

GENERAL RULES TO ASSIST IN CHOOSING THE CORRECT WAX FOR XC SKIING

Learn to use **one brand** of wax first eg. Rode, Swix. Note there are differences between the different coloured waxes used by each brand It is suggested that you choose a brand which uses the following colour codes for sticks and klister waxes:

Blue - below 0°C

Purple - around 0°C

Red - above 0°C

Yellow - very wet snow above 0

Similar colours amongst these wax brands work in similar snow conditions.

- Keep a diary of waxes used and record the weather, air temperature and your ideas about snow conditions ie. fresh fallen snow, wet, dry old corn snow etc.

® Remember to read manufacturer's instructions and check if temperatures refer to snow or air temperatures.

Common Australian Snow Conditions:

DRY, FRESH FALLEN SNOW - below 0°C

Snow depth over older snow, (min. 5cm) - snow does not settle on your clothing.

This is Blue Stick / Purple Stick snow.

This only occurs at high altitude and early in ski season - or very cold (-5°C) weather.

FRESH SNOW FALLING AT APPROX. 0°C

This is the most difficult waxing conditions.

Snow settles on clothing - sometimes melts and leaves your clothing damp.

This is Purple/Red Stick condition, if the snow remains cold and is more than 7.5cm deep over older snow.

Important note: this condition rarely remains stable for long periods of time

- i) Air temperature starts to rise mid morning
- ii) Skiers compress the moisture in the snow in the tracks
- iii) And/or moisture seeps up from wetter snow underneath and the tracks begin to 'glaze' and form ice patches.
- iv) Stick waxes begin to slip.

In this condition it is suggested that you try cushion waxing - a thin layer of purple klister with harder stick waxes eg. blue extra or Rode multigrade, applied over the top. Care must be taken to chill the klister layer before applying the stick wax. By leaving the skis in a shaded area close to the snows surface. Also some newer fluoro stick waxes work well in these conditions. Some skiers are having success with **START Black Magic** stick and Klister waxes

WET SNOW FALLING MIXED WITH RAIN - big floppy/sloppy flakes.

As this snow falls through the atmosphere it is continually changing. Therefore, it cannot be considered to be 'new fresh snow'. Treat this snow as changed snow that has not refrozen. It is usually very slow snow.

Try thin layers of klister for wet, fresh, new snow or thoroughly wet snow eg. Rode Red Special

OLD, COURSE, GRANULAR SNOW - Below 0°C

This is snow that has thawed and refrozen many times.

- It forms coarse lumps like sugar
- It is not wet to touch and sometimes is mixed with frost crystals (which are sometimes mistaken as new snow).
- Ignore these fine crystals as within 1-2 hours they will thaw out and soften with the old, course snow to form wet, granular snow above 0°C.

For old, course snow below 0°C early in the morning, apply a thin base klister eg. Swix Green, or Rode Chola if you plan to ski 10km or further.

Then apply a layer of Purple or perhaps Universal Klister.

Be prepared to apply Red Klister over this base as the snow thaws and air temperature rises.

OLD, COARSE, WET, GRANULAR SNOW - above 0°C (air temperature)

Most common snow condition occurring in spring or warm weather in Australia.

Apply Red Klister.

Note: Rode Red (Rossa) works well above and below 0°C. It does not 'grab' in the shaded icy areas under trees etc. Also Swix KR 60 and KR 50 klister

Note: This information is only a guide.

Keeping records is very important. To gain waxing experience

- i) Wax in a group, and swap skis with training partners
- ii) Check the bases of other XC skiers' skis after they have raced or trained

Look for

- a) How long have they waxed?
- b) How thick and what type of wax was used?
- c) Were their skis stiff or soft cambered?
- d) Do they or yourself have good ski technique? ie. do not lean too far forward - (have the ability to compress the skis as feet pass)
- e) Compare this information with what wax you had decided to use.

FLUORO KLISTER & STICK WAX

In recent years these new more expensive waxes have become available - choose a brand with the same colour coding as above.

Fluoro grip waxes **do improve glide**, fluoro added to grip waxes permits a correctly waxed ski to run free, resist dirt and water absorption for longer periods and yet maintains good grip.

For the economy conscious XC skier use fluoro grip waxes as a final layer over traditional grip waxes.

Fluoro grip waxes tend to cover a wider temperature range than some traditional waxes. It is possible to simply own 1 or 2 klister and 2 or 3 stick waxes to cover 95% of Australian snow conditions.

Save your fluoro grip waxes for that special classic race but do experiment with their use before race day.

Remember good grip or your ability to modify your technique to suit the snow conditions is more important in classic skiing rather than having the fastest gliding skis. The greatest time loss is always on the uphill compared to the tenths of seconds gained on the downhill.

WAXING CAN BE CLEAN

WAXING CAN BE FUN

WAXING CAN BE A VERY SOCIAL ACTIVITY through which you can always start a conversation with fellow XC skiers.

Good Luck!

Bob Cranage, Level 3 XC Coach

For further advice on waxing and storing your skis do not hesitate to contact the staff at SNOWGUM Wodonga

161 High St

Wodonga 3690

Tel: 1300 858 6607 & (02) 60 56 6605 Fax: (02) 60 56 2395

Email: wodonga@snowgum.com.au

www.crosscountryskier.com.au