

Alpena Ski Season Is Now Open

City Will Make Bid for Fame as Center of Popular Winter Sport

BY PATRICK S. MCDONAGH

Not content with commanding the respect of the midwest, as Michigan's most outstanding speed skating capital, Alpena will make a bid for fame as a skating center when the snow sports season officially opens here this Sunday.

While both speed and figure skating has been developed to a high degree, Alpena, until this year, had done little in the skating line. In the midsummer ski enthusiasts dug out the records to find that Alpena over a 46-year period has enjoyed an average annual snowfall of 67 inches, which by comparison stacks up most favorably with other communities in the state which have gone into the skiing business.

Manning Hill
During the progress of developing skiing facilities for this community, Berger Berg, former Norwegian cross-country ski champion, now engaged in training troops for Uncle Sam at Fort Brady was brought in to look over available sites. He selected, as was expected, the spot which has been Alpena's unofficial skiing center for many years—Manning Hill.

After the Alpena Chamber of Commerce purchased the property, hundreds of stumps and boulders were removed, rough spots graded, a road built into the property and an 800-foot, mechanically driven ski tow erected.

The Alpena Park, which is situated 13 miles west of the city on M-52, has a main ski slope some 1,000 feet in length. In addition there is a narrow 1,200 feet long and dozens of smaller runs for the beginner. There are also several small but interesting novice slopes.

Queen Selected
Earlier in the week the Alpena Winter Sports Carnival Queen was selected. Queen Gladys Carlson will preside over activities this weekend when the Michigan Outdoor Speed Skaters perform on Alpena ice for the fifth consecutive year. Of existing Michigan skating records, 28 have been established at the Alpena rink.

On Sunday noon the first snow train of the season rolls in from the Bay City and Saginaw Valley district, and on Jan. 24, the State's only overnight winter resort train will arrive in Alpena with 700 Detroiters for a two-day visit.

Guests on the Alpena snow train from Detroit, sponsored by the Alpena Club of Detroit, will be able to witness for the first time in Alpena, the Michigan Intercollegiate Speed Skating Championships in which 169 Michigan high school teams have been invited to participate. The returning snow train will depart from Alpena at 6 p. m. Sunday, Jan. 25. The annual wild cat hunt is scheduled for Jan. 31—Feb. 1.



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