

Metro ski areas have sprouted up, melted away

Ski-area watchers and users around the Twin Cities over the last 27 years may well ask themselves, "What next?"

Having skied off and on since the age of 6, this reporter, at the age of 36, was assigned to cover a ski area. Any one would do. There were Moon Valley, Hill, Bluffs, and other areas. But then came the Troilhaugen area. It was a new one, and it was in the Twin Cities. It was a new one, and it was in the Twin Cities.

Entrepreneurs Walter Peterson and Lee Rogers, who had used a two-page ad in the Star Tribune to get the word out, were in the chair, sitting on a small plane, and the rest was history.

After observing the action at the Troilhaugen "slopes," Board declared a ski area on the hills facing the river several miles north of town. Kenneth was in charge. They named it "Val Creek." Things were well.

At the base of Rock Hill that summer I found Chuck Stone, its president, trying to clean up some wreckage around a small frame building that was then the Rock Hill Club. He complained about summer residents, lawn mowers, and summer horseback riding at the area to him with a shrug.

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In the 1950s Gordy Bowen got Mount Noramunda (now Wizard Hill) going in Bloomington. He was using a barrow made from the chassis of well-used cars in that end of town—just the drought hit.

During the drought snow-making made its appearance. The first around the Twin Cities to try it was Margie Brendel, who had been married to pro skier Skip Brendel. She's a professional ski clothes designer and an excellent skier and now lives in Colorado.

Other areas have come and gone—Noyah because river falls and now lies fallow pending real estate developments south of the Twin Cities. Engstrom, an area that sprang up north of Troilhaugen, was bought up and closed by river-front developments.



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David Linton, a hard worker who bought and developed the Birch Park terrain in Wisconsin, died before he could see a blossom and flourish as it has under the fast systems and Roger Levy, Buffalo Valley came and went.

In a Cannon River valley gully she had been running Moon Valley in the Minnesota River valley southeast of Saukape since late in the Depression—had done some radio broadcasting about skiing, too. She said the soil for her snow-making cost \$20,000. That sounded like a fortune in those days.

Ski Mac, founded by M.L. Mizell, because Snowcrest. Now owners Bob and Carol Orens intend to build a new ski area near the city.

Jet North Central to plenty of skiing...in the land of plenty to do!

Obviously there's lots of skiing in the Colorado Rockies. Mountains of it. Knee-deep powder. Car-high moguls. Runs of one, two, even three or four miles. You don't have to be an expert to ski Colorado though. Nearly 75 percent of the runs are for beginners and intermediates.

Now get ready to explore this "land of plenty to do" without your ski! Take a dip in a heated outdoor pool. Play tennis or racquetball indoors. Discover the thrill of tubing. Struggle up on a romantic sleighride. Drive a snowmobile. Dine on delicious food. Relax or relax. Explore shops galore. And much more.

Also about that time, walking into the fields south of Allou, I saw a man with a stored saw—Paul Augustine. He was a skier. He was a skier. He was a skier. He was a skier.

That was Dennis Radeke. He got his certificate, ran the Troilhaugen Ski School, skied in the American Recreation's Administration team at the worldwide recreation gathering, sold Rosemount boots through the mountains and bought Val Creek, which by now runs and improves as "Wild Mountain."

The Troilhaugen founders, having sold their area to Afton and May Rockland, are living in happy retirement. The area goes and it will add chalets.

That's only what's happened around the Twin Cities. Ski areas have sprouted up and now have died all over the Upper Midwest since that Troilhaugen assignment in 1950. What next?

Almost any resort area you choose is a town in itself, filled with shops, night spots, great restaurants and other activities too numerous to name.

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- WINTER PARK. 5 nights accommodations, 5 days lift tickets. From \$97 per person double occupancy (Taxes, 10% gratuity, and local transportation are extra).

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