

Lone Ski Area To Open

By JEFFREY MILLS

LYNCH, Ky. (AP) — Kentucky's only ski area is scheduled to open for its first full season Friday with \$50,000 worth of new equipment installed atop Big Black Mountain, the state's highest peak.

Lonesome Pines Ski Area in Harlan County, which was open for three weekends at the end of last winter, has added its first permanent building and installed lights on the beginners slope. Dr. Kenneth Wier, president of the Black Mountain Corp., which developed the facility, said.

"We have been getting a lot of rain lately. But if the weather favors us we will be open on Friday," Wier said.

The new building will be used as a ski rental building and warming area. A trailer used last year as a warming hut has been converted to a pro shop for retail sale of merchandise.

The rental building is equipped with 200 pairs of rental skis, up from 50 last year. The beginners slope is four times as large as it was last year, Wier said. There is also a new wire cable rope tow.

Two snow-making machines will again augment the snowfall on the 4,140-foot mountain.

The ski area was opened last February after tourism specialists at the University of Kentucky Extension Service had proposed the facility.

Data showed that skiers could expect about 120 days a year, with the help of artificial snow. Then 10 investors formed the Black Mountain Corp., including four medical men working in a clinic in Lynch.

Now the group has expanded to 18 investors and Wier said further plans are being made for expansion. "We're trying to improve the facilities as rapidly as possible to make it better for skiing. Eventually, we'd like to have accommodations adjacent to the slopes, and we will be enlarging the big slope next year," Wier said.