

## MT. MANSFIELD SKI CLUB BULLETIN

Vol. V No. 7

March 24, 1939

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### SUN VALLEY LETTER

Sun Valley is perfectly delightful and very beautiful. The sun shines always here—too often in fact, because there have been only two snow storms since the first of the year and we need snow badly this winter. It gets down near zero at night but it's plenty hot from eleven to four. You've got to ski with dark glasses all of the time, and keep your face well lathered with grease. In the middle of the day it's like spring skiing in the East. What little snow there is always good. It never freezes and it never gets too soft.

My big thrill of course is the same thrill that everyone has who comes here—the up-mountain transportation in the form of chair tows. There are three such tows, one each on Dollar, Ruud and Proctor Mountains. The first day I was here I took things easy (because of the altitude—Sun Valley is 6,000 feet) and yet I figure I had more downhill running than in three week-ends in Stowe.

Dollar Mountain is the, "practice slope" where, most of the ski classes are held. It is completely above timber line, and there is a huge, gradual slope at the bottom where the beginners take their lessons. The tow takes about seven minutes to the top, and from there you have a choice of three easy runs down. Ruud Mountain also is above the tree line but is very much steeper. The tow is faster, but it takes about ten minutes. From the summit you have a choice of several runs because the mountain is formed by three ridges, and you can ski down these or take the bowls between. Because of these bowls, Ruud is ideal for slalom and all of the slalom races are held there. Proctor Mountain is again steeper, taking about fifteen minutes up on the tow. Unlike the others it is covered with trees to about half-way up, so while the upper part is open skiing the bottom is more or less trail skiing as in the East. Most of the downhill races are held on Proctor.

Another mountain which is a favorite for advanced skiers is Baldy. A tractor type sled holding about twenty people takes you from the 6,000 foot level to 8,000 feet—just above tree line—in an hour and a half. From there you climb for about two hours on ski—no to just over 10,000 feet. We did that run the second day here and being unaccustomed to the altitude it was really tough going. The first 2,000 feet down is all wonderful open-slope skiing, and from there down you ski on a trail designed last year by Dick Durrance. The trail is steep and fast, but not comparable to the Nose Dive.

After skiing on the Nose Dive as much as we have, we have no fear whatsoever of any mountains, slopes or trails out here. Everyone here

who has ever skied the Nose Dive talks about how much they like it. Most of the racers here—both men and women—say that it is the most interesting race course they've ever seen (Take a bow Charlie Lord). But, everyone also says, "if only you had a tow up Mt. Mansfield". Really, the only advantage that Sun Valley has over the Mt. Mansfield region is the ski tows. In a little under three weeks of skiing I've had more downhill running than in three whole winters at home. That's the real reason that people come here from all over the United States. (February 23rd).

J. N. Cooke

#### INTERSCHOLASTIC SKIING

Five years ago the Club organized the first interscholastic ski meet in Vermont. Since then, under the direction of Howard Prestwich whose idea it was, the meet has been an annual fixture at Stowe. In the beginning, schools outside of the State sent teams to the competition, but with the increasing interest in skiing it became necessary later to limit the entries to Vermont schools. This winter the Vermont Headmasters' Club, which administers inter-scholastic sports, took over the organization of the meet as one of its recognized activities.

This move is a satisfactory climax to our pioneer efforts. It means that skiing, previously just tolerated by the authorities who were more concerned with the longer established games, has been accepted as a logical part of the athletic curriculum.

To Howard Prestwich and Raymond Bassett (until recently principal of Stowe High School) goes all of the credit for giving Vermont interscholastic skiing a sound beginning based on the four-event championship. It is hoped that the Headmaster's Club will continue this policy which should have some influence in developing really versatile skiers for the future.

#### RANCH CAMP NEWS

It almost seems like spring around Ranch Camp these mornings, in spite of the fact that the area is covered with more than three feet of nice white snow. The reason,—the Ranch has become the rendezvous for a score of winter birds, chickadees, juncos, woodpeckers and blue jays. They are continually hovering around a wild apple tree in front of the cook house, the branches of which are decorated with bits of suet, and doughnuts.

Of course these doughnuts do not really grow on a tree—they grow in the Ranch Camp kitchen, and hungry skiers like to eat them too.

Why don't you ski into the Ranch one of these afternoons while the snow is so good. A nice route is over the wooden foot bridge just in from Stowe Forks, up the Forks Trail to the top, and down the Luce

Hill Trail to Camp. A cup of hot tea and a couple of those crispy doughnuts will be waiting for you.

#### CLUB FIELD DAY

A Field Day will be held for Club members at the Ranch Camp on Sunday, April 2nd. The committee in charge plans a mid-day dinner followed by a number of easy competitions. The tentative program includes slaloms for men and women. The events will be mainly for the less expert, and everyone is urged to enter.

There will be prizes for all winners, and probably others for outstanding performances along various lines. The committee also is offering a prize for the most humorous snap-shot of the occasion. Do not forget the date, and be on hand.

#### A PRACTICAL TECHNIQUE

(continued)

Since the recent description in this Bulletin of the Snub Brake as a reliable method of stopping on skis, it has been noticed that many people are having some difficulty putting the details into a really harmonious execution. Instead of bending forward aggressively and placing the poles with unhurried determination across the track, the hapless runner lurches backward, assumes an open or reverse stem position, and immediately is catapulted (willy-nilly) face downward between the divergent tips. While it is true that motion is stopped very effectively, the power-dive thrusts the body so far into the snow that only an unusually heavy cover will prevent the skier from being literally spiked into the ground beneath. This is not a good thing.

Without doubt the great weakness of the Snub Brake is that it involves a conscious forward leaning, to which the average skier is temperamentally unsuited. About the only alternative is to carry a grappling hook ready to be thrown out in cases of dire need.

(So many comments have been made about the Practical Ski Technique that the author threatens to establish a school. If such a thing occurs, it definitely must be understood that the Club will accept absolutely no responsibility for any part of the business.—Ed.)

#### NOTES

The Directors have elected Charles D. Lord to fill the office of vice-president until the annual meeting.

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Friedl Pfeifer who is coaching the American women's team at Sun Valley has commented many times on the wonderful training that Ann

Cooke and Marilyn Shaw received from Sepp Ruschp.