

This coming summer with the installation of the chair lift and the practical completion of ski trail construction, the function of the Club as a development agency becomes more or less accomplished. It is unthinkable, however, that the Club should cease to exist. Having helped to create a place to ski, we now are in a position to concentrate on furthering the skiing enjoyment of our members.

Your directors are mapping a policy along this line which will be presented at our annual meeting in May. Involved are certain desirable amendments to our present by-laws, one of which provides for some increase in dues. But the basic principle being followed is that to justify its existence a ski club must provide for its members more enjoyable skiing than they could obtain without a club.

Every member will be given an opportunity to vote on the various amendments even though he may not be able to attend the annual meeting. Needless to say, the directors will welcome any suggestions for their guidance.—C. D. Lord, President.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

It was particularly gratifying that the Vermont State combined downhill and slalom championships were won by two Vermonters—Miss Stevia Korzun and Wendall Cram, both members of the Otter Ski Club of Rutland. The highlight of the meet was the setting of a new Nose Dive record of 2 min. 17.6 sec. by Milton Hutchinson of our Club, while Miss Korzun established a new women's record of 2 min. 52.8 sec. The high standard of the competition can be judged by the fact that the first ten men ran the Nose Dive in under 2 min. 40 sec.

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The new expert-intermediate run from the upper Lord Trail down to the Nose Dive parking area has been named the S-53 Trail by the State Forest Service, after the CCC Camp that has done so much ski development work in the region. (This is the trail that Otto calls the Super-Duper, and Lord calls the Whooper-Doooper—both being right). The new novice trail from station 20 on the Nose Dive to the parking area is to be the Midway Trail, while the connection between the Nose Dive and the Merrill is the Rimrock Trail.

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This will be the last printed issue of MT. MANSFIELD SKIING until next Fall. In the meantime, announcements to members will be made by mimeographed bulletin as formerly.

MT. MANSFIELD SKIING

PERIODICAL BULLETIN OF THE
MT. MANSFIELD SKI CLUB

Edited by A. W. Coleman

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HOME TOWN GIRL MAKES GOOD

Last month Marilyn Shaw of Stowe, a member of our Club, achieved the distinction of winning the National ladies' combined (downhill and slalom) championships at Sun Valley. Much credit for her success goes to Sepp Rutschp, who has been responsible for her fundamental technique and to a large extent her development as a skier. Although still in high school, Miss Shaw's fine record in competition during the past few years, culminating in her National triumph, demonstrates unquestionably that she is one of the best downhill racers in the country today.

Probably of most significance to the sport is the fact that Miss Shaw is a girl born and brought up in the snow country. Undoubtedly in the future Vermont will produce other ski champions, but she is the first to win really high honors. And this will exert a tremendous influence on those youngsters who still have names to make. Because of her youth, this early success may prove at times somewhat burdensome to her. It is then that the discipline acquired in becoming a champion will stand her in good stead.

THE NEXT STEP

From general observation during the season just drawing to a close it appears at last that the sport hereabouts really is growing up. There has been much less of that painful exhibitionism with which in the past skiers have sought to impress the outsider. And non-skiers now accept skiing as a legitimate pastime instead of as an indication of untuly protracted adolescence. It may be considered that the sport has become established.

As to the next phase, there probably will ensue a period of regimentation. A multitude of rules will be promulgated for the regulation of skiers and the standardization of skiing practices. Some of these will be good, many bad. But because skiing is essentially a recreational sport, it never can be completely formalized. This fact, it is hoped, will insure the ultimate survival only of the better rules. The main thing for us all to keep in mind is that the pure enjoyment of making rules for others should be tempered with a decent amount of reason.

A. W. C.

SPRING SNOW CONDITIONS

The snowfall on Mt. Mansfield this past season has been ideal, not only in quantity and quality but also in its method of deposit. During the early winter there were several light rain storms turning

to snow. These were particularly beneficial in settling the already existing base and building up a series of compacted layers which could not be blown away.

A cross section of the present cover on the Nose Dive area shows from five to ten feet of thoroughly compacted snow which in texture tends to be granular below the surface. This condition is due to the heavy rain late in March which saturated the snow to a depth of about four feet. This packed granular snow, especially on the beaten trails, will be somewhat resistant to melting.

As yet (April 15) no real corn snow has developed, and the recent snow fall will delay this condition. Barring unusually warm weather, or protracted warm rains, we should have several more weeks of excellent spring skiing lasting well into May on the upper slopes.

—C. D. L.

THE SUGAR SLALOM

On April 28 the Club will sponsor its second annual Sugar Slalom on the Nose Dive. This race was inaugurated last spring at the suggestion of Roland Palmado as a fitting way to terminate the Mt. Mansfield skiing season. The race is designed to be more of a friendly get-together than a purely formal competition, and prizes will be awarded in several different classes so that everyone may have a chance to win something.

The race this year is to be a giant-slalom, set by Sepp Ruschp from the Nose Dive race start down to station 25 which is at the foot of the upper schuss. A large field of entrants will participate, among whom will be a group of Canadian skiers.

ACCIDENTS AND RACING

A thought has been advanced by a prominent skier that the prevention of accidents to downhill racers might be furthered by requiring candidates at time trials first to qualify by passing preliminary proficiency tests. This is based on the contention that many skiers have gained a downhill classification through good nerves and luck rather than any real ability, and that inevitable serious consequences can be minimized only by forcing some standard of ability on them before they become eligible for competition.

We have asked two skiers with divergent views to discuss this question.—Ed.

The Answer To A Serious Problem

This proposition may be the answer to a problem that has disturbed us at Mansfield, and cannot help but have arisen at other centers. It should be evident that while downhill racing is becoming more and more "point 'em down," with the man having the most nerve winning under ideal conditions, nevertheless skill also should be at a premium in a race and certainly would be the deciding factor under difficult snow conditions.

Too often a skier with plenty of daring but little experience takes a chance at coming through whole in order to get his downhill racing. Under the present set up if he makes it in spite of wobbles and close shaves, he is adjudged competent to repeat the feat in sanctioned races. If he falls by the trailside,—well, the ski patrol will bring down the pieces. This is a heavy responsibility for the sponsoring club, not to mention the race officials, to assume.

Would not a downhill classification carry more merit, besides being for the better interests of racers, if it proved not only the ability to run fast down a trail, but also attested to some standard of proficiency as well?—W. V. Mason, National Ski Patrol.

Impractical and Harmful

From a practical viewpoint, to compel a would-be racer to pass a proficiency test before trying for a downhill classification would be of little value and might cause him harm. Since a proficiency test consists simply of fundamental turns and an easy run, all carried out under ideal, hard snow conditions, the result more likely would give him a false impression of his prowess rather than to make him conscious of any deficiency. Through a process of elementary reasoning, the future world's champion would be so convinced of his ability to cut a figure on the racing trail that the dangers of his cutting a swath instead would be multiplied.

Every person, even a skier, is endowed with a few brains and a certain natural instinct of self preservation. No one but a complete fool would attempt a race or time trial without knowing something about skiing. And the exception would be so complete a fool that a proficiency test or even a court order would exert but little restraint.

The best training for racing is to race. And the only experience of value to a racer is gained by racing. After all, the proportion of injuries to racers is ridiculously small compared to accidents in recreational skiing. Racing is based on speed, and speed knows no restrictions. In the end a racer will ski just as fast as he can, regardless of laws and entangling regulations.—O. Abbiati (Downhill Class A).

RECORDS OF THE CLUB

Planning for the Future

During the eight years since the Club was founded our primary efforts have been directed toward the development and maintenance of skiing facilities on the eastern side of Mt. Mansfield. Although our nominal dues have made it impossible to offer members many tangible benefits, nevertheless the existence of a large, organized group of skiers who were interested in the region has contributed decisively to the growth of what now is one of New England's most versatile skiing centers.