

# IMCZ NEWS



JANUARY – MARCH 2023



## EDITORIAL

As I write this, the usual Christmas chaos is unfolding in other parts of the house. Small grandchildren excitedly talking about what they will get from Santa, older grandchildren happy that School is finishing for the year, food shopping lists are being finalized and last minute post items are anxiously awaited. It's the same every year. But for me the priceless part of this holiday period is the chance to spend time with the family, to chill and just to enjoy each other's company with no pressure of deadlines or work pressures.



Unfortunately this prospect is denied to many people. Those who are apart from each other, those suffering from conflict or illness. We should all bear a thought for those affected in this way and, perhaps, do something to help in a small way.

It's been a good year for the IMCZ. We've bounced back from the restrictions of Covid and got lots of events under our belts. It should continue the same way next year. I look forward to seeing even more of you at our various "parties" in 2023.

So, as the year draws to a close, I wish you all a happy and healthy New Year and hope you find time to celebrate with friends and / or family.

Awrabest - Alan

## FUTURE EVENTS

For future events, please look at the club website under <https://imcz.club/Club-Events>  
Events can be organised at short notice and we're not able to include everything in the Newsletter.

### Annual Burns Supper – 28th January '23

This is the 27th time that the IMCZ will celebrate the birthday of Scotland's national poet, Robert Burns. It is a unique evening providing an opportunity to taste real Scottish atmosphere. The party will be held again at the Wirtschaft Brandenburg near the Stierenmarkt. It is less than 200m from the S-Bahn station "Zug Schutzengel" and free parking is available across the street.

The evening will feature traditional Scottish fare, including the rousing sound of bagpipes from our guest piper, extracts from the works of Robert Burns (one serious, the rest funny) from our line-up of international guest speakers, people dressed in kilts and liberal doses of Uisge'beah (whisky). The menu starts with the traditional "Cock a Leekie" (chicken) soup and the Scottish haggis, but a vegetarian menu and an another main dish are also available. Registration is required for this event. Please visit the website to book your space. Open to members and friends.



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### STAMMTISCH

Every Thursday from 18:00-20:30

We meet at different venues – please  
check our website for the location:  
<https://imcz.club/Club-Events>



## RECENT EVENTS

Now that Covid is less of a challenge, the club has been much more active and many events have and are being organised. This has also been helped greatly by Ben Grech and Richard Beswick stepping up and organising some great events – or persuading others to organise them. It's been really good. Below are three events, summarised by Ben, Richard and myself – but elsewhere in the Newsletter are longer articles on the Competec Visit and the Ski Show.

### Oktoberfest in Zug 30th September

IMCZ organized an Oktoberfest in Zug in September. 22 IMCZ and ZIWC members and friends attended the event at the Bären Restaurant. We had a long table, Bavarian fare, beer and Schlager band Rivas Gü and plenty of singing of Ein Prosit, ein Prosit der Gemütlichkeit! The food was authentic Bavarian cuisine, the beer too. Many of the girls and boys were resplendently decked out in Lederhosen and Dirndl outfits. The atmosphere was tremendous, with frolicking, jokes, singing aplenty. An Oktoberfest to match anything Munich has to offer.



### Mushroom and Toadstool Safari – 11th October '22

IMCZ and ZIWC members and friends joined forces for a safari to discover the wonderful world of mushrooms, toadstools and fungi in the beautiful surroundings of the Steinhausen Forest. The safari was led by renowned mushroom expert Pam Roesch. Our band of fourteen



men, women and children set off from the Steinhausen Forest Hut and spent two hours combing the forest for mushrooms. Pam skillfully guided us in the discovery of a host of mushrooms, beautiful and ugly, big and small, poisonous and edible, and medicinal. At the end of the safari, Pam displayed our trove and explained what we had collected and

what other mushrooms were lurking in the forest. We presented the mushrooms to the President, who was courageous enough to eat them and survived. Some of the participants also went along to the Zug Mushroom Club (<https://www.pilzvereinzug.ch/>) to delve further into the wonderful world of mushrooms.

### Red Wine Circle / New Members Reception 3rd November '22

This year the NMR was combined with a Wine Circle event in the Huwilerturm in the Zug old town. We had a very successful White-Wine event earlier in the year and this time the focus was on Red Wine. Members (except New Members) were asked to bring along a bottle of their favourite Red to share. Ben Grech was the MC for the event, and between him and the wine “doner” we were educated as to the origin, and style of the wine. Then there was the best bit – we could all try it. A good time was had by all. The club sponsored food for the members, a choice of Curries and Pizzas was offered.



## IMCZ BOARD MEMBERS

Thumbnail biographies of board members can be found on our website [www.imcz.club](http://www.imcz.club) under 'About Us' section

**PRESIDENT**  
**Bill Lichtensteiger**  
079 378 63 26  
[president@imcz.club](mailto:president@imcz.club)

**WEBMASTER**  
**Roger Brooks**  
079 583 99 35  
[webmaster@imcz.club](mailto:webmaster@imcz.club)

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR**  
**Alan Cattell**  
079 340 25 51  
[newsletter@imcz.club](mailto:newsletter@imcz.club)

**EVENTS**  
**Ben Grech**  
078 927 73 63  
[events@imcz.club](mailto:events@imcz.club)

**SECRETARY**  
**Geoff Watson**  
079 946 37 27  
[secretary@imcz.club](mailto:secretary@imcz.club)

**EVENTS**  
**Richard Beswick**  
079 340 44 32  
[events@imcz.club](mailto:events@imcz.club)

**TREASURER**  
**Lindsay Johnston**  
079 276 78 03  
[treasurer@imcz.club](mailto:treasurer@imcz.club)



## RECENT EVENTS

### Competec Logistics Center

*Contributed by IMCZ Webmaster Roger Brooks  
with photos courtesy of IMCZ Members Andrew Glass  
and Tobias Volker*

#### Competec

A few weeks ago a small group of us enjoyed a guided tour of one of the largest logistic centers in Switzerland. Competec was founded by Roland Brack, the founder and owner of the eponymous e-tailer, to consolidate and provide purchasing and logistics services for Brack, DayDeal and other businesses of his. Meanwhile it has expanded to offer logistics services to other organizations, among them competing e-tailers like Digitec/Galaxus, as well as distributors, wholesalers and other enterprises wanting to offload some of the overhead of expediting and receiving.

#### The Logistics Center

The logistics center in Willisau occupies the site of the former Lego factory, which Brack purchased in 2011. The six former Lego buildings were repurposed to house shipping, receiving, sorting and various sizes of automated and automated storage units as well as offices and a cafeteria. The logistics center began operation in 2012, but by 2016 Competec needed more space. After fighting objections all the way to the Swiss Supreme Court, Competec constructed an adjacent storage warehouse from 2019-2021. Currently, the logistics center handles over 250,000 different articles and employs over 600 employees.

#### The Receiving Area

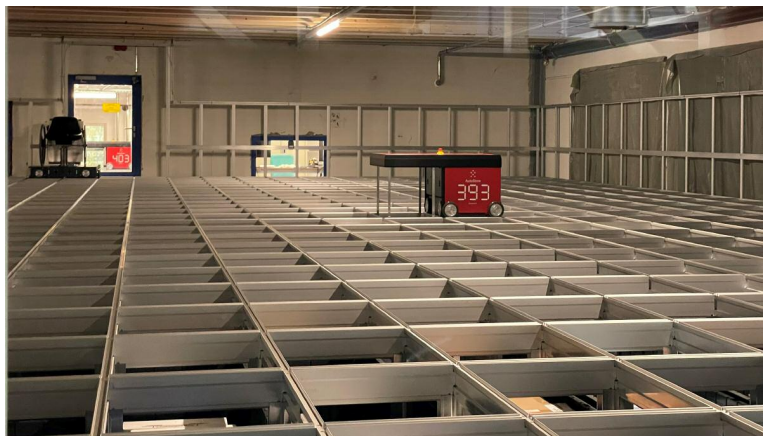
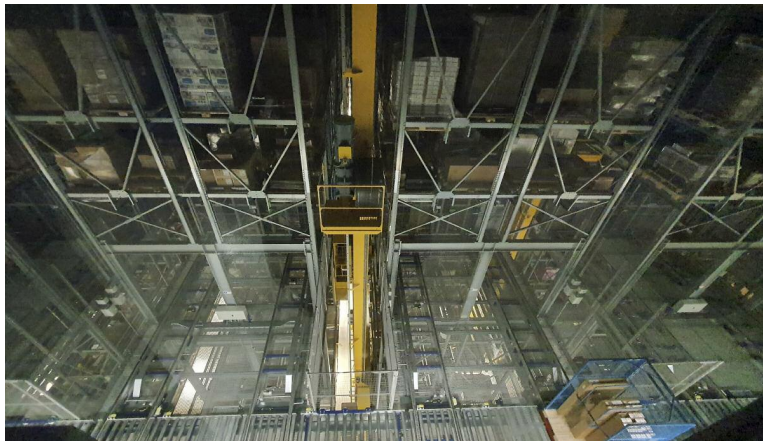
After collecting safety vests and helmets in the cafeteria, our tour began at the docks where carriers deliver their wares. Transporters must book a delivery time slot in advance to keep the operation running smoothly. Large, irregularly sized objects are placed in cribs for delivery to a special section of the pallet storage warehouse. Pallets containing only one type of article are sent intact to the pallet storage unit. Pallets with mixed contents are broken down and the different articles sorted into bins for storage in other storage units. Employees have their choice of hand-held scanners or scanners mounted on their wrists or the backs of their hands to scan the articles' bar codes. Articles are labeled with Competec-internal bar codes as well as manufacturers' codes.

#### The New Building

The new building is over 30 m tall and contains a fully automated high rack pallet storage unit with a capacity of 27,000 pallets, as well as an automated shelf storage unit for up to 97,000 bins. Some of the power required for its operation is provided by nearly 7000 sq. m. of solar cells on its roof. The warehouse contains a controlled atmosphere with a reduced partial pressure of oxygen to prevent fire. Consequently, employees who must enter to perform maintenance on the equipment are only allowed to remain inside for an hour at a time and are subject to regular medical examinations. There is also a time capsule embedded in one of the upper floors of the building.

#### The Auto-Store Units

Smaller articles are (manually) sorted into smaller bins for storage in 3 auto-store units located in the older Lego buildings. These units feature robots which literally push and pop the bins in stacks 21 levels deep. The storage is optimized to keep frequently needed articles in the upper levels of the stacks. One of the 3 auto-store units features a window through which the robots' activity can be observed. A fourth auto-store unit is being planned.



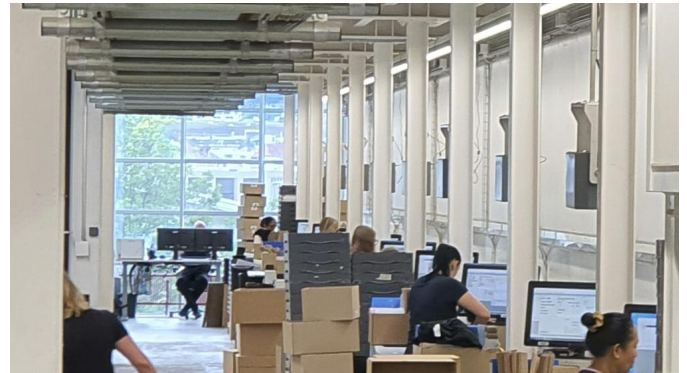


## Packing and Shipping

Bins containing smaller articles to be shipped are delivered to packing stations where employees place them in cardboard boxes for shipping. The boxes come in only three standard sizes, which are then folded to the appropriate size for their contents and then labelled for shipment by an automated production line. The packages are then conveyed to the shipping area where they are collected for pickup by the Swiss Post. To further streamline operations by using advanced technology, Competec is providing employees in the shipping area who want to use them with augmented reality headsets. These allow them to call up information about the orders they are processing without being tied to a workstation.

## Apero

After the tour, we enjoyed an aperitif provided by the Competec canteen (and partly subsidized by the club). Those who missed the tour can organize one of their own via the web form at <https://www.etermin.net/CompetecLogistik>. Further information can be requested from the Competec employee responsible for organizing the tours, [Ursula Limacher](#). Any food or drink should be arranged separately with the canteen, [Il Primo](#) (041 970 14 02) under the management of Cagatay Oynamaz.



## Further Information

- [Wikipedia \(in German\)](#)
- [Competec website](#)
- [Lego Produktion AG](#)
- [Competec verlagert Logistik in ehemalige Lego-Fabrik](#)
- [Competec eröffnet neues Paletten-Hochregallager](#)
- [Press Release Archive](#)
- [Video-Archive](#)



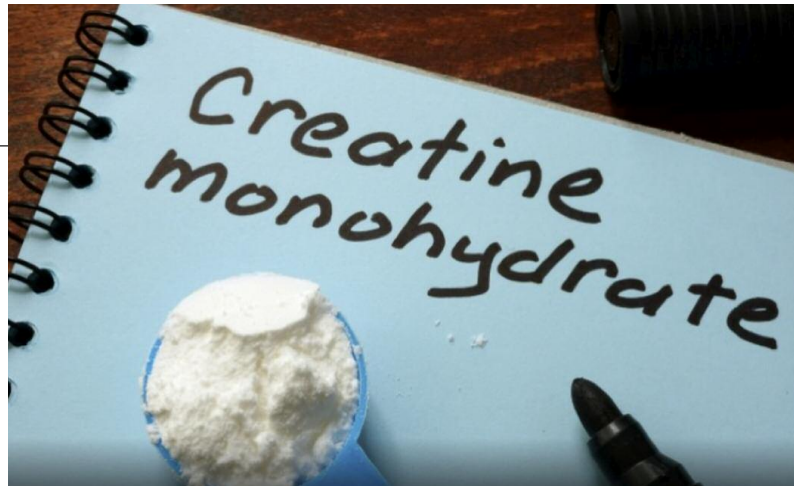
## Creatine – important nutrient for brain function

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

Even the recreationally sports enthusiast may have heard of creatine, the most widely used supplement amongst not only serious top athletes but also non-professional sportsmen. The reason lies in its fast and remarkable effect on strength and particularly on body weight, i.e. increased lean muscle mass after only 1-2 weeks of supplementation.

Creatine is a natural substance in our body, crucial in the energy production of our metabolism (ATP cycle). Creatine is stored in muscle as creatine-phosphate and restores ADP to ATP by transferring its phosphate molecule, allowing it to begin the energy cycle again (ATP => ADP + phosphate = energy). Our muscle cells are capable to uphold a higher creatine store with daily supplementation of about 3 g, i.e. maintaining increased energy stores for physical activity and improved performance. However, it is not just about more energy for the muscles.

Nowadays, there is good evidence that impairment of energy production also plays a role in the pathogenesis of neurodegenerative diseases. Creatine supplementation increases creatine content in the brain and improves memory performance in healthy individuals, particularly in older adults, according to a meta-analysis in 2022 (<https://doi.org/10.1093/nutrit/nuac064>). The research contributes to a growing body of literature on the neurobehavioral and physiological effects of creatine supplementation. The fact that the brain spends about 20% of our overall energy output, underlines the importance of sufficient energy supply to the brain. Therefore, creatine becomes increasingly interesting not just in the treatment of diseases such as Parkinson's, but also for low-dose supplementation (1 g/d) in the elderly in order to prevent cognitive decline. The graph of an older



study from 2007 shows, for example, creatine's effects on long-term memory improvements in people of 76.4 years of age on average (McMorris, 2007).

The brain requires a high amount of energy for cellular processes, such as neurotransmitter and synaptic functioning. The above mentioned meta-analysis concluded that creatine supplementation improved measures of memory compared with placebo, with more robust effects in older adults (66- 76 years) as compared to their younger counterparts (11-31 years). The researchers suggest that brain creatine content may decline during aging and therefore older adults may be more responsive to creatine supplementation. These data support the contention that creatine supplementation has benefits beyond improving physical performance but can be an important nutrient to support health and cognitive function as we age, well beyond all kind of muscular dystrophy in aging and/or clinical populations, but also regarding its potential neuroprotective properties.

### BRAIN HEALTH SUPPLEMENT: CREATINE

**DOSE: 3-5 g per day**



Improved energy shuttling from mitochondria to brain neurons



Enhanced brain energy production, storage, & utilization

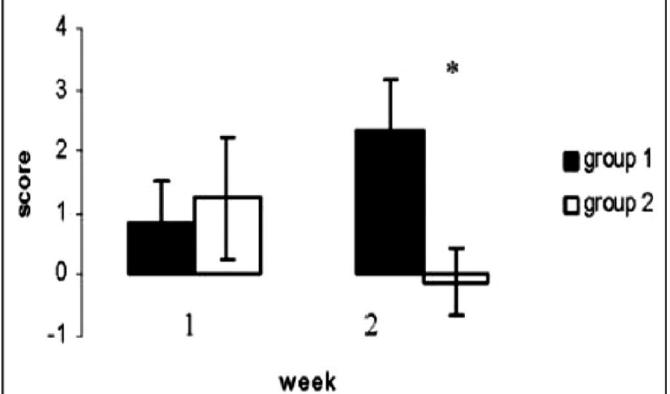
#### REPORTED BRAIN BENEFITS:

- Improved memory in healthy adults
- Improved brain aging
- Improved brain function under stress

@drdnjackson CSO ATP LAB

Nutrients 2021, 13(2), 586; Biomolecules 2019, 9, 406.

FIGURE 3. Mean (SE) Δ scores at weeks 1 and 2 for both groups on the long-term memory test.



\* differ significantly  $p < 0.01$

## Truth and Lies - A Scientist's Perspective

Contributed by IMCZ member, Alan Cattell

### Science & Technology Reporting

It seems to me that many reporters (and perhaps most people) fundamentally misunderstand Science and the scientific method. Breakthroughs and "facts" are reported without context and without any indication of the maturity of the science behind it. Vested interests, marketers, and conspiracists report propaganda as "facts" or "truth". Belief driven reporting seems to be endemic, amplified by social media.

I thought it might be interesting for some of you to read a short article on the scientific method and how to assess reported work. The first three "principles" are a bit abstract, but then I'll illustrate what I mean with specific examples.



### Principle # 1: Science is like an onion

Scientific knowledge is layered, with the newer (outer) layers being built on the foundation of previous layers. The newer the knowledge, the more likely it is to be incorrect. Many new studies contain errors, major or minor. This is rarely the result of deliberate fraud, but rather a consequence of the difficulty of much scientific research. It's very easy to make mistakes. However, these mistakes are corrected over time because the conclusions drawn don't match the results of other researchers, or it becomes clear they conflict with other areas of science. Such apparent conflicts are investigated in detail and this leads to a clearer idea of what's going on.

### Principle # 2: Science is not about "Truth" – it's about prediction

Truth in an absolute sense is not the realm of Science, it's for Philosophers and, perhaps, religious teachers. There is no "truth" in Science. The test of scientific understanding is that you can use it accurately to *predict* the behaviour of a physical system, a chemical reaction and so forth within known limits – and that it's reproducible.

### Principle # 3: Science is based on data and predictive models

The first level of scientific understanding is to collect data about how a system behaves and test this for repeatability. Based on this data, the goal is then to develop a model. This is then used to predict how things will behave in areas away from the area where the data was collected. If it predicts results correctly then it is likely a good model.

All models have limits of validity and understanding these is critical. Often clarifying these limits leads to new, more sophisticated models which have wider scope of validity, but can be more complex.

### Example 1: Laws of motion and gravity

Anyone who has studied Physics at school has heard of Isaac Newton and his laws of motion, published 1689.

Newton noticed that objects pushed with a given force are accelerated, and when no "push" was present, the continued to move at a constant speed. It was possible to collect data to show that the acceleration of an object was proportional to the size of the force applied. To link the two, he came up with the concept of MASS. This is a property of an object which governs the relationship between force and acceleration:

$$F = m \cdot a$$

where F is force, m is mass and a is acceleration. But what is mass? This is NOT DEFINED by Newton except as the link between force and acceleration. It's described as a property of matter, and that's all. So this is a model showing the link between F and a, and the model can be verified experimentally, but it does not explain mass.

Newton also deduced that mass attracted mass – and he called this property Gravity. He showed that:

$$F_g = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{r^2}$$



where  $F_g$  is the force due to gravity,  $m_1$  and  $m_2$  are two masses attracting each other,  $r$  is the distance between them and  $G$  is a constant. Again, this is a model which can be verified experimentally, but why mass attracts other mass is not explained (and gravity remains the least well understood of the 4 known forces).

### Example 2: Gas laws

During the industrial revolution, understanding the behaviour of gasses became increasingly important. External and internal combustion engines relied on this understanding. In 1834 the full ideal gas law was first described as a combination of Boyle's law, Charles's law and Avogadro's law. It states:

$$pV = nRT$$

where p is pressure, V is the volume of the gas container, n is the number of moles of gas and T is the absolute temperature. R is a constant, known as the universal gas constant. This model works well for all gases which are in their "ideal gas" range. It allows good prediction of gas behaviour and works for all "ideal" gasses. However, in this model R is a proposed constant, derived from experimental results. There is no understanding it's meaning.

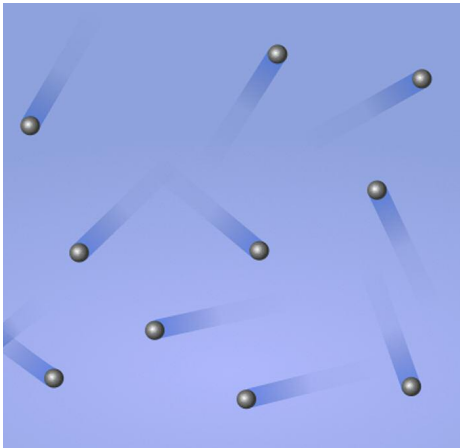
Obviously, the model has limits. If the gas starts to condense or separate (if it's a gas with multiple components) then the model breaks down. This is non-ideal gas behaviour.

### Adding layers to the onion – the scientific method

Analysis of the motion of bodies in the solar system continued in order to test Newton's laws. Initially there were lots of discrepancies between measured orbits and predicted orbits, but these were found to be due to objects which had not hitherto been discovered (e.g. new planets). Thus Newton's laws were validated through accurate prediction of orbits and their ability to predict things which were previously unknown.

However, detailed analysis of the orbit of Mercury showed some deviations from the model. Initially there was speculation that this was due to another unknown inner planet, but no such a planet could be found. Newton's laws were shown to be no longer 100% valid. It was only with the arrival of General Relativity (Einstein 1917) that the deviation from Newton's laws could be explained. Mercury is moving sufficiently fast that relativistic effects are significant. So the model for gravitational interaction was adapted to a new model of space-time, layered over the Newtonian view of gravitation. So Newton's model is "incorrect", but for most cases it's is good enough and there is no need to add the complexity of relativity.

From the early 1900's onwards, the atomic model of matter developed and this led to a



kinetic theory of gasses

kinetic theory of gasses, where a gas is seen as atoms or molecules moving at speed and bouncing off each other and the walls of a container. Based on these ideas, it's possible to refine the model for the gas laws and relate them to Newton's laws. Pressure is caused by collisions of the gas molecules with the walls of the container and with each other. Further development of the model leads to a clear link to thermodynamics. The average energy of a gas molecule can be shown to be linked to its thermodynamic temperature by Boltzmann's constant and the gas constant R can be defined in terms of Boltzmann's constant. In this way three separate areas of Physics can be brought together, further confirming the validity of the common model. The refined models of gas behaviour are useful, but the simple gas law remains valid for "ideal" gases and for most everyday purposes is good enough.

Models around force and mass have also developed considerably. The standard model of particle physics has been developed and this has led to a revolution in the understanding of the origin of most forces and mass. Mass is shown to be linked to the Higgs boson (finally detected in 2013) and other particles are "force carriers" for the electromagnetic force and for the strong and weak nuclear forces. However,

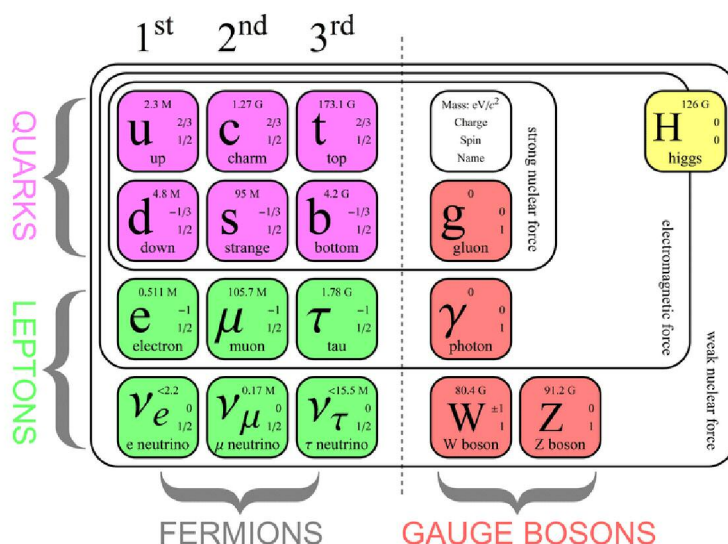
gravity is not yet included in any reliable model and its cause remains unclear – though there is a lot of work on quantum gravity trying to solve this problem. In addition, we already know that the standard model is not 100% correct – so work continues to refine this model, or to find the next "layer". We also can't yet reconcile quantum entanglement with Einstein's general theory of relativity.

These examples illustrate the scientific method. The predictions of models of how a system behaves are analysed extensively by different researchers for different scenarios. A good fit helps confirm the model validity (for the scope of the experiment) and deviations from expected results lead to focussed efforts to explain the deviations. This can lead to changes to the model, or a paradigm shift with a new, more refined model which extends the scope for prediction, and often link to previously unconnected models. So quantum mechanics can be seen as a refinement of thermodynamics which is a refinement of the gas laws and Newton's laws, with each having, in turn, a much wider scope. Quantum mechanics underpins many other areas.

The links and limitations of each layer of a model are defined. This is true for all mature areas of science, including molecular biology, bio-chemistry, physical and organic chemistry and many others. So the force which determine if a two liquids can be mixed homogeneously is the same as that which stabilises the double-helix structure of DNA and the same as that which determines the boiling point of liquids. To keep things manageable, we divide up these interrelated effects into models for a specific scope of specific topics and we work with them. But it's important to remember that they are *models*, with specific limitations, designed to predict behaviour, not some description of "truth".

### Maturity of a scientific model

As mentioned, models for different topics in science have different levels of maturity. When forming an opinion about a topic, it's very important to have some idea of this level of maturity. A mature model has demonstrated that it can predict many outcomes, is linked to many other areas of science and has clearly defined limits. An immature model (for a new area of science) is much more open to question and is likely to be refined regularly.



As an extreme example of a mature model, the current model of the solar system states that Earth is approximately spherical, has a large satellite orbiting around it and this system in turn orbits round the Sun. The Earth orbits the Sun in around 1 year and the moon orbits the earth every 28 days approximately. This model has been refined for hundreds of years. The model accurately predicts:

1. Tides – variations in range and time – and moon phase
2. Dipping heights of lights at sea (visibility of a light above the horizon vs. distance to the light and its height)
3. Foucault's pendulum movement
4. Changes in time zone and the position of the "fixed" stars
5. How geo-stationary satellites and low-earth orbit satellites behave

6. Prevailing weather patterns and trade winds
7. The mean surface temperature profiles of the planet
8. Radio propagation in the atmosphere
9. And hundreds of other observations....

To challenge this model seriously, one would require a new concept and a new model which explained ALL that the current model explains with some additional predictions which are currently not addressed.

However, immature models are more open to challenge. In the early days of climate science, there were many open issues and conflicts between different ideas and data collection. Much modelling was not supported by robust data. In this phase there was considerable scope to doubt the conclusions of any work. However, since those early days, the quality and validity of climate models has improved dramatically and huge amounts of experimental work to confirm these models has been undertaken. This branch of science is now much more mature, though still developing rapidly.

There are also many examples of failed models in science, some of which were quite popular for a while. Eugenics and Phrenology are two obvious examples from “softer” sciences. Neither has survived the scrutiny of more detailed studies.

So science develops through rigorous analysis of existing models / data and constant challenging of current understanding against the evidence. The constant search for inconsistencies in data or models leads to new refinements of these models and further cross-linkage between different disciplines. To me, the most misunderstood thing about science and the scientific method is that scientists and technologists are always actively trying to find out where other people’s work is somehow in error. It’s a feral business. The idea that people are reinforcing each other’s prejudices is laughable. Nobody will further their career by blandly agreeing with others. To stand out, to make progress, you need to challenge current understanding somehow. Conflict (mainly polite, but by no means always) is the name of the game. All the big breakthroughs resulted from challenges to existing belief and many were bought with considerable personal pain.

The examples I’ve given are essentially based on mathematical models, but there are different types of models which are more useful in other disciplines. Functional models which describe processes and interactions are very common in molecular biology for example.

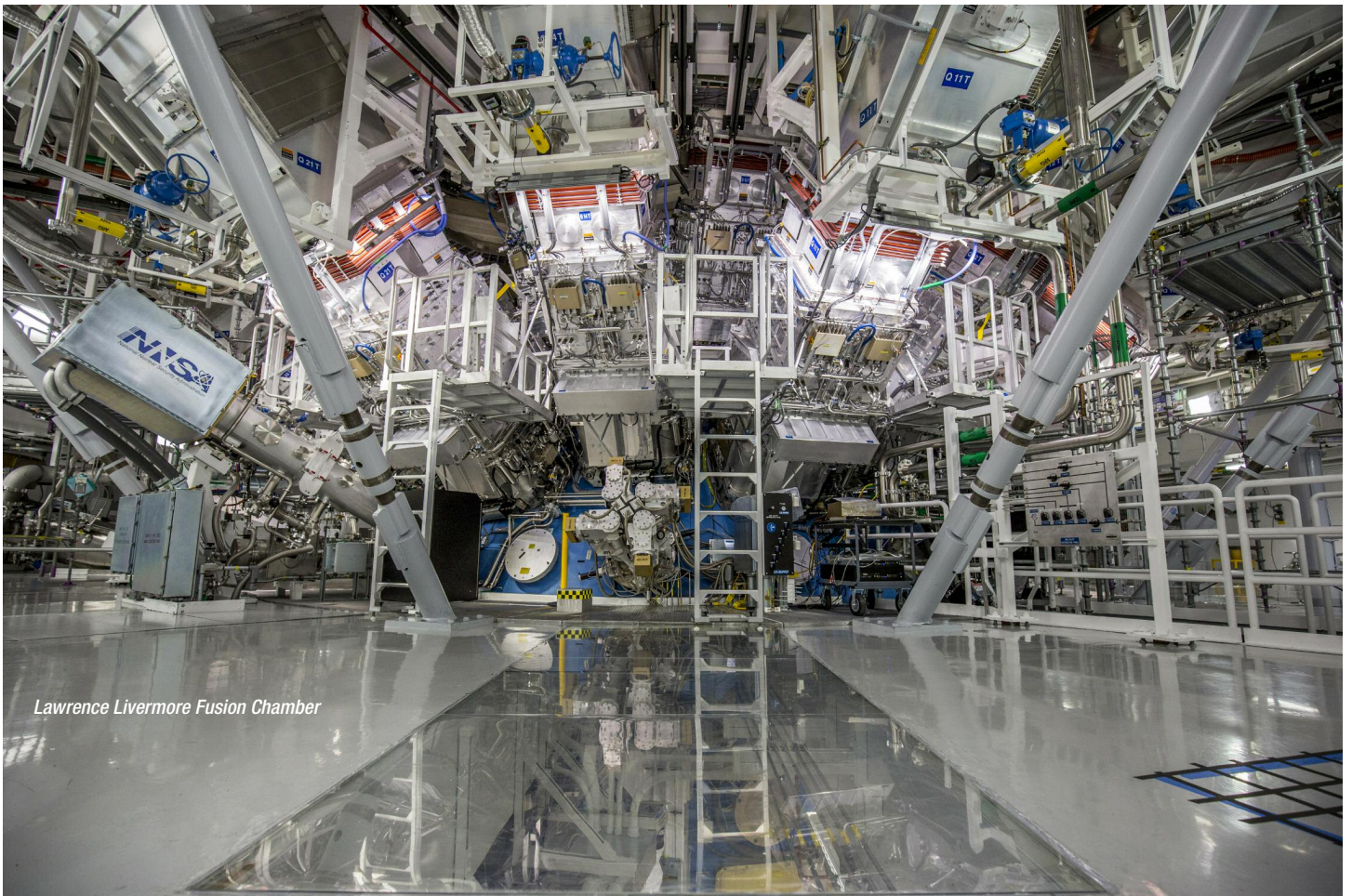
## Reporting on science

The way in which progress in science is reported in the popular press / social media is very strange. There is a tendency to dramatize results out of all recognition.

There is a recent report from Lawrence Livermore on laser confinement nuclear fusion with a net positive energy balance. It was widely reported as the solution to our green energy problems. While there is no doubt that this is an exciting breakthrough based on real science, there is a very long road to exploitation. One needs to make it reliable, increase the power level, capture the energy released and convert it to electricity and heat efficiently and do so on an industrial scale. So it’s a big step forward, but it’s a fair way from industrial exploitation. So to claim that it solves our energy problems is far from correct. It might – but some time in the future.

Early reports in the press on medical breakthroughs are a very mixed bag. Some are basically marketing hype from a company trying to attract customers or funding. Many are preliminary reports on the efficacy of a treatment in very limited initial trials. Some, on the other hand, are genuine breakthroughs validated by lab work or clinical trials. The devil is in the detail. If a treatment is based on an established technology with known science behind it and the efficacy of the treatment is established through clinical trials then good. All else should be viewed very sceptically or as preliminary work.

Nutrition is an area where marketing often triumphs over science. There is scarcely a day in which some new “super food” or “magic



Lawrence Livermore Fusion Chamber





bullet” to extend your life expectancy is not trumpeted to all and sundry. Most of these claims are either based on zero evidence or extrapolated from very limited evidence to become a “major breakthrough”. In this newsletter, the articles by Remo are a good example of a rational approach to nutrition science – but many others are less reliable.

My recommendation, if you are intrigued by a press report of some breakthrough, is to look a bit further. It’s real it will be reported in one of the reputable “popular science” magazines. (e.g. New Scientist, Science News, Scientific American, National Geographic etc.) There will normally be a more balanced account there. Otherwise, try to get to the source information and at least look at the author(s) and his / her affiliation. This will tell you a lot.

## Opinions and beliefs

Everyone has opinions and beliefs. When a scientific /technical report contradicts these, it leads to conflict.

In recent times we seem to be returning to the stage where it’s acceptable to just discount scientific understanding without engaging with the evidence, even in mature areas of science which are well proven. This return to “pre enlightenment” behaviour is very worrying. Denial of objective reality is always very dangerous – it will bite you.

Examples range from the strange to the alarming.

There are people who quite seriously believe that the Earth is flat and want to do their “own research”. From what I have read, they come up with “models”, but then don’t go further. They don’t test them against data we have (see the list in “Maturity of scientific model” above) and don’t look for predictability. Much of the data they would need can be collected by themselves. After all, it was the ancient Greeks who made the first estimate of the size of the Earth, based only on simple observations and basic mathematics. In addition, they also assume it is plausible that every single astronaut is a liar and every space programme is a fraud. They don’t apply even basic logic, let alone a scientific method.

Another example of this trend (to me) is the emotion around the Covid-19 mRNA vaccines. These vaccines introduce into human cells, mRNA which is a **sub-set of the same mRNA** which would be introduced by a variant of the virus itself (it has to be or it would not create an immune response). We know the mechanism of mRNA production, transport and use in cells in detail. We observe that mRNA in cells is destroyed in a few days. We know that mRNA is chemically different from DNA (no Thymine, contains Uracil instead). We know the body contains enzymes which eliminate Uracil mutations from DNA strands. We know what mRNA does in cells – it’s how we make all the protein we need for the body to function. Therefore the scientific basis of the vaccine is sound, the cell biology is

understood and the mechanisms for avoiding RNA incorporation into DNA are known. There were also many extensive clinical trials involving hundreds of thousands of people. Despite all this, lots of people are still suspicious of the vaccine and continue to make unwarranted claims, without evidence, about risks. The worst I heard recently was parents trying to prevent an essential life-saving operation for their child because of their concern about the long term effects of mRNA in donor blood. It would be equally rational be concerned about blood taken from people born under Taurus.

## ...but the data is manipulated

One of the common excuses for a contrary opinion, is the assertion that the data on which it is based is somehow “manipulated” to support the desired conclusion. There are many examples of data manipulation in science, and some of this manipulation has survived for a significant period of time. (Piltown Man was accepted as genuine from 1912 to 1953 – Andrew Wakefield’s *deliberate fraud* around the link between the MMR vaccine and autism still has influence, thought long since discredited) However, they all fail in the end because of the fundamentals of the scientific method. Nobody relies on one data source to confirm a model / theory. One keeps looking for different data sources from other areas which could, or should, confirm the model, or the limits of the model. Inconsistencies lead to more detailed analysis. Thus, while a fraud on a primary data source is possible, the idea that all data sources which will be looked at in the future (even when we don’t yet know which they are) are manipulated at the same time in multiple countries and multiple organisations is just not plausible. Then there’s the human element. Such manipulation would be a conspiracy involving (hundreds of) thousands of people in more than 100 countries. What are the chances of no “leaks” in such a giant conspiracy? Someone would inevitably break ranks to expose it.

I therefore conclude that even short-term data manipulation is effectively impossible if data is being sourced from different countries,

different research groups and organisations with different operational responsibilities. The more people involved, the less likely is data manipulation.

## Conclusions

The scientific method is a very robust way to develop and validate new ideas in Science & Technology. It quickly identifies errors in current models / ideas and identifies more robust alternatives. It clearly defines the scope of applicability of current models in science. It makes no claim to the “truth” of any particular theory, rather it judges success based on the ability accurately to predict the behaviour of systems within defined limits. Explaining past results is good, but the “gold standard” is to predict previously unobserved events. It is evidence driven and tends to minimise “observer bias” over time. It has a long track record of success.

The reporting of Science and Technology is often at odds with the principles of the scientific method. Claims for “truth” are made and research results are claimed to be huge breakthroughs, even when they are simply first steps. Carefully developed research results are disparaged because they don’t fit with the pre-conceived ideas of the reporter / editor / owner of a publication. Pseudo-scientific drivel is often compared directly (and favourably) to more reputable work. Evidence based methodology is not respected. While there is no doubt that errors are made, and fraud occurs in scientific publications, the scientific methodology finds these in time and corrects them. To use such examples to suggest that a whole area of research is a fraud is not realistic.

Both excessively positive and excessively negative reporting of Science are problematic. The reality lies in the middle. Science does not claim “truth”, only that it can predict events based on data and models of behaviour. To understand the reliability of reported work, look at the source information or reputable popular science publications. Also try to assess the maturity of an area of work. Then decide how much weight to give any claim based on this insight.





## THE SCORPION

The young lad had fallen rather ill not long after the family arrived in Kasama, the tiny village in the north-eastern part of what was then Northern Rhodesia. Having spent three months in hospital and a further three months at home flat on his back in bed, when he was finally allowed to leave his bed, he simply collapsed. He could not walk. Six months confined to bed without any thought given to physiotherapy, what tender muscles he had in his little legs before being hospitalised, had simply disappeared.

It took the lad several weeks to learn how to walk and to be capable of walking without someone constantly by his side. Once strong enough, the young lad enjoyed wondering the streets, breathing fresh air and soaking in the sun. A wonderful feeling after being couped up indoors for so long.

One Sunday morning, he was taking one of his long walks through Kasama’s deserted streets. There was not a single car, not a single sole, in sight. Just as he liked it. Solitude. Then something caught his eye. Just ahead, in the middle of the road. Something was moving. Something small and black. He walked over to take a closer look. The thing in the road was a scorpion.

Something was wrong. The little chap’s tail was swinging around wildly and its little legs were moving, but the scorpion wasn’t going anywhere. It seemed stuck to the road.

Kneeling down to take a closer look, but keeping well clear of the swinging tail and its deadly sting, the lad noticed that the scorpion’s back seemed to be broken. It appeared the poor thing had been run over by one of the very few cars in the village. What bad luck. The scorpion would surely die if he left it there in the middle of the road. What to do?

He had to think. What could he do with this injured little chap? Maybe, just maybe, if he took the little fellow home, his father may know what to do, to save its life. Good idea.

Carrying the injured chap back home posed a problem. Although he was only five years old, he was aware that although scorpions did not bite, the sting at the tip of their tail was deadly. The way the scorpion’s tail was thrashing around, it was going to be difficult for the lad to grasp it without being stung. As if the scorpion had read his mind, its tail suddenly stopped moving. Perfect. Very carefully, the lad took hold of the tail, directly below the sting; lifted the crippled scorpion gently off the road and started walking home.

His mother gave a stifled cry when she saw her son walking into their garden with a big grin on his face; with pride, displaying the scorpion for all the family to see. His wise father was going to save his little friend’s life.

Not a chance. His father was quick to react. He picked up a stick, walked over to the lad and knocked the creature out of his hand and onto the ground. He then found a large rock and proceeded to crush the poor scorpion to death.

The young lad was mortified. His father then turned to the lad, yelling at him. Telling him what a stupid boy he was. How stupid to be holding the scorpion so close to the poisonous sting. *‘The worst place possible to be holding that scorpion’*, shouted his father. *‘It’s a miracle it didn’t sting you. You could have died.’*

Tears running down his cheeks, the lad ran to his bedroom, flung himself on his bed and cried himself to sleep.

There comes a time in a child’s life when they have their first doubts about their father, not being the perfect, all knowing, all caring father. Always right about everything. That moment in the young lad’s life had just arrived. Even this five-year-old boy knew that where he had been holding the scorpion was the safest place possible.



## BUSINESS/FINANCE • IMCZ

### Investment Commentary 1st QUARTER 2023 November 25, 2022 • WAGNER & ASSOCIATES Investment Consulting

Contributed by IMCZ member Christian Wagner

#### ECONOMICS AND POLITICS

According to the economists of the EU-Commission, Germany’s GDP will contract by 0.6% next year. The whole Euro-area will be in a (technical) recession in the fourth and first quarter. They reckon with an inflation rate of 8.5% this and 6.1% next year. The Bank of England on its part expects a tenacious, but not deep, recession for up to eight quarters. Inflation is currently at 11.1% and not expected to decline until mid-2023.

#### BOND MARKETS

Until recently “TINA” (there is no alternative) was the reason why equities were preferred, now the expression is valid for the interest rate increases by central banks. Since inflation tends to decline only slowly, it must be assumed that efforts to tame it will take longer. In the beginning the problem was solely the large increase in energy prices, but this spilled over to food prices and nowadays the service industry is affected. A wage-price-spiral in certain countries cannot be ruled out.

#### EQUITY MARKETS

Despite an uncertain economic development and rising interest rates, realized earnings are in the range of expectations which had been reduced only slightly. Companies have succeeded in passing on most of the cost increases up to now. The markets have thus probably discounted the valuation effects of higher interest rates but not the

consequences of a decline in operating margins. When prices cannot be increased further, costs have to be reduced. One of the best examples is the wave of redundancies, especially in the technology sector.

#### CURRENCIES

The IMF is often the lender of last resort when individual countries have financial difficulties, and their currency is in danger of collapsing. Less known is the fact that certain countries also loan money with strict conditions attached. China e.g. has helped Argentina and Pakistan. Should a country still go bankrupt, it is unclear how such informal lenders will be treated.

#### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In view of the market turbulences caused by the proposed growth package of the former British government, the fiscal situation in other western nations should also be examined. All countries are spending money for pandemic and inflation measures, and all are facing an economic slowdown or recession. The fiscal burden of a reconstruction of the Ukraine when the war is over and the outlays to fulfil the promises at the COP-27 climate conference still lay ahead.

Christian Wagner,  
Schönggrund 11, CH-6343 Rotkreuz,  
Tel. +41 (0)41 790 35 81



## Show Must Go On ...

Contributed by IMCZ Sports' editor Joseph Dow

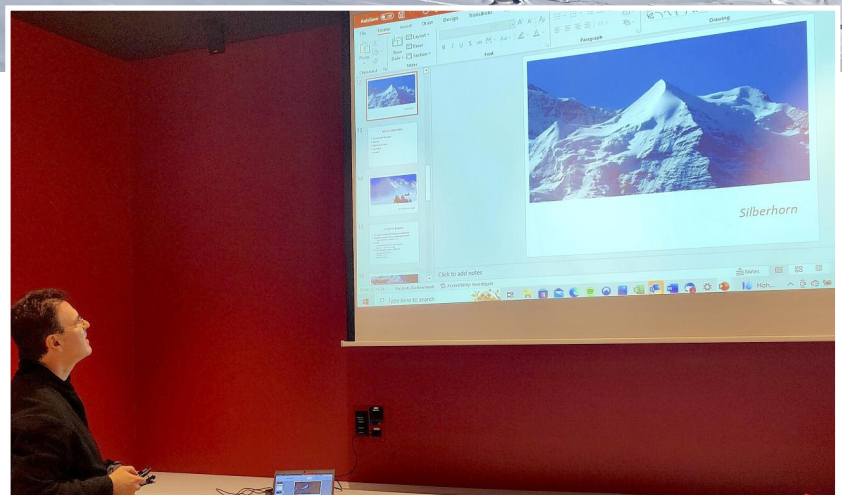
# 2022 IMCZ Winter Sports Show



Everything looked ready to go on the morning of October 20<sup>th</sup>, when I got the first call ... The last gasp of the Covid monster had stricken Saskia, our resort presenter, and she would not be able to attend our event at the Park Hotel. Originally a restriction from past shows to keep the evening to a manageable length, the number of presenters was limited to three, and that seemed to work well with each presenter given enough time to provide a comprehensive talk. So, three became the rule: a *ski company*, a *clothing manufacturer*, and a *Swiss ski resort*. Faced with only two presenters remaining, I began to scramble to see if there was something else I could do. Then, apparent disaster struck!

Around noon, the presenter for **Anavon**, the ski company, who was to be the keynote presenter of the evening, emailed to say that he, too, had come down with the Coof, would not attend and no one else would be available to cover. In a panic, I contacted and begged them to send anyone, even a young intern looking to get some presentation experience. No luck. CC'd on the emails, Bruno Kernen, the CEO of the company, sympathetically responded that he had been, up to this point, unaware of the situation but unfortunately was powerless to help, as he was unavailable at a sports tradeshow in Munich.

I sat with my head in my hands for five minutes, about to slip into despair. Then, I remembered the words of Freddie Mercury and quickly called up my knowledge of the sport of skiing to whip up an ad hoc presentation on ***Skiing in Switzerland***. I had hoped I would be the smiling master of ceremonies for the evening but became the third presenter. Saskia rallied and agreed to present via Zoom and the event went ahead.





To my great relief, Bill was able to get the Zoom call to work and the speaker to integrate. Saskia gave us a nice view of the wonderful **Flims Laax** resort with details about both winter and summer offerings, various activities, available facilities, and accommodations through a narrated audio-visual presentation. Saskia also provided a special code for members to use, if they wish to visit Laax. You can use the club's code: **IMCZ15** for a 15% discount when you book the signahotel or rocksresort hotels on their site.

Next, the highlight of the show became the presentation and live fashion show provided by **DRAFT**'s Tobias Nagele. Toby gave us a wonderful overview and history of the Austrian clothing brand, **Frauenschuh**, with the lovely Peggy Ringuey modeling various pieces from the current collection. The line is elegant and understated, combining natural materials and high-tech fabrics in classic designs executed with exquisite quality. Yes, I am a huge fan of this brand and definitely recommend it and Toby's shop in Zürich to my friends in the club.

With such an enthusiastic and supportive audience, it was quite easy for me to then ramble through my presentation about skiing in Switzerland. I tried to cover all the major areas from the different ski regions of the country and indicate some resorts to consider for various types of skiers. Overall, I think the show was a success despite the near catastrophe and lack of a ski company presenter.

In the near future, we will attempt to put together a ski day/weekend for club members at Laax. So, stay tuned for information that I will coordinate with Bill and the Board.



## Additional Information:

**LAAX** (Flims Laax Falera): [flimslaax.com](http://flimslaax.com),  
[reservation@laax.com](mailto:reservation@laax.com), +41 81 927 99 99

**FRAUENSCHUH** Clothing:  
[frauenschuh.com/en](http://frauenschuh.com/en)

**DRAFT** :  
[www.shopdraft.ch/store/frauenschuh](http://www.shopdraft.ch/store/frauenschuh)  
Wildbachstrasse 68, 8008 Zürich  
[hello@shopdraft.ch](mailto:hello@shopdraft.ch)

**ANAVON** Swiss Tailor-made Ski:  
[anavon-ski.com](http://anavon-ski.com)

**PRAY FOR SNOW!!! PRAY FOR SKIING!!!  
PRAY FOR SNOW!!! PRAY FOR SKIING!!!**

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



## Exclusive offer for IMCZ members

Stay in LAAX this winter and get a **15% discount** off accommodation at **signinahotel** or **rocksresort**.

Mention "**IMCZ15**" as a promo code at time of booking on the websites, by e-mail ([reservation@laax.com](mailto:reservation@laax.com)) or by phone (+41 81 927 99 99).

*Booking and cancellation policies as well as included and excluded services will be mentioned in the detailed offer.*

*Excluding black-out dates:  
24.12.22-07.01.23 & 12.02.-25.02.23  
A minimum stay may be required.*

Located directly at the heart of the LAAX valley station, rocksresort and signinahotel are the ideal places to spend an active getaway in the mountains of Graubünden.



signinahotel



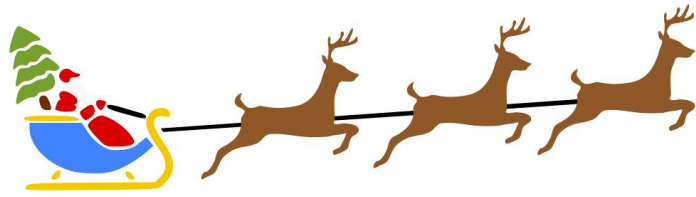
rocksresort





## Traditional terrible Christmas one liners (for the kids)

- What do you call an obnoxious reindeer? Rude-olph.
- How is Christmas exactly like your job? You do all the work and some fat guy in a suit gets all the credit.
- Why did no one bid for Rudolph and Blitzen on eBay? Because they were two deer!
- What do you call a scary looking reindeer? A cari-boo.
- What did the Queen call her Christmas Broadcast? The One Show!
- What do reindeers say before they tell you a joke? This one's gonna sleigh you!
- What do you call Santa's little helpers? Subordinate clauses.
- Why don't you ever see Santa in the hospital? Because he has private elf care!
- What's the difference between the Christmas alphabet and the ordinary alphabet? The Christmas alphabet has No-el.es
- Why is it getting harder to buy Advent calendars? Their days are numbered!
- How do you know when Santa's around? You can always sense his presents.
- How did Scrooge win the football game? The ghost of Christmas passed!
- What do you call an elf that can sing and dance? Elfis.
- What do angry mice send to each other at Christmas? Cross-mouse cards!
- Where does Santa keep all his money? At the local snow bank.
- What do you call a broke Santa? Saint Nickel-less
- What do you call a bunch of chess players bragging about their games in a hotel lobby? Chess nuts boasting in an open foyer!
- What did the beaver say to the Christmas Tree? Nice gnawing you!
- What's every parent's favorite Christmas Carol? Silent Night.
- What does Santa do with out of shape elves? Sends them to an elf Farm.
- Who hides in the bakery at Christmas? A mince spy!
- What do snowmen eat for breakfast? Frosted Flakes or Ice Crispies.
- What would you call an elf who just has won the lottery? Welfy!
- How did the bauble get addicted to Christmas? He was hooked on trees his whole life!
- What athlete is warmest in winter? A long jumper!
- What do you get if you cross a bell with a skunk? Jingle Smells!
- What do you get when you cross a deer with rain? A reindeer!
- ...with my apologies – but it seems it's compulsory.



## An accident report

I am writing in response to your request for additional information in Block 3 of the accident report form. I put "Poor planning" as the cause of my accident. You asked for a fuller explanation and I trust the following details will be sufficient.

I am a bricklayer by trade. On the day of the accident, I was working alone on the roof of a new six-story building. When I completed my work, I found I had some bricks left over, which, when weighed later were found to be slightly in excess of 500lbs. Rather than carry the bricks down by hand, I decided to lower them in a barrel by using a pulley, which was attached to the side of the building on the sixth floor.

Securing the rope at ground level, I went up to the roof, swung the barrel out and loaded the bricks into it. Then I went down and untied the rope, holding it tightly to ensure a slow descent of the bricks. You will note in Block 11 of the accident report form that I weigh 135lbs.

Due to my surprise at being jerked off the ground so suddenly, I lost my presence of mind and forgot to let go of the rope. Needless to say, I proceeded at a rapid rate up the side of the building. In the vicinity of the third floor, I met the barrel which was now proceeding downward at an equally impressive speed. This explains the fractured skull, minor abrasions and the broken collarbone, as listed in Section 3 of the accident report form.

Slowed only slightly, I continued my rapid ascent, not stopping until the fingers of my right hand were two knuckles deep into the pulley. Fortunately by this time I had regained my presence of mind and was able to hold tightly to the rope, in spite of the excruciating pain I was now beginning to experience. At approximately the same time, however, the barrel of bricks hit the ground and the bottom fell out of the barrel. Now devoid of the weight of the bricks, that barrel weighed approximately 50 lbs. I refer you again to my weight of 135 pounds.

As you might imagine, I began a Rapid descent, down the side of the building. In the vicinity of the third floor, I met the barrel coming up. This accounts for the two fractured ankles, broken tooth and severe lacerations of my legs and lower body. Here my luck began to change slightly. The encounter with the barrel seemed to slow me enough to lessen my injuries when I fell into the pile of bricks and fortunately only three vertebrae were cracked.

I am sorry to report, however, as I lay there on the pile of bricks, in pain, unable to move, I again lost my composure and presence of mind and let go of the rope and I lay there watching the empty barrel begin its journey back down onto me. This explains the two broken legs.

I hope this answers your inquiry as to my "poor planning".



## What's the World's Greatest Invention

An engineer, a physicist, a mathematician, and a mystic were asked to name the greatest invention of all time. The engineer chose fire, which gave humanity power over matter. The physicist chose the wheel, which gave humanity the power over space. The mathematician chose the alphabet, which gave humanity power over symbols. The mystic chose the thermos bottle.

"Why a thermos bottle?" the others asked.

"Because the thermos keeps hot liquids hot in winter and cold liquids cold in summer."

"Yes - so what?"

"Think about it," said the mystic reverently.

"That little bottle - how does it know?"



## Pilot with a White Cane?

One day at a busy airport, the passengers on a commercial airliner are seated waiting for the pilot and co-pilot to show up so the plane can take off. The pilot and co-pilot finally appear in the rear of the plane, and begin walking up to the cockpit through the aisle.

Both appear to be blind. The pilot is using a white cane, bumping into passengers as he walks down the aisle, and the co-pilot is using a guide dog. Both have huge sunglasses covering their eyes. At first the passengers don't react thinking it is a practical joke.

After a few minutes the engines start up and the plane starts down the runway. The passengers look at each other with uneasiness and look toward the flight attendants for reassurance. The plane gets going really fast and approaches take-off speed. The passengers begin to panic. As the plane gets closer and closer to the end of the runway, the voices of people praying get more and more hysterical.

Finally, when the plane is less than 10 feet from the end of the runway, all the passengers begin to scream at once. At the last moment the plane lifts off and is airborne.

Up in the cockpit, the co-pilot breathes a sigh of relief and says to the Captain:

"You know, one of these days the passengers aren't going to scream and we're going to get killed."

## Too Much TV for Children

Isn't it amazing what a child, a toddler, or a kindergartner or first grader will say? They learn from imitating and repeating from what hear from their parents, siblings, friends, and yes, television. TV is a wonderful teacher. Sometimes. Sometimes NOT!

Waiting tables at the local Dew Drop Inn Cafe, we have a regular breakfast crowd. And from time to time we see new faces.

This morning a little boy and his mother came in for breakfast.

"Can I get you some coffee ma'am?"

"Yes, please, with sweetener."

"And what would you like to eat this morning young man?"

"Tommy, please tell this nice lady what you want to eat for breakfast this morning?"

"Yes, mommy. I WISH TO DEVOUR THE UNBORN!" Tommy announced boisterously.

His mother was very taken back and embarrassed. "Tommy!"

Quietly and with hesitation she looked up at me.

"Eggs. He would like some eggs for breakfast."

## The Hungry Puppy

Over indulging during the Christmas holiday season is anticipated, and expected. For one little beagle, at just a year old, Butchy took it a bit too far last year.

Butchy promptly attacked the pies with a vengeance when everyone stepped away from the kitchen. While pumpkin pie was not obviously a favorite, Butchy managed to lick, bite, gobble or destroy 6 of them. The 2 apple pies, and 3 pecan pies did not fare much better, especially with the puppy's love of sweets and the rich pecans. This treat included the foil pie pans and plastic wrap.

Butchy's owner Betty Lou returned to the kitchen after adding the final touches to the Christmas tree, and colorful garland to the fireplace mantle. "I went back into the kitchen and found Butchy lying in the middle of the floor, on his back, with feet in the air. His belly was nearly double it's normal size. I had to make an emergency trip to the vet immediately. And yes, she made a mess in my car when she got sick!"

The vet said there was not much more he could do. He gave me some laxative pills for Butchy, so he could pass the sharp foil pieces without serious stomach damage.

Naturally Betty Lou submitted a claim to her insurance company for the trip to the vet and the prescription. Cleaning the car, that's on her own shoulders. Way to go Butchy!

## My Politically Correct Annual Holiday Letter

Dear Friends,

Please accept with no obligation, implied or implicit, my best wishes for a low stress, environmentally conscious, socially responsible, gender neutral, non co-dependent, and non-addictive celebration of the winter solstice holiday, practiced in the most enjoyable traditions of the religious persuasion of your choice, or secular practices of your choice, with respect for the religious or secular practices and/or traditions of others, or their choice not to practice religious or secular practices at all.

I also wish you a fiscally successful, personally fulfilling, and medically uncomplicated recognition of the generally accepted of the new calendar year approaching, but not without all due respect for the calendars of choice of other cultures whose contributions to society have helped make America great, not to imply that the United States is the only America in the Western Hemisphere, and without regard to the sex, race, color, creed, age, physical ability, aesthetic dynamics, religious faith, choice of internet service provider, choice of computer platform, or other preferences of the wisher.

(By accepting this greeting, you are accepting these terms. This greeting is subject to clarification or withdrawal. It is freely transferable with no alteration to the original greeting. It implies no promise by the wisher to actually implement any of the aforementioned wishes for him/herself or others, and is void where prohibited by law and revocable at the sole discretion of the wisher. This wish is warranted to perform as expected within the usual application of good tidings for a period of one year, or until the issuance of a subsequent holiday greeting, whichever comes first, and warranty is limited to replacement of this wish only, or the issuance of a new wish at the sole discretion of the wisher.)





## Members' Marketplace

Are you **selling** your yacht (harboured in Piraeus)?

Your Aston-Martin old-timer with the roll top roof?

A gorgeous view of the Bay of Biscay, with a little bit of house attached?

Or are you cashing in the half of your stamp collection that is finally worth something?

Perhaps you're **looking** for all of these things?

### Then ADVERTISE here, in the IMCZ News;

The Members' Marketplace is reserved for unformatted advertisements of 150 characters (approx. 3 lines) of text. These are free of charge to IMCZ members.

Advertisements must be submitted as illustrated below. Longer advertisements cost CHF 30.-

**Example:** FOR SALE: gorgeous view of Bay of Biscay with stunning sunsets and high waves. Wee house (12 rooms), dock and yacht included. Call Bill at 041 123 45 67.

## IMCZNEWS Advertising Rates

The IMCZ newsletter is delivered bi-monthly to about 200 members representing 20 nationalities. IMCZ members have personal or professional interests in both the international community and in the canton of Zug.

**Format:** A4 vertical, full color.

**Ad content delivery:** electronic by e-mail, .pdf, .jpg, .gif

### Advertising Rates:

- Full page, A4 vertical. (19 x 27.7 cm), Fr. 210.-
- 1/2 Page, A5 horizontal (19 x 13.5 cm), Fr. 115.-
- 1/3 Page, vertical (6.3 x 27.7 cm), Fr. 85.-
- 1/3 Page, horizontal (19 x 9.2 cm), Fr. 85.-
- 1/4 Page, A6 vertical (9.2 x 13.5 cm), Fr. 65.-
- 1/4 Page, horizontal (19 x 6.9 cm), Fr. 65.-
- Business Card (9.2 x 6.45 cm) Fr. 40.-

Extra costs may be incurred for typesetting, special formatting, etc.

Discount for year of advertising - 20%

Discount for members - 20% off single adverts, 30% off annual advert



### STAMMTISCH

Every Thursday from 18:00-20:30

We meet at different venues - please check our website for the location:  
<https://imcz.club/Club-Events>