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Boblet World Championships 1939 in Switzerland

St. Moritz, February 8 and 9

Championnat mondial de boblets 1939 en Suisse St-Moritz, 8 et 9 février

Die Bobletweltmeisterschaft 1939 in der Schweiz St. Moritz, 8./9. Februar

«Run clear»; «Attention»; «Contact!». The last word is shouted into the microphone by the Bobsleigh Club's secretary with a note of excitement indicating to the crowd of onlookers along the run that a boblet has started. Meanwhile the graceful steel vehicle has glided past the electric timing apparatus at the start and while the «Steerer» on the wheel is keeping it straight then «Brake» runs alongside to increase the speed by pushing. As it becomes great enough the second man with amazing steadiness jumps on his seat and the «course» has begun. The first bends with low banks do not offer special difficulties though with every second the boblet travels faster and faster. A sudden drop of the track leads to «Sunny Corner», familiar by hear-say at least to sportsmen throughout the world, a monstrous construction of snow and ice. Its height, almost 30 ft., is needed to protect bobsleigh riders from racing over the top. As it is they are safe and thanks to excellent steering the boblet passes without bumps. The following straight allows the development of hair-raising speed but champion bobbers never use the brake except in case of emergency. «Horse Shoe», another giant corner is therefore taken at full speed and for several moments riders are in a practically horizontal position to the ground. Then come a further series of tricky bends, and after tearing over «Leap» the team races down the final straight reaching its maximum speed of about 60 miles p. h. «Contact!» it sounds again through the loudspeakers and an instant later the boblet dashes up the counter rise to come to a standstill at the top.

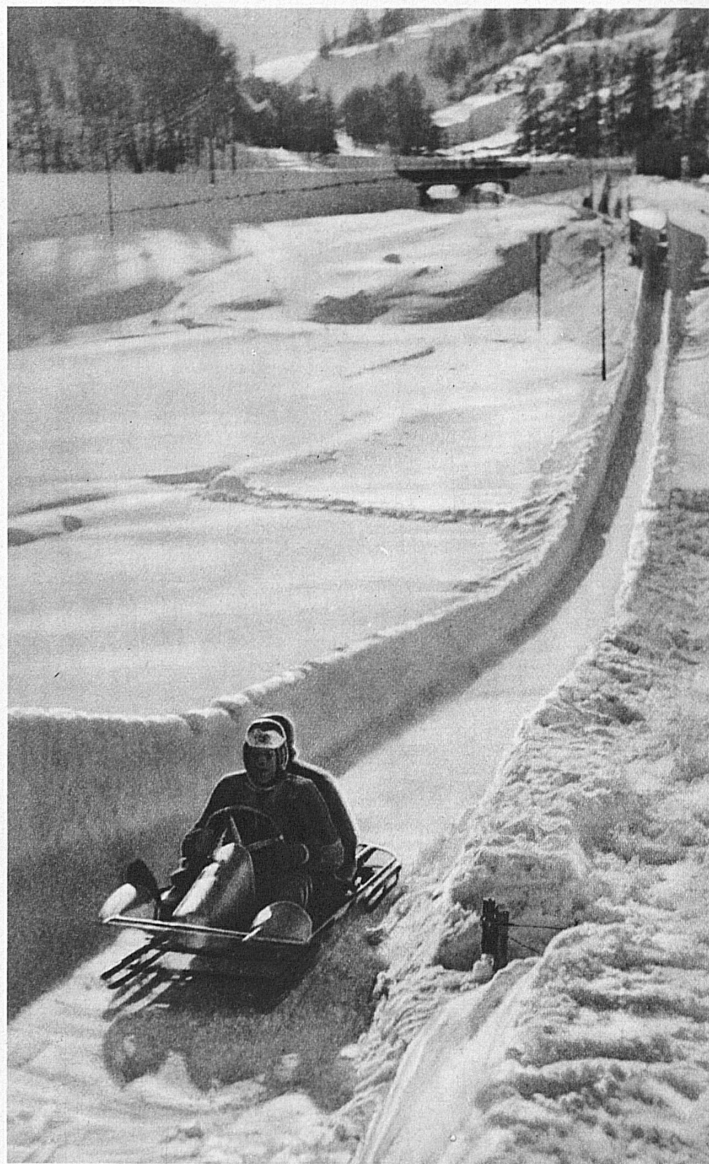
Above description of a course might apply to any of the 20 international teams who last winter competed for the boblet (2 men bob) World Championships on the classic run of the St. Moritz Tobogganing Club. And this winter again, on February 8th and 9th 1939, the worlds best bobsleigh riders will meet in St. Moritz to take part in the great struggle for the proud title. Split seconds decided the issue last season when the German team Fischer-Thielecke beat the title holders Freddy McEvoy-Paddy Green (Great Britain), with the rest of the field ever so close to their heels. Needless to say that the British are determined to regain the championships. But over and above that special importance attaches to the championships 1939. In 1940 St. Moritz will be the scene of the Olympic Winter Games and the competition in February 1939 will be the last opportunity to become acquainted with the world's most lovely and exciting run.

But what does bobbing mean to the average holidaymaker? Well, he may look at it from two points of view. Nobody who has once witnessed it will ever forget the thrill which a big bobsleigh race offers to onlookers. Stands and cloubhouses on all interesting points of the track make it a pleasure to watch the world's most daring riders flash past. While more active folk will find out that bobbing is neither an exclusive sport for millionaires nor suicide candidates. All clubs in Switzerland are only too glad to encourage and assist the newcomer. For 5 Swiss Francs, or even less, he will be adjusted with crash helmet, knee and elbow pads and a bob or boblet, and if he prefers there will be always an old club member to do the steering leaving his new partner to enjoy the ride without responsibility.

The World Championships 1939 are being held in St. Moritz, but of course first class bobruns are to be found also in many other lovely Swiss wintersport resorts — to mention only Caux, which may claim to have the longest track, and Engelberg, home of the famous Swiss bobsleigh builder and rider Feierabend.

Whether the visitor is a bobsleigh enthusiast, skier, skater, curler or whatever wintersport he may like, Switzerland has unique opportuni-

ties for everyone in store. I cannot think of a greater and more sincere tribute to the country's outstanding qualities in this respect than the International Olympic Committee's decision to hold the next Olympic Winter Games in St. Moritz, queen among Switzerland's innumerable beautiful holiday centres. Swiss aptitude for big scale organisation



Phot.: Blau

and Swiss hospitality offer sufficient guarantee that the games will be an outstanding success. Already for the season 1938/1939 however St. Moritz can boast with a sports and entertainment programme of unrivalled quality. International horseraces on the frozen lake, international skating competitions on several of the big ice rinks, ski races for the White Ribbon of St. Moritz and the Titulescu Cup (where every competitor gets a prize) down the treeless Corviglia slopes, these are only some of the attractions. But why should I go on describing when a single day out there will delight you more than words ever can.

H. A. Kuranda.