

MT. MANSFIELD SKI CLUB BULLETIN

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DEVELOPMENTS - PAST AND FUTURE

The development of the ski trail system on the eastern side of Mt. Mansfield has proceeded from the beginning in an extremely harmonious atmosphere, with the Vermont Forest Service, the Town of Stowe, certain private interests, the Amateur Ski Club of New York, and the Mt. Mansfield Ski Club all cooperating in a most energetic manner. It would seem now that a point has been reached where a bit of introspection and analyzing is in order.

Natural Conditions Favorable

In the development of any skiing center one absolutely necessary requirement of course is natural facilities. By these are meant favorable topography, sufficient snowfall, and accessibility. It is desirable also to build around some outstanding feature, or combination of them, such as a major racing trail, a first class jumping hill, late spring snow areas, exceptional touring terrain, good open slopes or forest-slalom areas serviced by tows, or an aerial tramway. The Stowe-Mansfield region is fortunate in possessing several of these things, together with fine topography, snowfall, accessibility, adequate accommodations, and qualified instructors.

An Extensive Trail System

In the entire region there now exists a total of 65 miles of ski trails, of which 15 miles are located on State preserves, and 45 on privately owned land. Practically all the trails in the Mt. Mansfield State Forest were constructed specifically for skiing, and since that part of the mountain is the steepest and most rugged, the greater share of expert downhill runs are in that section. On private lands there has been an equal amount of new construction, together with the clearing and widening of abandoned carriage roads, old lumber roads and foot trails. The fact that a large portion of the terrain adjacent to the mountain proper consists of former farm land, makes these less steep and more thinly wooded slopes primarily suited to touring.

Classification of Trails

The following table summarizes the results of a detailed trail survey conducted by the Club last fall. Downhill runs are classified according to the currently accepted method as Expert, Intermediate and Novice, which terms are more or less self explanatory. Touring trails are designated as Ordinary and Advanced--the former being suitable for average or novice skiers, while the latter because of their steepness and often restricted width require a somewhat higher degree of all-around ability.

<u>Class</u>	<u>State Forecast</u>	<u>Private Land</u>	<u>Total</u>
Expert Run	3.55 mi.	1.05 mi.	4.60 mi.
Intermediate Run	6.25	7.15	13.40
Novice Run	2.00	10.45	12.45
Ordinary Touring	0.90	24.90	25.80
Advanced Touring	1.00	4.20	5.20
Miscellaneous	1.15	2.15	3.30
TOTALS	<u>14.85</u> mi.	<u>49.90</u> mi	<u>64.76</u> mi

(To be continued in the next issue)

Charles D. Lord

THE SKI SCHOOL

Sepp Ruschp who has made so many friends during his past two years at Mt. Mansfield is this winter running his own ski school with headquarters at the Toll House. His assistant is Ali Mauracher, late of the Greenwich Outing Club, and an Austrian state qualified instructor. In association with Sepp will be Jacque Charmoz the resident instructor at The Lodge and a familiar figure at the mountain.

The ski school is directly sponsored by our Club. For the first time the instructional facilities are organized so that you can be sure of obtaining lessons at regularly scheduled times during the week and week-end. Six hourly classes will be held each day from nine to four o'clock, and provision made for forming groups of comparable ability. Rates are a dollar a lesson for classes, increasing to three dollars for private instruction. While advance reservations are not necessary, it is suggested that a good idea would be to gather a group of friends for a regular course.

In associating the Club so closely with Sepp, the directors believe that they are doing something of definite service not only to members but to all who ski at Mt. Mansfield. Sepp has proved to be a swell fellow, and it is hoped that we can do as much for him as he does for us.

RANCH CAMP NEWS

Ranch Camp announces that the larder is well filled, and that as usual plenty of warm blankets are on hand. For those desiring a sandwich, a meal or a bunk, a reasonable scale of prices prevails. As has been customary in the past, there will be a free cup of tea for anyone at any time.

Rates, per person, for food and lodging are as follows:
 Temp, Stem, and Telemark Cabins - \$3.00 a day, \$17.00 a week
 Igloo Cabin - \$2.50 a day and \$15.00 a week

A discount of ten per cent from the daily rate will be made to Club members.

Individual meals will be served at the following prices:
Breakfast - .40, Lunch - .50, Dinner - .60. A regular dinner will be served on Sundays from 12 to 2, and from 5 to 7 for 60 cents.

For those wishing a light snack, sandwiches will be provided at ten and fifteen cents, beverages at five cents, and a bowl of hot soup for 15 cents.

It is suggested that Club members desiring accommodations at the Ranch for a day or more make reservations in advance, if possible.

Trim and Bert Conkling

PUBLICATIONS

Just before Christmas there appeared from Hanover, N.H. a new publication called SKI WEEK. A weekly newspaper for northeastern skiers, it presents an imposing list of experts as feature writers. Judging from the first two issues the paper is well worth anyone's fifty cents for a season's subscription.

SKI WEEK seems to be just what we have been waiting for. Having none of the regional or organizational obligations which make most skiing publications such unutterably dull reading, it is my bet that SKI WEEK will do a great deal toward raising the standard of ski news to where it belongs.

LETTERS

Postmarked Juneau, Alaska comes the following letter from our fellow member Ted Coomara, who will be remembered by some when he lived at Craftsbury, Vermont and used to hang around the Nose Dive with his gang of schoolboy skiers. Last winter Ted was at Mt. Hood and an interesting article by him appears in the current American Ski Annual.

"Too bad you are not footloose like me, because if you were you would be here to see what I can see. Yesterday (the letter is dated Nov. 4) I lugged my skis up Gastineau Peak, a small protuberance on the earth's crust about 3500 feet high, and one of the hundreds of such within view. At timberline, 2500 ft., there was a trace of powder snow, and at 3000 ft. about six feet of wind pack in the hollows with an old crust on the ridges. Near the top there was a light wind, a blue sky, and a wilderness of tree-less glaciated peaks all around me. Two eagles spiraled slowly above and looking down I could see endless bays and inlets where the sea fills the fjords; all flanked with spruce and hemlock topped by snow mountains.

"...The (Juneau Ski) club is fortunate in that several members also belong to the Forest Service, with the result that the CCC have cut two ski trails, one not unlike the Chin Clip, and have erected cabins and a bunk-house and also cleared several acres of steep ground for open slope skiing. The below-timber ski season around here is about the same length of time as at Mt. Mansfield, except that the snow is somewhat deeper and there is apt to be spring skiing through most of May... It is fascinating to see winter approach, not out of the north as it does down below, but vertically down the mountainsides, a little lower each time it rains in Juneau, which is almost every day."

Ted

Dear Sir:

...It is getting so that the average skier is not content unless he has super-hickories, steel edges and cable bindings. Most people you meet on the trails are loaded down with enough fancy hardware to sink the Normandie. It is no wonder they go for ski tows instead of cross country skiing with all that weight to carry around.

So far as I can see, steel edges are only necessary for downhill racers or those who ski a lot in the mountains. They are supposed to make the skis last longer, but when you get right down to it what's the matter with a pair of well worn ash for every day going? And as for cables, you can get enough down pull with more safety on plenty of leather bindings. You don't have to have so much down pull that your ears scrape the snow in order to ski... Or maybe all the fancy stuff is why there are so many expert skiers around nowadays.

A. J. B.

(Evidently a damned communist boring from within.—Ed.)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

It is a matter of great regret that Mr. Frank Griffin has found it necessary for business reasons to resign as vice-president and a director of the Club. Fortunately, however, he is able to continue as chairman of the competitions committee. Frank was among those responsible for the formation of the Club, and has done a tremendous amount for the development of skiing in the Stowe-Mansfield region. Despite his resignation from the board, the directors feel that his advice and assistance still are available in our various activities.

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Now that Christmas is passed, the membership secretary wishes that all members who have not done so will send in their 1938-9 dues as soon as possible. There are certain expenses connected with the operation of any club, and while we came through last year with \$127.74 in the bank, we must depend almost entirely on our membership dues for our principal source of income.

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Charles Lord whose article on skiing developments begins in this issue has put more actual time and thought into the Mt. Mansfield trails than any ten other men. Motivated solely by his own personal enthusiasm for the sport, he should stand as an example to those who moan about conditions but never raise a finger to help. Back in 1926 Charles was an exponent of the Zardsky technique, and the way he could switch down a steep slope with his single staff would have made your eyes jump right out. Although the rest of us kept telling him that the book said poles should not be used for turning, we never could prove it by our own exhibitions. Now he is an unforgiving purist, and the sight of a stick rider would quake him to the teeth.

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Among certain outsiders there seem to be two evenly divided schools of thought about the Club,—(1) that we are cleaning up plenty from the skiing at Mt. Mansfield, or (2) that we are dumb as hell not to be cleaning up plenty. The inference from both sides of course is that there is plenty lying around for someone to clean up, and that they would rather like to be in on it. If you hear anyone talking like that by all means send them up to Stowe, and we will see that they are provided with an axe to do all the cleaning up they desire.

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Send all bulletin contributions to the editor, A. W. Coleman, 25 Liberty St., Montpelier, Vt., While naturally a purely Club publication of restricted circulation, I am sure that our members would be interested in material on any general skiing topic. Since a section devoted to letters has been started, it may give some of you a chance to blow off steam now and then.