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# Ohio's Newest Ski Center Gets Ready For Season



**SKI SEASON HERE** — Beth Kitzmiller, cross country ski director at Echo Hills Ski Center, is ready for the season. There are

miles of cross country trails on the old girl scout camp near Logan.

Skiing has come to southeastern Ohio.

Echo Hills Ski Center is located in the scenic Hocking Hills, three miles off U. S. Route 33 near Enterprise. It is a leisurely 45 minute drive from Circleville.

H. E. (Hap) Kitzmiller, the owner, has announced the grand opening for Ohio's newest ski facility is Jan. 19-20. Construction work on the downhill slopes, the lifts, the lodge and installation of snowmaking equipment is nearly complete.

In addition to three downhill slopes, Acorn for the beginners; Sycamore, to sharpen your intermediate skills; and Sassafra, Ohio's first expert slope, there are 17 miles of cross country trails to explore. With snow in the forecast, there will probably be some skiing at the center this weekend.

Operation of Echo Hills is a family affair. Ann, Hap's wife, handles the public relations for the facility, son Scott is the general manager and daughter Beth is the cross country ski

director. Byron Weigler is director of the Echo Hills Ski School.

The Kitzmillers have long been a skiing family and Hap was a major investor in Valley Hi, now Mad River Mountain, 15 years ago.

Hap is in the timber business. In 1975 he bought the 500-acre Camp Echo Hills, an old girl scout camp, for the timber on it.

The family fell in love with the area, built a house there and moved in. Last year the Kitzmillers not only survived the "Blizzard of '78", but decided to turn it into something positive. They started by opening up the logging roads for cross country skiing.

Then in June, they selected a valley with slopes facing northeast where they are never touched by sunlight and began construction of the downhill

runs, the lifts and a 6,000 square-foot lodge.

They hope to have it all together for the opening, a little over a week away.

The area, both cross country ski trails and the downhill slopes will be patrolled by fully accredited members of the National Ski Patrol System who have had first aid training.

While there are no restaurant or overnight accommodations available, these can be found in nearby Logan and Lancaster.

Echo Hills is not difficult to locate. Circleville residents can take Route 22 to Lancaster and then go southeast on Route 33. Signs are located on Route 33 as it approaches the turnout to Enterprise directing the motorist toward Echo Hills. Or they can go through Laurelville and take Route 180 to Route 33 and Enterprise.