggle tan and shaggy hair do. The Sydney Footy Show takes over for burly beefcake on July 21.

Fact file

FOR a list of winter events and activities to suit the man of your dreams, visit the ski field websites and start booking.

Down South:

Qantas and Rex Airlines fly to the Snowfields of Australia.

www.qantas.com.au or 131 313

www.rex.com.au or 131 713

NSW

Thredbo: www.thredbo.com.au

Perisher Blue: www.perisherblue.com.au

Victoria

Falls Creek: www.fallscreek.com.au

Mt Hotham: www.hotham.com.au

Across the Tasman

Value Tours offer package deals including flights from Brisbane, ski passes, ski rentals and accommodation. www.valuetours.com.au or 1300 361 322

Mt Ruapehu: www.mtruapehu.co.nz

Treble Cone: www.treblecone.co.nz

Cardrona: www.cardrona.co.nz

Queenstown: www.queenstown-nz.co.nz

Up North

United Airlines fly to Vancouver and Denver from Sydney and Melbourne via Los Angeles or San Francisco.

www.unitedairlines.com.au or 131 777

Whistler Blackcomb:

www.whistlerblackcomb.com

Aspen Snowmass:

www.aspensnowmass.com

Mt Hotham has the General Store, the only pub in Australia where there's a queue for the men's toilets and none for the girls. For men in uniform go mid-August for the annual RAAF Winter Games.

Falls Creek boasts 28 drinking establishments. Go the cliché and hang with your ski instructor at The Frying Pan. For male urbanites in designer black head to Huski Lodge and The Produce Store for pre-dinner vino then to Milch to pretend you're in Melbourne with graphic designers, architects and media types. Hard-core snow men hit The Man for live music and cheap eats.

Across the Tasman

Kiwi blokes are divided into North Island and South.

Northerners are divided again into those from Auckland and those from everywhere else. Real Auckland skier types stay north and ski the active volcano that is Mt Ruapehu. There's only one town with any night life, the intimate Ohakune and only one true party pub to hang, the Powder Keg.

Arrogant Aucklander types head to the glitz of Queenstown in shiny Spider ski suits. They love the ego skiing of Cardrona, where everyone looks like an Olympian. You'll find them at Eichardt's House Bar at sunset with the schlock real estate men who've made their millions in the Queenstown boom. True Southern Men bang beers down at

the Speight's Ale House. Everyone else heads to Bardeaux where the barmen are as hot as the clientele.

For more laid-back nightlife and wicked downhill take your lip gloss to Wanaka and the skier's mountain of Treble Cone. Thursday night is indoor curling night at the Bullock Bar which turns feral at midnight—the more sophisticated men are found at Barluga.

Up North

Start saving your pennies and head north from November to April for some powder snow and fresh-faced North American mountain men. For gold diggers the average annual income of skiers in North American ski fields is \$US50,000 plus.

If you can't find a man in Colorado's Aspen Snowmass you're just not looking hard enough. It's apres drinks at Little Nell for male celebrity types, the J Bar for arty men with cash, the Sky Bar for mountain staff in Ralph Lauren uniforms but the best way to meet the men is in the Gondola.

Whistler Blackcomb is Canada's Aspen. The men folk are more laid-back, you may have to prod them awake, but there are plenty of them. For visiting Seattle Frasier types head to In the Mix for barside cocktails. The cigar room at the Bear Foot Bistro gets a good workout after 10pm and Buffalo Bills is where you'll find true Whistler males.