

Skiing Area Planned Here for Next Year

Estherville has been chosen as the site for the first fully developed ski area in this region, expected to open next fall. It is the one hill suited for this purpose, according to ski resort experts.

The ski area will be located on a 40-acre hill, the former Nasby property, south of the Des Moines River and west of Highway 17.

It will feature tow lifts, two intermediate and one beginners' slope, a chalet, artificial snow ski instruction and a ski rental, and equipment shop, owner-promoter Don Sievers of Spirit Lake announced today.

If the ground is frozen and snow-making machines can produce enough snow, Sievers plans to open his resort by next Thanksgiving. Construction will start after the first of the year.

The hill selected for the local ski area has a 160-foot vertical drop, making possible a 1,200-foot beginners' slope. This long, gentle slope will be excellent for ski school lessons and a great place for practice in perfecting the skiing technique, according to ski resort experts who inspected the site.

The hill affords two good intermediate slopes. Sufficient fill can be obtained from the property to allow recontouring these to make them longer, gentler and more desirable than they now appear in their rough state, they stated.

Sievers is planning to install a double rope tow for each section, which should be adequate for serving approximately 6,000 skiers per hour.

He chose the slopes and the locations of the rope tows to make possible the addition of a T-bar at a later date without disturbing the original set-up, as well as making it possible to cover all slopes for snowmaking with a minimum of piping.

A chalet and a parking area will be constructed at the top. The one-story chalet will be approximately 35 by 70 feet and will contain a snackbar, ski shop, rental service and rest rooms. Sievers hopes to build a fireplace in the middle of the floor.

He will also operate a ski school with certified instructors.

The site is heavily wooded, and the runs will have to be

cleared of natural timber.

"I will not cut down any more trees than necessary," Sievers said, "because they add natural beauty and protect both skiers and snow from the wind."

"We cannot depend on natural snowfall here," he continued. "Natural snow is fine, but with a lot of traffic snow has to be replaced almost every day. Eventually a good base will be built up."

Sievers is being assisted in this undertaking by Walter Peterson and Lee Rogers, proprietors of the Trollhaugen ski resort at St. Croix Falls, Wis.

According to Sievers, Trollhaugen is one of the best-managed ski areas in the midwest. Peterson and Rogers stated that they were willing to cooperate with advice and help because "any encouragement given to the skiing sport in general will ultimately benefit all those involved."

Sievers is an avid skier himself, and familiar with Midwest skiing areas. He started to ski while in the army in Germany and has skied actively since 1957.

He is operating manager of the Gipner Boatworks on West Okoboji and grew up in the Okoboji area. His wife is the former Ruth Gipner, and they have two children.

"The ski area will tie-in perfectly with my business with Gipners, because the boating season runs from April to November, and the rest of the year is ideal time for skiing," Sievers said.

"There is much more interest in skiing here and all over Iowa than most people realize," he said, "and I hope this will add to the attractions of Estherville and the Lakes area," he concluded.

Two Block Assessments

DES MOINES (AP) — Two more counties, Woodbury and Floyd, were counted Thursday on the growing list of Iowa counties which have obtained injunctions against 1965 property tax assessments increased by the State Tax Commission.

Polk County District Judge Dale S. Missidine granted restraining orders Wednesday preventing the commission from putting into effect new real estate valuations this year in Woodbury and Floyd. Such assessments are the basis for collecting 1966 taxes.

The two counties contended the proposed changes would delay next year's tax collections and would leave some school districts in a position where they could not pay their bills.

Farme

AMES (AP)—The Iowa Highway Commission moved Thursday to combat what it calls "uniform and apparently organized action by north central Iowa property owners" in bar-



Don Sievers