

Spotlight on Arbroath Ski Club

By **FIONA PRINGLE**

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Bitterly cold gusts of winds set a perfect winter scene for my visit to Arbroath Ski Club.

An unusual welcome for a sports club, I first had to negotiate an armed guard before chairman Brian Cairns ushered me out of the elements and into the bustling boot room tucked underneath the ski slope at RM Condor, Arbroath.

Adults, children, instructors and watchers-on alike were busy preparing for the evening ahead, squeezing into boots, measuring up skis and securing gloves. And no time is wasted as fully decked out in all the gear, skiers rush to the slope to get as much 'snow' time as possible.

The professional operation focuses mainly on lessons and could be described more as a ski school than a club.

All ages and abilities, including adult beginners, enjoy the benefits of access to the Royal Marine facility on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

The club runs blocks of lessons which include ski and boot hire as well as social dates throughout the calendar.

As I braved the north sea wind to get a closer look at the slope and what goes on, parents couldn't help commending the service: "It's great. Skiing is a lifelong skill and we are delighted to be able to bring the kids here to learn."

The club also encourages trips to Scottish slopes such as Glenshee to transfer skills learnt on the artificial SnowFlex™ surface with real snow.

"It can be tricky to organise," Brian admitted. "But we are trying to look at doing more of it."

Five-year-old Jamie Lyons joined the club as soon as he was old enough and has also skied at Glenshee and in the

French resort of Val D'Isere. He said: "It's good fun. My favourite bit here is going up on the tow!"

Angus Council has recently invested in the club, with a chunk of funding which will help them meet the growing demand for lessons. Brian said: "The funding will help finance the BASI Level 1 instructors course. We are grateful to the council for the award of £2,500 which will be matched by club funds to put 10 ski club members through the course."

The club offers other perks such as Snowlife Awards, nationally recognised awards scheme covering nine levels taking participants from beginner to expert which starts in the next block of lessons.

To find out more or book lessons, visit info@arbroath-ski-club.co.uk or check out the website www.arbroath-ski-club.co.uk



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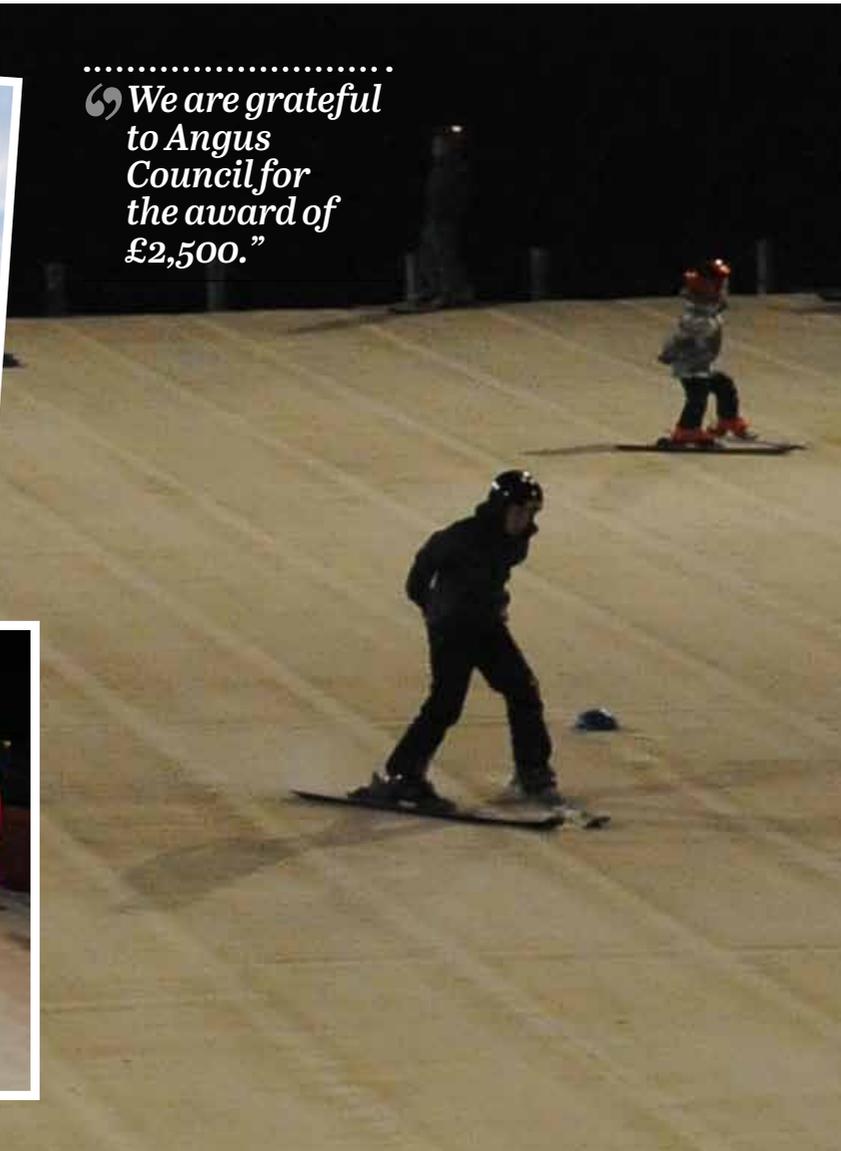
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