

You may have noticed the new **Teacup SMS Report/MicroBlog** section on the teacup home page. The SMS report is a user entered report on ski conditions at Teacup and the roads going there. The micro blog is a Twitter like blog for members. The conditions report is retrievable via text messaging as is entry of ski conditions and blog lines. There is also a web based interface for data entry. This document explains how it all works.

Teacup is offering an experimental text message based service which will allow members and nonmembers to:

- Get the latest National Weather Service temperature forecast.
- Grooming information.
- Data on skate, classic rating
- Cabin closing time
- Parking lot status
- Highway status

This data is user based - we do not yet have any monitoring system in place at the cabin.

Success of this system will depend on your usage and good reporting. One big limitation is that cell reception at Teacup is limited to Verizon users. We are hoping that our Verizon users will give us current information while at Teacup and that others will give us information (highway anyway) on the way up or down when they can reach the AT&T/T-mobile towers.

Unlike **Twitter**, the Teacup system is not a broadcast system. You get reports by "polling". You send a message to Teacup's number and shortly later receive the report back. The system is updated by users who report on condition status in the **send** message.

Getting started:

1. Go to <http://membership.teacupnordic.org/> and select the **Register for Teacup SMS** tab.
2. Enter the name you sent in for your Teacup membership (either first last, or last, first)
3. and a short name to be known as in your messages. This name must be unique - you will not be allowed to go to step 4 if someone has already used that name.
4. Clicking on the Register Name button will bring up the Zeep form to enter your cell phone number.
5. After entering your cell number, Zeep will text you with a short message from the Teacup phone number which is 88147.
6. Send a reply to 88147 with a YES (or STOP) to proceed.
7. Send status queries and reports to 88147 where the first word of the text is teacupxc.
8. You will get a reply back with current Teacup conditions as our users have reported.
9. You can also enter conditions reports and blog line through the **Enter Teacup Conds** tab on this page.

You can try out status only messaging by sending a message: **join teacupxc** to number 88147. This allows one to text the message **teacupxc** to 88147 and receive a reply of the latest report. You will not be able to update

though.

The current status words are:

Code	Meaning	Suggested use	Expires in
lgr	last groomed	S M T W Th F Sa	14 days
ngr	next grooming		
skt	skate conditions	0-9 or 1 word (great sucks)	8 hours
cls	classic condition		
tp	temperature	2 digits with minus	4 hours
wnd	wind speed	low-hi or word (windy calm)	
pre	precipitation	snow rain slee	
hut	Cabin closing	hh:mm or clsd	12 hrs
lot	lot % full	xx(x)	4 hrs
h26 h35	Highway 26 or 35 status	OK clsd hours delay	8 hrs

Example messages:

1. **teacupxc lgr'Su ngr'W skt'4 cls'2 pre'snow hut'closed lot'10** this results in a response of: **teacupxc: Tcup NWS tp:hi/lo sky:xx% lgr:Su ngr:W skt:4 cls:2 pre:snow hut:closed lot:10**
2. later on someone sends **Teacupxc hut'4:30 lot'50** which results in: **teacupxc: Tcup NWS tp:hi/lo sky:xx% lgr:Su ngr:W skt:4 cls:2 hut:4:30 lot:50**
3. Someone sends: **teacupxc** and gets the previous response.
4. Another user sends: **teacupxc tp'23 pre'snow** the response is now: **teacupxc: Tcup NWS tp:hi/lo sky:xx% lgr:Su ngr:W skt:4 cls:2 tp:23 pre:snow hut:4:30 lot:50**

How it works:

- User sends a message to phone number: 88147
- The first word of the message must be **teacupxc**. Any of the above commands can follow.
- Zeep.com routes this message to a form handling page on our website with information:
 - sender registered name
 - phone number (currently ignored)
 - the message body
- The web page inspects the message and inserts any content matching the above codes into the

database. It then replies with the NWS forecast and the current database content.

- Registered users are given a level 1 priority allowing them to alter the database. Unregistered users (or those posting "bad" messages) will have a priority of 0 and be limited to receiving data only.

Alternate Interface:

The webpage <http://membership.teacupnordic.org/> displays the current conditions in the center of the header. Also, the tab: **Enter Teacup Conds** allows one to enter conditions from the web.

Caveats:

The membership database used in <http://membership.teacupnordic.org/> is not yet that used by the board to keep member data, so it may be incomplete.

The whole web interface is in flux and may change at any moment. Also, it has been tested using Firefox and Opera to a lesser extent. IE and Safari probably work.

The Zeep interface is poorly documented and missing some features.

Future plans/ideas:

The member database will eventually allow you to register and renew your membership. We will probably be able to use your AOL, Google, FaceBook, or similar OpenID registration to verify your identity and login to Teacup.

We can build a mobile webpage similar to **Enter Teacup Conds** so that iphone, gphone, or other cell phones with a web browser can enter data without using a text message.

We are looking at the concept of a microblog, which would allow users to post messages from their cell phone. This is more or less working: any text after the last condition is entered into a database for display. It's mostly a matter of figuring out where to display the resulting "blog". In the meantime, suggestions posted with received messages will be logged. Update - the blog is now available on the <http://membership.teacupnordic.org/> page.

Teacup might purchase a prepaid Verizon phone for the cabin which would allow members to do on-site reports. An exercise for the reader is to either program the phone to read weather instruments and send out periodic updates, or do the same using a low power computer and a SMS enabled modem.

Policy considerations:

We need to consider (and this will evolve) who is allowed to join and what levels of messaging are allowed if

several classes are defined. Also, do we broadcast status to users, and at what times... It would also be possible to add "Twitter" features, so that people would be able to grab comments from a friend (or group). I can see this a potentially useful for our high school teams - one place to send a message to the whole team.