

IMCZ NEWS



 APRIL / MAY 2019
 

EDITORIAL **Spring is Sprung**

Now that the weather is gradually getting warmer, I'm sure many of you are thinking about warm weather pursuits and putting away your winter sports equipment for another year.

Soon the blossom will be out on all 1,000 cherry trees in Zug and it will be time for each of us to finalise plans for the summer. For me it's soon the start of the sailing season!

This is the second edition of the IMCZ Newsletter which I have edited. I think it's now time to get some feedback from you, the membership. I want to hear from you – for example:

- Do you read the Newsletter?
- Do you enjoy the Newsletter or is it only of passing interest?
- What would you like to see more of? / less of?
- What do you think of the format?

Speak to me at one of the Stammtische evenings or send me an e-mail.

From my perspective I would like to get more content from you. We have a very diverse membership with a lot of expertise in different areas and it would be great to get some articles about your business area or your hobbies. We've had some very interesting articles of this type, but I'm sure there's a lot more out there which we would all enjoy reading about. Just get in touch.

So enjoy this latest version of the Newsletter, and let me know what you think.

Alan Cattell (newsletter@imcz.com)

Introducing... New members THE IMCZ WELCOMES:

Martin Wrathall

Martin is of mixed British and German descent. He was born in Shrewsbury but moved to Düsseldorf in his early teens. He trained as "Hotelkaufmann" and then "Chef du Cuisine" and had many jobs in kitchens in Germany, Austria, Chicago and Singapore. In 1990 he started his own business "all-event Party & Rental services" in Germany, which attracted many large clients. In 2017 he sold this business and shortly thereafter started a new all-event company in Zug, freelancer event management, catering events and expos. His interests include cooking, golf, running, cycling, swimming and socialising. He is married with two sons. His wife, Connie, is a member of the ZIWC.



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FUTURE EVENTS



Round Table Talk - All about Golf

THURSDAY, 11TH APRIL 2019 AT 7PM - 8PM

Location: City Garden Hotel,
Metallstrasse 20, 6300 Zug
Speaker, Dave Speicher - Regional Director (Retired)
- Member of the IMCZ

New Members' Reception

THURSDAY, 9TH MAY 2019
AT 6PM - 8:30PM

Location: City Garden Hotel,
Metallstrasse 20, 6300 Zug

Planned Future Event – Reserve Now! A City Excursion for VIPs THE REALLY EXCLUSIVE MILANO

DATE 28TH & 29TH SEPT. 2019

Special price exclusive for IMCZ and family and friends €1.250/pp

This special offer for IMCZ & ZIWC members, their family and friends includes:

- Round-trip by train (Zug-Milano) and public transport in Milano
- Overnight stay at the Hotel dei Cavalieri or an equivalent (4 star) hotel
- VIP access to the Leonardo VIP tour as per offer **
- Behind the scenes and museum tour at La Scala
- Dinner (meat or vegi) Saturday and lunch (meat or vegi) Sunday
- Free time on Sunday morning for shopping
- English speaking guide

** The normal price for the Leonardo VIP tour alone is 1.100€/pp

The package price of € 1.250/pp does not include cancellation insurance, which is recommended by the organizers. Please indicate when registering whether you wish to take the insurance. The number of participants is fixed at 30. The excursion will be reserved as soon as 30 people have registered. (Register in [Events](#) section of website.) The registration deadline is 30th April 2019. The IMCZ no-show policy applies.

This is just a brief overview of the event being planned by Enrico, our Events Organiser. For fuller information please go to the Events section of the club site where you will also find a link to a flyer with full information about the Leonardo VIP tour (or click [here](#)) plus the link to register for the event.

Payments are not supported online, but should be made as follows:

1. 5 May 2019: 50% € 625.-
2. 31 August 2019: 50% € 625.-

Account: Italian Allegrria C.Rocco
Post account CH630900000917436749
Please call or e-mail Events Coordinator
[Enrico Dell'Angelo](#) +41 79 311 78 08
with any questions.



PAST EVENTS

Burns Supper 26th January 2019

The 24th IMCZ Burns Supper was held this year in the Wirtschaft Brandenburg and was a great success as always.

The event was introduced by Bill Lichtensteiger who gave a quick summary of what was to come, and we then took our seats for the evening.



The Master of Ceremonies for the evening was Steven Knight, and he did a superb job. He managed the evening with humour and gentle persuasion and kept us all on track – a particularly challenging task as most of us were enjoying an extensive whisky tasting! We even had to taste the same Whisky several times to be sure we got the full flavour.

Catherine Luke provided the Selkirk Grace and I had the privilege of addressing the haggis. Andrew Glass gave us the Immortal Memory – which he had clearly researched extensively. Then we

had the Toast to the Lassies from Paul Jones – thanks to him for battling through despite not feeling well. Kerry Noonan then replied on behalf of the lassies.

There was a post prandial raffle for those of us who could still concentrate, followed by a gradual departure of the guests.

Our thanks to all the contributors and to all the “back stage” supporters without which the evening would not have been so successful. A special thanks to our piper, Hans Peter Burkhard, for his excellent work and for stepping in at short notice. A special mention is also due to Christian Hempel, the manager of the Brandenburg, and to all his staff who provided excellent service throughout.

Alan Cattell



FUTURE EVENTS

Stammtisch at City Garden or Parkhotel

WHERE MEMBERS MEET OTHER MEMBERS
TIME, EVERY THURSDAY AT 6:00PM – 8:30PM

Date and Location, check in the website www.imcz.com/calendar.
The Stammtisch is a great opportunity to get to know members better. Discover their interesting experiences, ideas and opinions!

IMCZ BOARD MEMBERS

Thumbnail biographies of board members can be found on our website www.imcz.club under 'About Us' section

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Ski Day Saturday & Sunday February 2nd & 3rd, 2019

By the time we managed to find the swiss five star's Store & More location in Engelberg, the weather looked quite promising; thankfully, we were right, it stayed dry on the first day of our annual ski trip. Five skiers turned up complete with helmets, goggles, sticks and boots. No skis, which were kindly provided by Thomas from the swiss five star shop. Whilst enjoying the tasty morning coffee there, we filled-in the forms with our weights and boot sizes, as well as our skiing level, and were promptly provided with the appropriate swiss five star skis.

Fully equipped we made our way to the lift station. The gondola took us in one go to Stand at 2500 metres altitude. We made our first skiing run to Laubersgrat and it quickly transpired that we belong to two groups, Joseph and Bill the fast, professional skiers and Roger and Muthana the slower and more careful ones. No wonder, the difference in average age between the two groups is well over twenty years.

After teas at the Skihütte in Stand, we made our way to Joch Pass, skiing all the way down to Trübsee, taking the Hopper to the far side and the chair lift to Joch Pass. We skied there till it was lunch time. The food at the restaurant there was excellent, finding a free table was a problem, however. After lunch we were joined by Ilham and we skied down taking the valley run all the way down to Engelberg.



Finally, we all made our way to the swiss five star location, gave back our skis and enjoyed a nice apero, before calling it a day. Joseph and Bill returned for the second day, after the others made their way back. The weather was not so kind on Sunday, but who can predict the weather accurately so far in advance? In any event, Bill and Joseph enjoyed some challenging in-bounds powder skiing in low visibility conditions aided by some special wide skis suggested by Thomas.

Thanks are due to Joseph for his untiring work in organising the whole event and to Thomas of the swiss five star for providing the skis and the apéro.

Muthana Kubba



AGM Thursday February 7, 2019



The AGM took place this year at the City Garden Hotel. About 20 members were present. The tasty pies supplied by IMCZ member Ian Stansfield were the highlight of the Apéro which preceded the meeting. Our thanks for that.

The meeting proper started with our President delivering his annual speech. During the speech, he invited the other board members to give their input as well. Then Ilham presented last year's accounts, showing a small profit, and the auditor read the audit report. The budget for next year was presented and approved. Bill was voted in again as the president for the next year. He introduced his team of board members with two newcomers Alan and Wolfgang and the board was confirmed.

There was one departure from the board: Muthana. For his long and dedicated service in several roles, especially as newsletter editor, he had the grateful thanks of the membership showered on him.

Last, but not least, Joseph Dow was recognised for his sterling service in providing articles to the newsletter on the theme Sports. His interesting articles are much appreciated.

Bill Lichtensteiger





If you can dream it, you can make it!

On the 14th of March, Nadja Lang ran a workshop for us in the City Gardens Hotel.

Nadja is a lawyer by training and an international certified project manager. Now she does coaching, training, arbitration and project management for business people, to bring back "flow" into teams, projects and people and to make the business run in a smooth way again.



She took us through a highly interactive workshop where she challenged us first to write down our dream – what would we really like to be or do. Her basic thesis here is that, if you can clearly articulate your dream, you can then find ways to realise your dream step-wise, by breaking down the barriers which prevent you moving forward. Nadja asked us to write down our thoughts to make them concrete. The session included activities such as:

- What are the key elements of your dream which are important to you? Be specific...
- How would feel when you achieve your dream?
- What new behaviour is needed to achieve your dream?
- What are the first steps to move in the direction you want to move?
- Think about what YOU need to change – not what other people need to do.

Overall it was a very interesting session which clearly showed the potential to find ways to articulate dreams in a pragmatic way and then define realistic steps to achieve these goals.

Thanks to Nadja for a most interesting evening.

For more information you can visit her website at <https://www.nadjalang.com/> and find her podcast at www.nadjalang.com/podcast



Expat Expo, 24th March 2019, Cham



Expat Expo was once again a very lively event with plenty of opportunity to sample the food and drink from various Swiss companies offering their products and services aimed at Expats and the local English-speaking community. I personally enjoyed the selections of beer, whisky, cheese, quiche and honey on offer. The IMCZ stand was staffed throughout the day on a shift-basis by Bill, Roger, Muthana, Ilham, Wolfgang and Jeremy. Our dart board proved to be very popular and several new potential Club Members were attracted to the stand, probably due to the beer prizes we offered for scoring a bullseye. Steven Knight, our Master of Ceremonies at our Burns Supper, turned out in his full regalia, assuming the role of piper on this occasion. He provided a tuneful blast from his pipes as he entered the exhibition hall. Ian, our pie maker, also brought along a couple of hundred of his best pies to the event; we shall have to ask him how he fared. All in all, it was a very friendly and enjoyable event with plenty of networking opportunities as well as the eating opportunities.

Thanks to all the IMCZ members who supported the event.

Bill

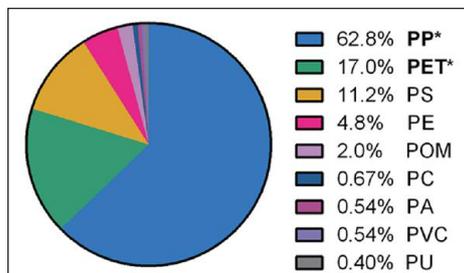


Microplastic in the environment – and in our body

Contributed by Remo P. Jutzeler van Wijlen, Head R&D Sponser Sports Food Ing. Appl Food Sciences, MAS Nutrition & Health ETHZ

There is much concern about microplastic (MP) and its potential dangers in our environment. In the media, however, the discussion is mainly about the easily recognisable, devastating and immediately visible effects of plastic waste – particularly in our oceans! In contrast, the implications of the invisible, micro-sized plastic particles to our health – and on the environment – are largely unknown and apparently not yet commonly recognised. Science is just about to start research in this field. However, one study on MP indicating that plastic finds its way into our body (Schwabl 2018) made the media and, as to be expected, the message to the public was theatrically dramatized and potentially frightening.

However, that same study has to be seen as what it actually is; an initial exploratory pilot study. It was not meant to prove something, or to elucidate specific pollution mechanisms; rather, it is meant to explore, to find and raise questions, enabling further studies to be initiated. I mean, it was a study with eight (!) subjects. Just because MP is in our environment and passes through our intestines inertly does not yet prove it's dangerous. The



question rather is, if it really is inert. And this may very well be a size question. In the mentioned study, in fact, the particle size found was rather big, around 50 µg. In contrast, a later study in mice (Jin 2019) showed that MP particles with a 10-times smaller size of 5 µg did indeed accumulate in the gut, induced intestinal barrier dysfunction and disturbed normal gut microbiota function. As the detection limit of the aforementioned Austrian study was around 50 µg, it is possible that a) there also were smaller particles in the faeces of the human subjects, or b) and may

be worse, there were none because they also accumulate in the gut as found in mice. In several animal models Jin's laboratory observed that MP exposure modulated the microbiota significantly – and did so with an (albeit high) concentration of either 0.5 µg or 50 µg sized polystyrene microplastics. Furthermore, the sub-micron sized particles seemed also to increase intestinal inflammation. Since increased levels of intestinal inflammation markers (interleukins, interferon) were only observed in the guts of those animals that were exposed to the small(er) 0.5 µm molecules, the hypothesis "the smaller, the worse" is still plausible. Unfortunately, we do not really know much about the likely varying distribution of both, small (50µm) and very small (0.5-5 µm) MP particles in our environment.

The lack of information about the distribution of particle sizes in the environment is not the only problem with presently available study results (reviewed by Eerkes-Medrano 2015). They do not catch either the small or the very small MP particles. Hence, we are facing the important question; whether the freshwater MP levels that have been measured by international scientists in Mongolia, Geneva, Lake Garda, Austria, the UK, and several German and US / Canadian rivers and lakes might profoundly underestimate the actual MP concentration in our freshwater supply. The measurements may have missed the smaller particles, which other studies suggest may make up to 80% or more of the microplastics in our environment. This raises even more concerns as it is known that having a leaky gut makes it easier for MP particles to get into the bloodstream. A leaky gut can be caused by certain intestinal diseases or can be a temporary condition triggered by overexertion, prevalent with endurance athletes.

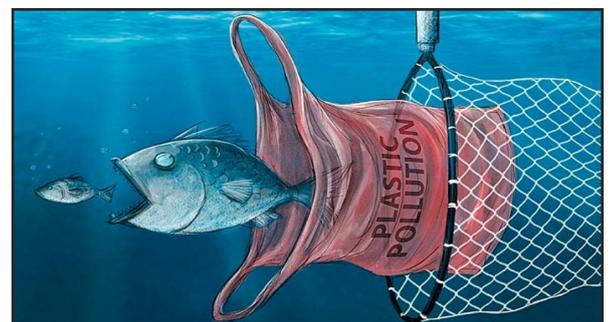
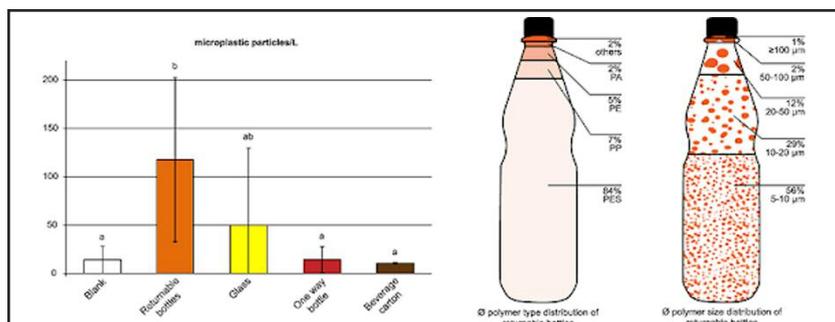
It is difficult to estimate how relevant our environmental exposure to MPs actually is. What can be said with some confidence, though, is that the exposure from freshwater reservoirs is 10⁴-10⁶ times (!) lower than that of animal studies. It may thus make more sense to look at the more recent and reliable quantifications of the MP content in bottled



water. Schymansky et al. (2018) found MPs in water from every one of the 22 different returnable and single-use plastic bottles, the 3 beverage cartons, and the 9 glass bottles they had obtained from grocery stores in Germany. And what's even worse, with sizes of 5-20 µm, almost 80% of these particles were several magnitudes smaller than those that were observed in freshwater reservoirs and one magnitude smaller than the particles in the stool of the subjects' in Schwabl's pilot study! As bad as all that may sound, the actual MP particle numbers in the Schymansky study were relatively small (see graph) - and only the worst, i.e. the reusable plastic bottles contained significantly more MP particles than the control water or the faeces in Schwabl's analysis. Notably, glass water bottles contained more (but not significantly so) MP than one-way plastic bottles.

In summary, the concentration of MP particles in bottled water (as well as in our faeces) is 4-6 magnitudes smaller than the concentration that has been shown to elicit ill health effects in animals.

Still, at this time, it is impossible to know whether the presently assumed MP concentrations in water, if even a worst-case exposure scenario, pose a risk to humans. And if there is a risk, is it acute, chronic or minimal? What we can say, of course, is that it would be much better to err on the side of caution and limit our MP exposure. Avoiding reusable plastic bottles and packaging, however, would increase the use of single-use plastic packaging and pollution in our environment, eventually leading to even higher MP occurrence in water, animals, and finally our food. Banning MP in cosmetics and food additives on the industrial level is probably the first and most important step to reduce exposure. Second, and most important on the individual level, dispose of plastic waste appropriately! As an everyday behavioural tip,: whenever handling reusable plastic packaging try to keep the surface as intact as possible, which will minimise MP leakage.



The Physics of Skiing

Compiled by IMCZ honorary member Muthana Kubba

Every year the IMCZ organises ski weekends for their members and friends. Lucky as we are in Central Switzerland, there are lots of charming ski locations quite close. We've had excursions to St. Moritz, Stoos, Crans-Montana, Andermatt and lately Engelberg. Many club members are experienced skiers and nearly all outings were a great success, although attendance could have been better.

Of course, most skiers ski without even thinking about how it works; it is all intuitive like walking. However, walking we learn as babies and all intricacies of the act of walking or running we do effortlessly without even thinking. For those of us who were not so lucky as to learn how to ski as small kids, and had to learn it as adults an understanding of the physics behind skiing is very helpful.

Basic Concepts

The first surprise for a first time skier is that skiing is not intuitive; in fact, it is almost counter-intuitive. Just like driving a car or riding a bike the first thing you learn is how to turn left or right. In skiing if you want to turn left then you shift your weight to the right ski and vice versa. The physics of the phenomenon is quite simple, when a ski is loaded, a thin layer of water builds up beneath it, because ice or snow melt under pressure. This thin layer makes the loaded ski slip faster than the unloaded ski, hence the turn. The next concept to master is braking. The classical way to put the brakes on is by the so called 'snowplow' by crossing the skis in an inverted 'V' form with the tip of the V at the front. This position will push the snow sideways to provide the braking force. The alternative braking method is to turn 90 degrees to the direction of motion and use the edge of both skis to push the snow downhill and thus provide a braking force.

Downhill Skiing

Also called Alpine skiing, is of course what skiing is all about for most people. If we take our analogy with driving a car one-step further, then gravity would correspond to the gas pedal of the car. The energy needed for skiing downhill is provided by the lifts or gondolas, which take the skiers to a high point on the mountain so that the force of gravity can provide the required energy to slide downhill.

Whizzing down wide pistes, taking in the magnificent views, minding other skiers whilst picking up speed, negotiating curves, avoiding obstacles and arriving safely at the valley station is what makes skiing attractive to millions of young and young at heart men and women.

It is clear that one cannot just keep on picking up speed going downhill, one must turn, both to temper one's speed and to negotiate a way through other skiers and around obstacles. Turning without skidding sideways is called carving.

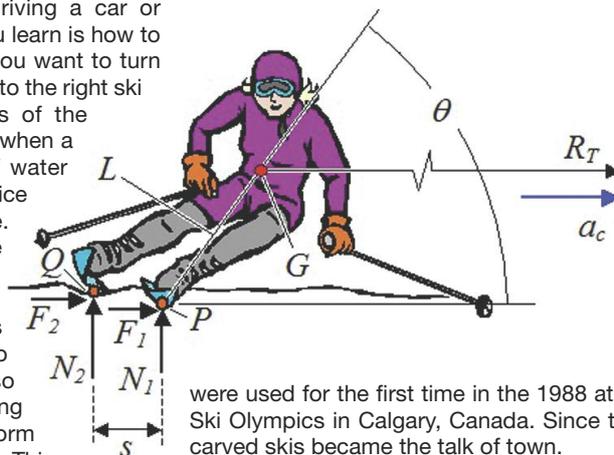
Skis can be built so that they can assist in making perfect turns. Such skis are called carving skis. They are made narrower in the middle, so that when pressure and tilt are applied for turning they deform into an arc, which makes turning automatic and easy with



Carved Skis

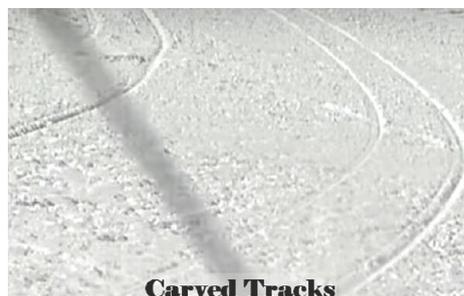
Carving

Up until about the mid-eighties of the last century, carving was unheard of. Parallel skiing was the talk of town. Top skiers kept their feet and legs together and it was considered elegant to ski all the time without parting one's legs. Doing the curves was of course possible but always with some skidding. Carved skis



were used for the first time in the 1988 at the Ski Olympics in Calgary, Canada. Since then carved skis became the talk of town.

Carving refers to a technique for making perfect turns without skidding. Remember, skiing is about turning, and the better turns one makes the better skier, one is. The tracks of a good curve would be pencil sharp, whereas the tracks of a turn with skidding would be non-existent. Thus the tracks of a good skier would be S formed, a C on the left turn and an inverted C on the right turn whereas the tracks of a poor skier would be Z formed, i.e. straight, sharp right turn, skid, another sharp left turn then straight.



Carved Tracks

no skidding. The advantage of making clean carved turns is that a skier can maintain a higher speed throughout the run, whereas the Z type skier makes a kind of start-stop skiing.

The best way to illustrate how a carved ski, bends into an arc and hence guides the skier into a perfect curve is explained in this [YouTube clip](#). Put simply, when the ski is tilted, its middle will be above the snow, so applying pressure at this point bends the ski into an arc and the turn follows automatically. However, it is important to remember that good skiers do not always carve. Under certain conditions, carving is not possible, e.g. extreme steep slopes bumpy terrain etc.

High End Ski-Sport

Like most major sports, skiing had traditionally taken centre stage on world-class championships. The FIS (Fédération Internationale de Ski) recognises the following ski-disciplines:

1. Alpine-Downhill and Super-G
2. Alpine-Slaloms/Super combined
3. Cross Country
4. Ski Jumping
5. Nordic combined
6. Snowboarding
7. Freestyle Skiing

Each of the above disciplines is subdivided into Men and Women events. Furthermore, under each event there are a number of different sub-events. For example, Alpine Skiing covers the following sub-events for both men and women::

- Alpine combined
- Downhill
- Giant slalom
- Slalom
- Super combined
- Super-G

In addition, there is a Parallel Mixed Team Event.

Obviously there is a huge number of possible varieties of skiing, and there may be many more yet to be invented. However, our focus is on the straight-downhill variety only.



Carving at work

As in any other sport art, there is quite a number of different competitions and cups involved. The FIS has an Alpine Ski World Cup annually. In addition, the winter Olympics takes place once every four years and downhill skiing is one of its highlights. The last Winter Olympics took place in 2018 at Pyeongchang, South Korea. The next Winter Olympics are scheduled for 2022 in Beijing, China. The venue for the skiing events will take place at Xiaohaituo Alpine Skiing Field not far from Beijing.

Hopp Schwiiz!

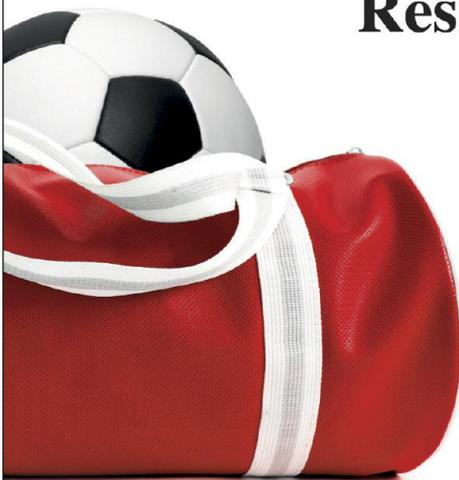
Winter Olympics 2022, Xiaohaituo, Beijing, China



Further Reading

- <https://www.real-world-physics-problems.com/physics-of-skiing.html>
- <https://www.bluffers.com/bluffers-guide-how-to-ski/>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carved_turn
- <https://skiinghistory.org/history/evolution-ski-shape>
- <https://www.olympic.org/international-ski-federation>

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Cruising the Caribbean Cartagena, Colombia

Contributed by IMCZ Webmaster Roger Brooks

Once again (see my series of IMCZ newsletter articles from 2015), we opted to grant ourselves a respite from the cold, and especially from the short days of January, to fly to our former home of South Florida and board a cruise, this time of the Western Caribbean and Central America. To see the Panama Canal has long been on my "bucket list" and, as luck would have it, some Swiss friends of ours shared the same ambition. We booked the cruise to coincide with our wedding anniversary, which, unfortunately, meant missing the 2019 IMCZ Burns Supper.

Fort Lauderdale, Florida

We only spent one night in Fort Lauderdale, in a Hilton near the cruise terminal at Port Everglades. The hotel is only a short walk from the Intracoastal Waterway, where one can see some of the ships in port. Port Everglades is the third busiest in the world, with nearly 4 million passengers in 2017. The first two, Miami and Port Canaveral are also in Florida. Miami tops the list with around 5 million passengers per year.

Port Everglades was built 90 years ago by connecting a freshwater lake, Lake Mabel, to the Atlantic Ocean by a canal which is now part of the Intracoastal Waterway. The Port has significantly expanded its cruise terminal capacity since we were there 4 years earlier, having extensively renovated two Northport terminals and constructed an entirely new one in the Southport. It remains the major port used for importing petroleum products to South Florida. Plans for investing nearly \$2 billion in

further expansion (for all uses) over the next 20 years already exist.

We didn't have time for sightseeing before embarkation, but we did enjoy a sightseeing cruise on the Intracoastal Waterway after disembarking.

The Island Princess

Port Everglades is the home port of Princess Cruises (a daughter of Carnival). The Island Princess is one of its older ships, built in 2003. Although it is small by modern standards (only 2500 passengers), it is still one of the largest (Panamax) ships which can navigate the old locks of the Panama Canal, but more on that later. The cruise began with a sea day, which gave us a chance to recover from travelling and to explore the ship. It wasn't too hard to find our way around, as we had sailed on a sister ship, the Sea Princess, in 2012.

Grand Cayman

Our itinerary called for us to call at Grand Cayman the following day. We arrived at 7:00 AM but high winds and heavy seas caused the port to be closed and forced the Captain to abandon the idea of tendering passengers ashore. We therefore had two more sea days before arriving at our first port of call, Cartagena, Colombia.

Cartagena

Cartagena, Colombia was once the capital of the Spanish Empire in the New World. It was

founded in the early 16th century and was known during the colonial era as Cartagena de Indias to distinguish it from its namesake on the southern coast of Spain.

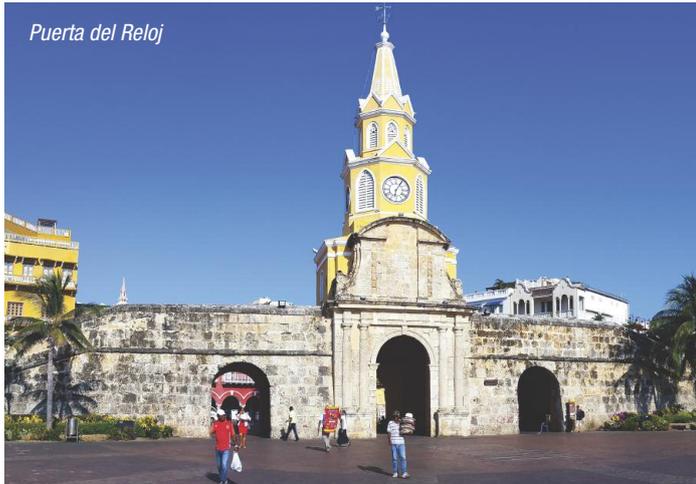
During nearly three centuries of Spanish rule, Cartagena served as a hub of military, political, commercial and ecclesiastical activity in the region. Due to its importance as a hub for transporting the riches of the New World (mostly Peruvian silver) back to Spain, it was repeatedly attacked by pirates, privateers and the British Navy. As a result, the city was extensively fortified, starting in the mid-16th century and with successive expansions in the 17th and 18th centuries.

In the early 19th century Cartagena was the site of several battles in the struggle for independence, which was finally achieved in 1821. However, the attritions of the war, the loss of its status as the capital of the Spanish colonies and the ravages of disease, led to a decline from which Cartagena took nearly a century to recover.

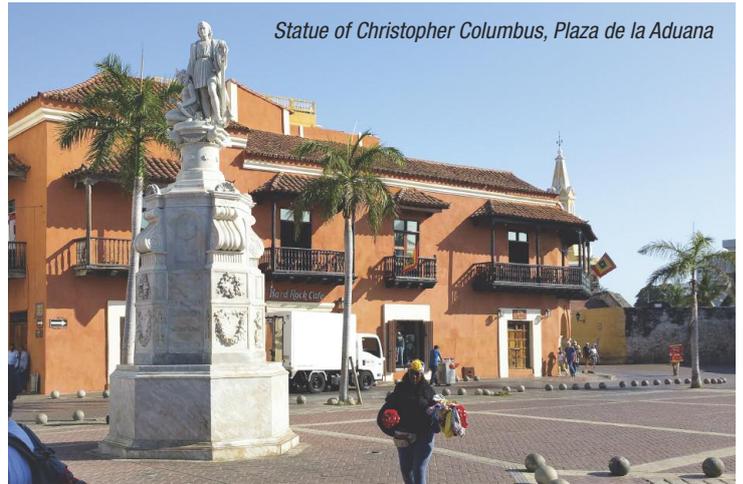
We arrived in Cartagena early enough to see the (almost) full moon setting over the city. We had a short day in port, departing at 15:00, so we opted for a walking tour of the old town. We had the luxury of walking ashore but had to take a short bus ride to town, as we docked in the industrial port. On our way into town, we were supposed to have an opportunity to take photos of the Castillo de San Felipe de Barajas, the largest Spanish fort ever built in the New World. We stopped

Full Moon over Cartagena





Puerta del Reloj



Statue of Christopher Columbus, Plaza de la Aduana

at the fort, but were not afforded an opportunity to disembark, so no photos. After the bus discharged us near the Parque del Centenario, our guide led us along the Camellón de Los Mártires, a linear park commemorating revolutionaries who were executed on this site by royalist forces during the war for independence. We then walked across the Plaza de la Paz to enter the old city by the main gate, the Puerta del Reloj (Clock Tower Gate).

Puerta del Reloj

The Clock Tower Gate was earlier known as the Boca del Puente (literally, the “Mouth of the Bridge”), a name still used by the locals. The gate dates back to the 17th century. The bridge (which no longer exists) was a 16th century drawbridge. The tower was first equipped with a clock in the late 19th century, which was then replaced in the mid-20th century by one of Swiss fabrication.

As soon as we arrived in the old town, we were accosted by street vendors selling hats, sunglasses and souvenirs. Some of them were quite persistent, following us throughout our tour. However, they were not as pushy as some of the vendors we have met elsewhere, for example in Jamaica or Morocco. Our guide told us that many of them were Venezuelan refugees.

Plaza de los Coches

Just inside the gate is the Plaza de los Coches, notorious as the site where slave auctions were held. It features a large statue of Pedro de Heredia, the founder of Cartagena. Heredia

spent several years in Santo Domingo (on Hispaniola) before acquiring title to what is now Colombia (as well as a portion of what is now Ecuador) from the Spanish crown in 1532. He founded Cartagena under the name “Cartagena de Poniente” (again to distinguish it from its namesake in Spain) a year later, and ruled the area for two decades, exploring the region and pillaging Indian burial grounds for gold. The city remained unfortified during his rule, and he was lost at sea on his way back to Spain to face trial for abuse of his authority.

Plaza de la Aduana

We then proceeded to the nearby Plaza de la Aduana (Customs Square), which features a statue of Christopher Columbus. The dome and towers of the Cathedral can be seen over the roofs of the colorful buildings bordering the square. It is the oldest and largest plaza in the city and can accommodate up to 2500 people. It has long been used for cultural and political events. The seat of the colonial government was located here.

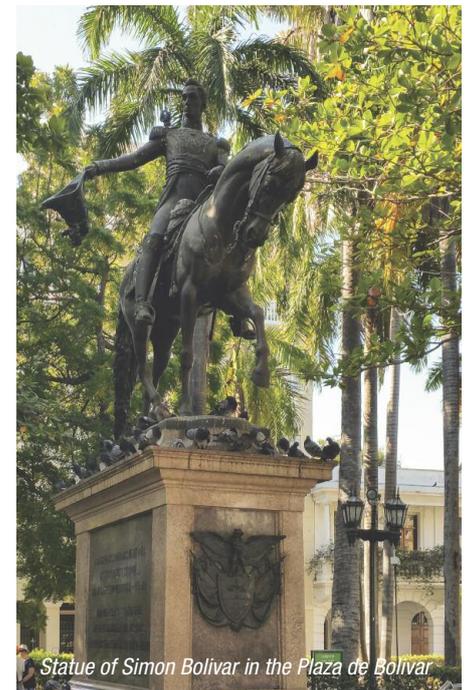
Santa Catalina Cathedral

We then passed by the Catédral de Santa Catalina de Alejandro (St. Catherine’s Cathedral) and paused briefly to admire the statue of Pope John Paul II outside on the corner of the Cathedral. The statue commemorates the Pope’s visit in 1986, during which he joined the faithful in mourning the deaths of 23,000 Colombians in a mudslide caused by a volcanic eruption the previous year. The cathedral was the third of Cartagena, but

the first worthy of the name. It took over 80 years to build, partly because of Sir Francis Drake’s attack on the city roughly 10 years into the cathedral’s construction.

Plaza de Bolivar

We then visited the Plaza de Bolivar, which features an imposing statue of Simon Bolivar on horseback at its center. It seems that the Liberator was not directly involved in the



Statue of Simon Bolivar in the Plaza de Bolivar



Statue of Pedro de Heredia, Plaza de los Coches



Statue of Pope John Paul II by the Santa Catalina Cathedral

battles for independence in Cartagena, but he visited it a few years later, proclaiming it a heroic city. He is still revered here as the father of Colombian independence.

Palace of the Inquisition

Directly across from the Plaza de Bolivar is the Palace of the Inquisition. In fact, the Plaza de Bolivar was previously called the Plaza de la Inquisición. The Inquisition was not established in Cartagena until the 16th century but was not abolished until independence in the early 19th century. The Palace now houses a well-regarded museum, which we however declined to visit it, having already seen enough depictions and instruments of torture in European museums.

Museo de la Esmeralda

The next stop on our tour was the Emerald Museum, conveniently housed at the same address as a jewelry store. It featured videos and exhibits about the mining of emeralds and their use by the indigenous peoples. We left early to avoid the jewelry sales pitch and took advantage of our free time to visit the interior of the Cathedral, the battlements at the Baluarte de Santo Domingo and the Iglesia de Santo Domingo.

Iglesia de Santo Domingo

The church of Santo Domingo belongs to the Convent of Santo Domingo which was founded by Dominican friars in the same year as Cartagena itself. The original location was what is now the Plaza de los Coches. The construction of the convent and church at the current site was only completed two centuries later.

Returning to our meeting place near the Plaza Bolivar, we had time for a little refreshment in a café overlooking the park. During this pause we were entertained by a talented group of breakdancers performing in the Calle de la Inquisición. Afterwards our guide instructed us to proceed to a new rendez-vous, at the Plaza de San Pedro Claver.

Plaza de San Pedro Claver

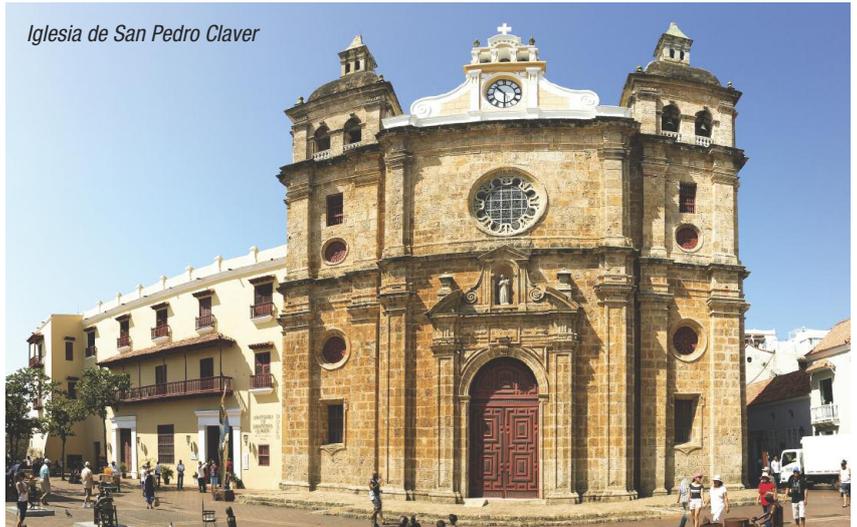
The plaza is named after a Jesuit priest who ministered to the Afro-American slaves as well as to lepers, to prisoners and to the general population. He served for four decades in Cartagena. Although he was poorly treated toward the end of his life, he was canonized in the 19th century and is now revered as patron saint of Colombia and of sailors as well as of slaves. The square hosts a church of the same name, whose construction was first completed in the year of Claver's death, 1654.

The plaza contains a dozen whimsical metal sculptures by Eduardo Carmona depicting people engaging in typical work and pastimes.

Once our group had reassembled we returned to our bus near the Plaza de la Paz for the ride back to the port.

Mini-Zoo at the Port

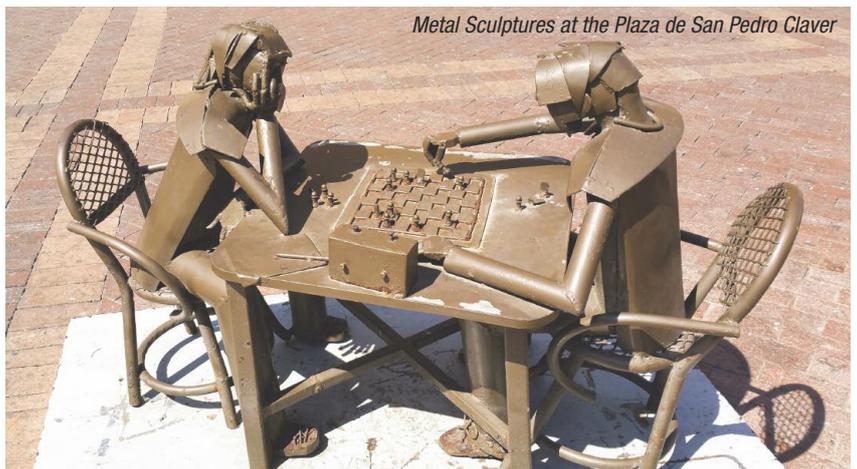
We had the bus driver let us out at the port entrance in order to visit the zoological gardens at the cruise terminal before returning to the ship. They are surprisingly extensive, featuring peacocks, macaws, flamingos and anteaters as well as gardens and cafes. Shortly after re-boarding the Island Princess, we weighed anchor for the main goal of our voyage, Panama.



Iglesia de San Pedro Claver



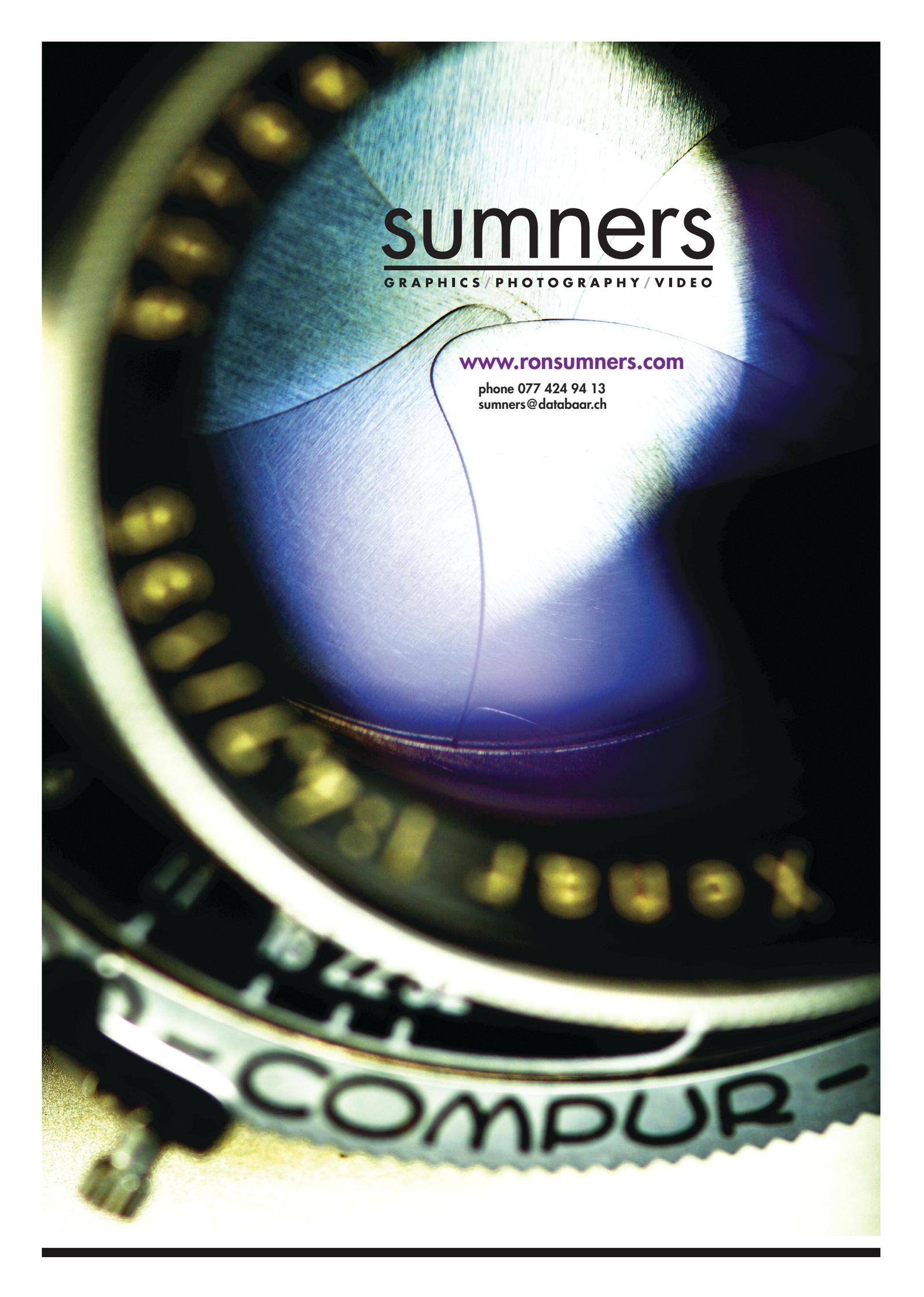
Iglesia de Santo Domingo



Metal Sculptures at the Plaza de San Pedro Claver



Anteater at the Cartagena Port Entrance



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Five Star Hospitality:

Contributed by IMCZ Sports' editor Joseph Dow

swiss five star - IMCZ Ski Weekend



For this season's IMCZ Ski Weekend in February, we took a different approach. Teaming up with the new Swiss ski company, **swiss five star ski**, we put together a package, designed by five star, for our members. Our event included a "base camp" to get organized, some delicious coffee and gipfeli, the chance to test some elite handmade skis, and a nice apéro at the end to top-off the days. five star had the unique capabilities to make this happen with its **Store & More**, which combines a cozy café and bar with a small ski showroom and attached workshop, all at the base of the Titlis area in Engelberg. A big "thank you" to Thomas and his lovely wife, Yvonne, for hosting our group.

All of us were able to try some different ski models from the swiss five star lineup. On the Saturday, we had a wonderful day, skiing and dining as a group in good weather. Then, with the weather turning on the Sunday, Bill and I took out some of the longer, powder-oriented X-Dream skis to challenge Mother Nature in the deep snow that had piled up.



swiss five star skis explained by Thomas:



"five star is meant to be the all-round ski, offering a clear alternative to the complex world of ski specialization. On a given day there may be different conditions requiring a ski that offers optimal performance for all the different piste and snow conditions. An important consideration

is the ski's geometry, which offers more comfort due to five star's choice of a wider waist on the skis, allowing them to also be used off-piste. The second important focus is carving. Thanks to a sidecut with radius between 12 and 15 metres and all five star skis having a flex pattern with a continuous round arc, they are wonderful for carving. The line consists of 5 models, which differ in geometry and choice of material, providing each model with an individual character."

X-DREAM

138/76/106 – 167cm, 176cm

As the name suggests, it achieves near perfection through its hybrid skiing characteristics. An all-in-one wonder, the X-DREAM is a super carver both on- and off-piste thanks to its wide shovel along with the characteristics of a freerider.

PRIME

124/75/102 – 160cm; 126/75/105 – 168cm

The PRIME perfectly implements the five star philosophy. Thanks to the use of cherry wood, it has great flexibility with exceptional rebound to ideally support the skier in initiating the carved turn.

ULTRA

124/75/102 – 160cm; 126/75/105 – 168cm, 175cm

The ULTRA has exactly the same geometry as the PRIME. The carbon upper layer gives the ski high stability. The ULTRA must be aggressively driven to take advantage of its exceptional skiing characteristics. Then, you can experience its great performance.

PEARL

124/75/102 – 155cm, 160cm, 165cm

The PEARL is a comfort ski which, thanks to its slightly rockered tip, allows you to drift even when the carve turns are not fully extended. Thanks to this feature, it requires less effort and is therefore very popular with lighter-weight skiers and the ladies.

ROYAL

122/72/107 – 166cm

In contrast to the other five star models, agility and the ability to perform both short and long turns, quick carves and long cruising, is emphasized. Carefully handcrafted from A to Z, the ROYAL turns even average skiers into experts.

I had the pleasure of trying the X-Dream skis in both sizes and have my own pair of Royals. I would use the shorter X-Dreams for later in the season on softer snow on the piste. For snowy, powder days like Bill and I experienced, the extra length of the longer 176cm is welcome for float and the skis performed quite well. For all around skiing on the piste, it's hard to beat the Royal. These are exceptional skis and I invite you to visit Thomas in Engelberg to check out the swiss five star line:

swiss five star ag

Thomas Koller
Gerschnistrasse 6
6390 Engelberg
+41 (0) 79 333 46 34
info@swissfivestarski.ch
www.swissfivestarski.ch/en/

THINK SNOW!!! THINK SNOW!!! THINK SNOW!!! THINK SNOW!!!

If you have questions about skiwear or equipment or want a recommendation, feel free to send me an email: [jjdow\[at\]Hotmail.com](mailto:jjdow[at]Hotmail.com)



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Financial Markets and Politics

Contributed by Christian Wagner, IMCZ Member

The Black Swan

This term, coined by Nassim Taleb, means a most unlikely event that occurs unexpectedly and with great impact. In retrospect, explanations can usually be found to make the event seem less surprising and more understandable. We are talking here about the “black swan” in the form of the politics that made the investment year 2018 a year to forget, despite satisfactory economic conditions.

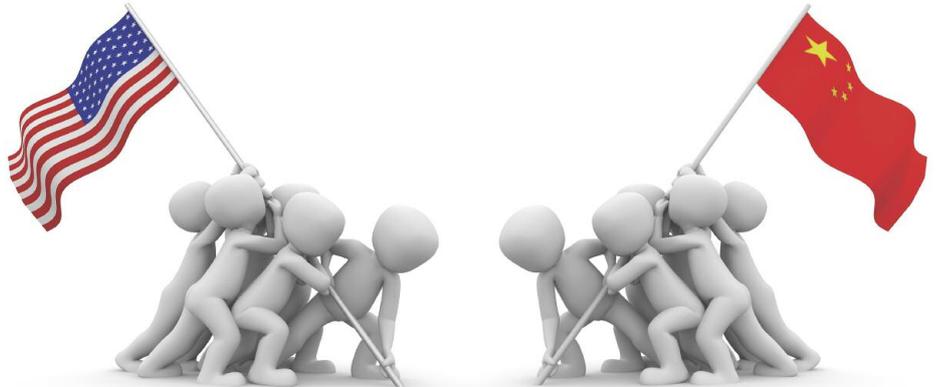
Political underpinnings of the world

The world of the past was essentially bipolar until 1990. The USA and the Soviet Union with their respective allies faced-off against each other in the “Cold War”. The ideological competition was based on political and military power but was finally decided by the economic superiority of the “West”. Financial markets became accustomed to the fact that political change only had a marginal effect on economic progress (Marshall Plan, EEC, EU). However, the world of the future, at least since 2012 with the inauguration of Xi Jinping, is again bipolar with China replacing the Soviet Union. The confrontation with the US is not military but economic, and its effects have already rattled financial markets. The successor to the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation, is mostly preoccupied with regional issues and focussed on specific, strategically important, countries. Europe, which has benefited the most from the collapse of the old “world order”, increasingly suffers from the fact that economic unification was accomplished without a political counterpart.

Democracies under pressure

By contrast with China, which is ruled by a single party in autocratic form, its counterparties are democracies where elected representatives of the people take the decisions. Unfortunately, the term “democracy” only describes the electoral methodology, but not how a government should function. Nowadays, the basic principle of the separation of power between executive, legislative and judicial branches is being subverted. The best example of this is the current situation in the UK. The whole process of withdrawal from the European Union lies in the competence of the executive branch, but the closer the withdrawal date approaches, the more frenetic the legislature’s aspirations become, not only to co-legislate but also to shape the form of the withdrawal.

For its part, the EU suffers not only from an ad hoc political leadership but also from the aftermath of a hasty enlargement (the former Eastern Bloc states) and their diverging priorities. Internal tensions are also a reason for the uncompromising attitude to the Brexit question.



Another example is the situation in the USA, where ideological clashes between the Republican President and the Democratic House of Representatives caused the longest ever government shutdown, mainly over the explicit financing of a border wall - a topic which is minuscule in an overall budget context.

Risks for the financial markets

A UK exit from the EU is usually discussed in relation to the negative impact on the UK. While this is certainly true, the EU will also suffer unpleasant consequences. The EU Commission hardly seems to have taken into account the economic collateral damage arising from its negotiating strategy. The automotive industry, which is so important for Germany, is only the most obvious example of Brexit related trading difficulties just at a time when the economy is weakening. Brexit will be done somehow, but the negative consequences will keep the financial markets busy for a long time.

The trade dispute between China and the USA is more than just a temporary disruption in the trade relations of both countries. The mercantile economic policies of the Chinese

leadership under President Xi Jinping are part of a geostrategic plan to strengthen the power of the state and the Communist Party. The *Belt and Road* and *Made in China* initiatives are an expression of the will to decisively influence the global economy. Since there is no clear dividing line between private enterprise and state, and government representatives sit on the boards of all major companies, foreign companies such as Huawei may also be in government service. The struggle of the hegemonic USA and emerging China will last for a long time, and from time to time will negatively affect the financial markets.

Consequences for the investor

Nowadays, unlike in the past, politics is just as important as economic data and company figures and should be taken into account accordingly. As its effects are often detrimental to the financial markets, risk increases. With increased risk, more liquidity (avoiding losing money is as important as making money), gold and stocks with a focus on the home market are recommended. Individual equities are preferred to index products.

(translated from the original German)



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The art of the put-down

A member of Parliament to Disraeli:
"Sir, you will either die on the gallows
or of some unspeakable disease."



"That depends, Sir" said Disraeli, "whether
I embrace your policies or your mistress."

"He had delusions of adequacy" - *Walter Kerr*

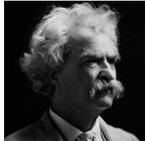
"He has all the virtues I dislike and none of
the vices I admire." - *Winston Churchill*

"I have never killed a man, but I have read
many obituaries with great pleasure."
- *Clarence Darrow*

"He has never been known to use a word
that might send a reader to the dictionary."
- *William Faulkner (about Ernest Hemingway)*

"Thank you for sending me a copy of
your book; I'll waste no time reading it."
- *Moses Hadas*

"I didn't attend the funeral,
but I sent a nice letter saying
I approved of it." - *Mark Twain*



"He has no enemies, but is intensely disliked
by his friends." - *Oscar Wilde*

"I am enclosing two tickets to the first night of
my new play; bring a friend, if you have one."
- *George Bernard Shaw to Winston Churchill*
"Cannot possibly attend first night, will attend
second... if there is one." - *Winston Churchill, in response*

"I feel so miserable without you; it's almost
like having you here." - *Stephen Bishop*

"He is a self-made man and worships
his creator." - *John Bright*

"I've just learned about his illness. Let's hope
it's nothing trivial." - *Irvin S. Cobb*

"He is not only dull himself; he is the cause
of dullness in others." - *Samuel Johnson*

"He is simply a shiver looking for a spine to
run up." - *Paul Keating*

"In order to avoid being called a flirt, she always
yielded easily." - *Charles, Count Talleyrand*

"He loves nature in spite of what it did to him."
- *Forrest Tucker*

"Why do you sit there looking like an envelope
without any address on it?" - *Mark Twain*

"His mother should have thrown him away
and kept the stork."
- *Mae West*



"Some cause happiness
wherever they go; others,
whenever they go."
- *Oscar Wilde*

Prayer answered

A man walking along a California beach was deep in prayer. All of a sudden he said out loud, "Lord grant me one wish."

Suddenly the sky clouded above his head and in a booming voice the Lord said, "Because you have been faithful to me in all ways, I will grant you one wish."

The man said, "Build a bridge to Hawaii, so I can drive over anytime I want to."

The Lord said, "Your request is very materialistic. Think of the logistics of that kind of undertaking. The supports required to reach the bottom of the Pacific! The concrete and steel it would take! I can do it, but it is hard for me to justify your desire for worldly things. Take a little more time and think of another wish, a wish you think would honour and glorify me."

The man thought about it for a long time. Finally he said, "Lord, I have been married and divorced four times. All of my wives said that I am uncaring and insensitive. I wish that I could understand women. I want to know how they feel inside, what they are thinking when they give me the silent treatment, why they cry, what they mean when they say 'nothing' and how I can make a woman truly happy."



After a few minutes God said, "You want two lanes or four on that bridge?"

Ice Cream

A couple in their nineties are both having problems remembering things. During a check-up, the doctor tells them that they're physically okay, but they might want to start writing things down to help them remember.

Later that night, while watching TV, the old man gets up from his chair "Want anything while I'm in the kitchen?" he asks.

"Will you get me a bowl of ice cream?"

"Sure."

"Don't you think you should write it down, so you can remember it?" she asks.

"No, I can remember it."

"Well, I'd like some strawberries on top, too. Maybe you should write that down, so as not to forget it."

He says, "I can remember that. You want a bowl of ice cream with strawberries."

"I'd also like whipped cream. I'm certain you'll forget that, please write it down!" she asks.

Irritated, he says, "I don't need to write it down, I can remember it! Ice cream with strawberries and whipped cream - I got it, for goodness sake!"

Then he toddles into the kitchen. After about 20 minutes, the old man returns from the kitchen and hands his wife a plate of bacon and eggs. She stares at the plate for a moment.

"Where's my toast?"



Why I stopped golfing

Saturday morning, I got up early, dressed quietly, made my lunch, grabbed my clubs, slipped quietly into the garage put my clubs & cart into the trunk and proceeded to back out into a torrential down pour. The wind was blowing 50 mph.

I pulled back into the garage, turned on the radio, and discovered that the weather would be bad throughout the day.

I went back into the house, quietly undressed, and slipped back into bed.

There I cuddled up to my wife's back, now with a different anticipation, and whispered, "The weather out there is terrible".

My loving wife of 40 years replied, "Can you believe my stupid husband is out golfing in that crap?"

I still don't know to this day if she was joking, but I have stopped golfing.



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