



The Slopes Of Chestnut Mountain Are a Popular Wintertime Rendezvous For Quad-City Area Skiers

Quad-Citians Try Skiing—And Like It!

By SAM WILSON
Dispatch Staff Writer

A cold crisp day, a high sky and plenty of powder snow over a long landing slope is part of the beauty that goes with skiing — a sport more and more Quad-Citians take up each year.

While the Quad-City area isn't exactly "Ski-ville, U.S.A.," improved skiing facilities relatively close to the Quad-Cities have raised interest in the sport.

Local skiers report, aside from aesthetic considerations of the great outdoors, that the excitement and just plain fun offered by skiing underwrite its popularity. Also, they say the price per hour and skill level is high at all, and for the young at heart skiing is "in."

The Mississippi Valley Ski Club, organized about seven years ago, has been partly responsible for drumming up local interest. Club president Gene Magnusson, who is an instructor for the Moline YMCA ski school, reports a steady growth in membership during the last three years.

Membership in the group, however, has corresponded directly to the amount of snow in the Quad-Cities each year. Two years ago, the club set up a ski tow line at Hillmead Forest Preserve on Illinois St. near Hampton, but has only been able to use the facility once or twice this year because of sparse snowfall.

Excellent instruction for the beginner is available in both Moline and Davenport. The Moline Y ski school held in January each year offers six hours, and Prospect Park serves as a good classroom for the beginners, Magnusson said.

The Davenport Park Board also has sparked interest in skiing this year by installing a "skiway" tow line in Duck Creek Park. Although its use, too, has been limited by light snowfall, recreation director Whiting Prust says

the facility has been in operation about two weeks this winter.

The tow line area is equipped with lights for night skiing. A \$20,000 lodge also was built by the park board for skiers. Instruction at Duck Creek has been available for a number of years.

Local sporting goods dealers can outfit a novice skier for around \$60. This includes good sturdy boots, metal edged skis, safety-type bindings and aluminum-alloy ski poles.

Once a skier is properly outfitted and has basic instruction behind him, it's just a matter of how far he is willing to travel to test his skill on large slopes.

Chauteau Mountain Lodge, along the Mississippi River between Galena and Hanover, is one of the most popular rendezvous for Quad-City skiers. The lodge's slopes offer skiing excitement to the beginner as well as the expert.

A 2,400-foot expert's ski run and snow-making equipment were added this year. Chauteau mountain's main run is 2,100 feet long with a vertical drop of 625 feet. The long run are serviced by a double chair lift.

For the shorter beginner and intermediate slopes, the lodge features six rope tows varying in length from 300 to 700 feet.

For the more intrepid skier, who is willing to throw caution to the wind, Terrapin Ridge Ski Area at Ellinboro, a few miles east of Hanover on U.S. 26, offers the ultimate in ski excitement — a lowering ski jump.

Terrapin Ridge, managed by John Baltanz, the top ski jumper in the United States today and a member of 1964 winter Olympic squad, was opened this year despite a number of difficulties.

Last weekend, Terrapin held its first ski jumping tournament, and more than 200 persons turned out to 45-degree weather for the event. Baltanz and a few others got off jumps of around 150 feet, although the snow on the jump and slope was quite wet.

Terrapin's ski jump, which can be seen miles away from the ridge, will even be used this summer. Baltanz and his associates plan to get plastic sheathing on the jump and slope, enabling them to use the facilities year-round.

Such a ski jump will not be unique to the world of sports, but it'll be the only one of its kind in North America. July 4 is the tentative date for the first ski jump ceremony on plastic.

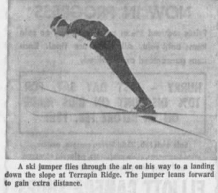
While the imposing wooden ski jump tower is certainly the feature of Terrapin Ridge, the area offers slopes for the beginner and advanced skier. Several rope tows and a poma lift are used. Terrapin also has installed snow-making equipment.

The real Quad-City ski aficionado still prefers the almost fabled slopes of Aspen and Vail in Colorado, Sun Valley and Squaw Valley in the far west and Snow Ski Resort in New England.

The cost, however, is rather substantial at these sites, and there still appears to be some correlation between the length of the ski slope and the length of the lift.



Duck Creek Park in Davenport provides a long slope and excellent skiing for the beginner and intermediate. This year the park has added lights for night skiing, a \$20,000 rope tow and a \$75,000 lodge. Lack of snow in the Quad-Cities this winter, however, has limited use of Duck Creek's facilities. Skiers have used the main slope for about two weeks total.

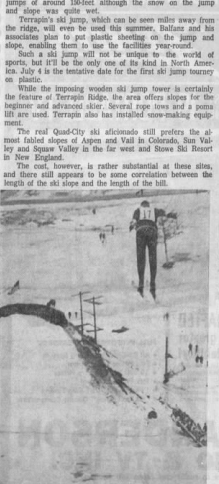


A ski jumper flies through the air on his way to a landing down the slope at Terrapin Ridge. The jumper leans forward to gain extra distance.

Photos By Harry Lemon
And Larry Nelson



This is the view a ski jumper has just as he leaves the ski jump tower at Terrapin Ridge. A jumper descends the 120-foot tower and another 120 feet or so down the slope in about 3 seconds. At that speed there isn't much margin for error. That's one reason why only the very intrepid skiers attempt ski jumping.



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