

Turning garbage to ski slopes

By Jack Fuller

THE IDEA of skiing on snow-covered plains around Chicago may sound like a lot of garbage.

But the Du Page County forest preserve district and the City of Evanston think it's great. Both are building ski slopes on mountains of garbage.

Three million cubic yards of garbage and clay have gone into Mt. Hoy, a 150-foot hill in the Blackwell Recreational Preserve just north of Warrenville in Du Page County.

"Garbage is just a resource out of place," said John Sheaffer, a Chicag waste consultant who collaborated on the design of Mt. Hoy. "We found a way to put the garbage to good use out there. Now the hill is a very dramatic thing."

THE GARBAGE is sealed in layers of clay so water will not seep thru it and contaminate the area's water supply, Sheaffer said.

"The same thing could be done in Chicago, if people would realize that garbage is a means to an end and not an end in itself," Sheaffer said.

The end is in sight for Mt. Hoy. By next winter, according to George Bottoms, superintendent of engineering for the forest preserve district, the hill will be fitted with four ski slopes, a snow machine, a chair lift, and a rope tow. It also will have two toboggan slides.

Evanston's ski season will open about Dec. 22 on a 60-foot high hill of garbage in James Park, Dodge Avenue and Oakton Street.

THE HILL has been there for many years, said Al Hyman, special facilities manager for the Evanston Recreation Department. But this is the first time it will be used for skiing. Only recently the Evanston City Council allocated \$28,000 to equip the hill with two ski slopes, snow machine, rope tow, and two toboggan runs.

A season of skiing on "Mount Trashmore" will cost \$6 for Evanston residents and \$10 for nonresidents, he said.

The Lombard Park District has operated a toboggan slope for four years on a garbage mountain in Sunset Knoll.

The Cook County Forest Preserve District plans to build a "mountain" similar to Mt. Hoy in Elk Grove Village, north of Biesterfield Road, said Richard Buck, the dis-

trict's landscape architect. However, it will be made of 2½ million cubic yards of earth dredged from a nearby reservoir instead of garbage.

The Elk Grove Village hill won't be for skiing for a few years, he said.

But the district operates the following facilities for tobogganing enthusiasts:

SIX CHUTES at the Swallow Cliff Winter Sports Area at Mannheim Road and Ill. Hwy. 83 near Palos Heights.

Two chutes in the Dan Ryan Woods at 87th Street and Western Avenue.

Two chutes at Bemis Woods South on Ogden Avenue, a quarter-mile west of Wolf Road near La Grange.

Four chutes at the Jensen Slides at Milwaukee and Devon Avenues.