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TRAVEL by The Star

THE SKI BOOM...

...that almost was

Looking back on the past two winters, you couldn't blame Ontario's ski operators if they climbed the highest hill in the province and jumped off, sans skis.

In utter frustration and clinging to some hefty mortgages, they have perched on the edge of a ski boom... only to be shut down by the weather-man. Snow didn't fall often enough to keep the peaks covered and when it did a thaw was never far behind.

A record number of skiers—some people place it at more than 1,000,000 in Canada—was itching to get on the slopes but chances were far fewer.

Again this year, ski operators and their backers are betting more than \$1,500,000 that this will be THE YEAR. That's how much they've spent manuring the hills, adding new lifts and in a few cases installing expensive snow-making machinery.

The Ontario skier will have a record 116 different ski areas to choose from, half within a three-hour drive of Toronto. The new installations will bring the number of ski lifts available to 223—almost three to every area.

Twelve snowmaking machines

Four new snowmaking machines have been installed bringing the number in the province to 12. Previously installed machines have been made more sophisticated in an effort to guarantee skiing when nature doesn't co-operate.

Trouble is the machines must have temperatures a few degrees below freezing to operate properly and the thaws that melt the natural snow curtail the snowmaker.

These machines combine compressed air and water and spray out tiny drops which freeze when they hit the air and turn into granules of powdery snow. Snowmakers can be expensive, costing from \$30,000 to \$100,000 to install.

Diversity has helped

One of the things which has helped some of the larger resorts overcome the bad weather, at least partially, is the growing diversity of activities. They feature such attractions as indoor and outdoor heated swimming pools, ice skating, curling, dancing, sun, card playing rooms and in areas where they are permitted, cocktail lounges.

Ontario was the only place affected by the winter drought. It hit the entire northeast section of the continent and had Hamilton ski operators appealing for government aid last winter.

How does Ontario compare with Quebec areas, New England, the Rockies or Alps? Well, it doesn't do as far as the length of runs and height of the hills are concerned but there are slopes in the province which would be a challenge for most skiers.

The real expert might long for a chance at Alpine skiing where he can go 10 to 12 miles on a single run and where people ski from town to town.

Variety of slopes

But for the novice or weekend skier, Ontario has a variety of slopes ranging up to 3,000 feet in length, though most of them are well under that. The annual snowfall in the ski belt around Collingwood where the best cluster of hills is situated is actually heavier than in Montreal.

Among the changes on the Ontario ski scene are:

A new resort, Sir Sam's Inn on Eagle Lake, eight miles north of Haliburton, complete with air strip, chalet, subdivision, lounge and Timberland Elliott T-bar lift.

Four new snowmaking installations at Appleton Hill in the Blue Mountain resort, Chokeake at Hamilton, Mansfield near Allison and Chipoke at Kitchener, still finishing touches on Hurontario's Hidden Valley snowmaker and extension of the system at Georgian Peaks.

The Bay Motor hotel at Owen Sound has rebuilt its main chalet, which was destroyed by fire. It has extended its ski run by 400 feet.

Timnans at Kimberly opened a large outdoor swimming pool heated to 98 degrees.

Forest Valley has been completed in Metro between Rathurst and Dufferin St., south of Finch Ave. Spectem Land, formerly Dagmar, has added land and installed its fourth rope tow.

A place you'll never ski

The most exclusive ski club in the world is Corviglia, at St. Moritz, Switzerland. It's at the upper terminal of the Corviglia funicular, over 4,000 feet above sea level. The Duke of Alba founded it.

The Corviglia club goes to considerable lengths to remain exclusive. Only life members, of whom there are 150, can bring guests to the clubhouse, and the screening procedure to become a life member is rigid.

A good proportion of Europe's aristocracy and wealthiest men belong, including Aristotle Onassis, the Greek shipping magnate, the Guinnesses, the Rothschilds, and Prince Rainier.

The Corviglia club was organized in the twenties, when skiing was considered vulgar.

St. Moritz had established, even before World War I, as the place where the aristocracy came to drink

IT MAY NOT LOOK LIKE MUCH TO PASSERBY

champagne after slopes. Skiing was definitely lower class, so the skiing enthusiasts were forced to go above the trees—and out of sight—to do the deed.

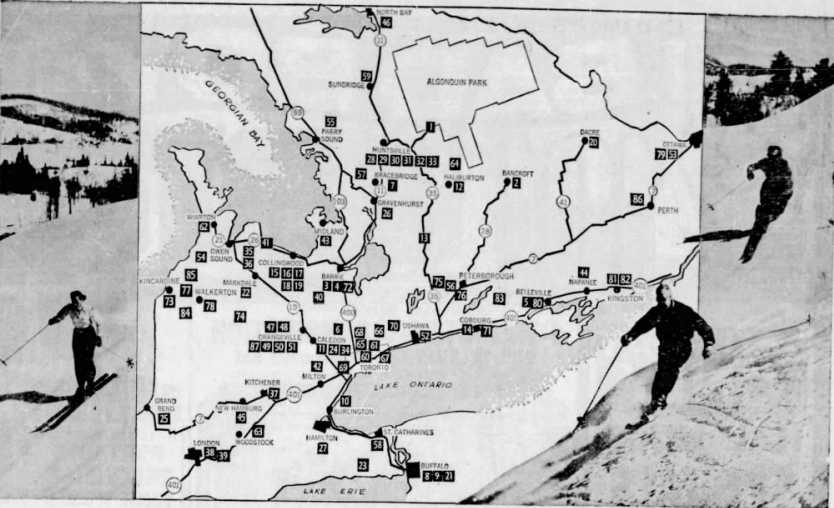
The club's lodge is rustic, in comparison with those in St. Moritz catering to a far less wealthy membership. A holiday skier could easily scuss by it without realizing its

status in the most prestigious of all sports.

One of the most popular activities at the club is moonlight skiing. Special funicular trains take the skiers up in the evening, from where they descend to the ski area.

St. Moritz carrying men in such a manner that a skier can avoid other skiers or objects.

2. When skiing downhill and overtaking a skier,



WHERE TO SKI AND WHAT THEY'VE GOT TO OFFER

- 1 Lebo Ski Trails (Algonquin Park)
- 2 Bancroft (1 R, W)
- 3 Snow Valley (Barrie, S, 2 R, 2 T, D except Tuesday)
- 4 Huron Snow Valley (Barrie, 2 R, 4 T, D)
- 5 Mountain View (Holliston, 2 R, W, night skiing)
- 6 Albion Hills (Bolton 2 R, W and Wed.)
- 7 Rainbow Ridge (Scarborough, 1 R, 1 T, D except Tues.)
- 8 Glenwood Acres (Buffalo)
- 9 Kissing Bridge (Buffalo)
- 10 Cedar Springs (Burlington, 1 R, 1 T, W and Wed.)
- 11 Chingunaway (Caledon 1 R, W)
- 12 Haliburton (Carnarvon 2 R, W)
- 13 Ski Club (Cobourg, 2 R, W)
- 14 Northumberland (Cobourg 2 R, W)
- 15 Alpine (Collingwood 3 R, S, 1 T, W)
- 16 Blue Mountain (Collingwood S, 6 R, 2 C, 4 P, 3 T, D)
- 17 Craigleith (Collingwood, 1 R, 3 T, W)
- 18 Devil's Glen (Collingwood, 1 R, 3 T, W)
- 19 Georgian Peaks (Collingwood S, 1 C, 1 T, 1 P, D)
- 20 Candiac (Dacre 1 R, 1 T, W and Wed.)
- 21 Holiday Valley (Ellicottville)
- 22 Beaver Valley (Fisherton-Markdale 4 R, 2 T, W)
- 23 Foresthill (1 R, W)
- 24 Caledon Ski Club (Parks of Credit)
- 25 Piney Park (Grand Bend, 1 P, W and D afternoons)
- 26 Muskoka Sands (Gravenhurst, 1 T, D)
- 27 Chokeake (Hamilton, S, 2 T, D)
- 28 Britannia (Huntsville, 1 R, 1 P, D)
- 29 Cedar Grove (Huntsville, use Hidden Valley)
- 30 Hidden Valley (Huntsville, S, 1 R, 1 C, 1 T, D)
- 31 Lincolnton (Huntsville, 1 R, 1 T, D)
- 32 Ski Jump Inn (Huntsville, 1 R, D)
- 33 Tully Ho (Huntsville, 1 R, 1 P, D)
- 34 Caledon Ski Club (Inglewood)
- 35 Old Smoky (Huntsville, 1 R, 1 T, W)
- 36 Tallman (Kimberley, S, 1 R, 3 C, 1 T, D)
- 37 Chipoke (Kitchener 5 R, W and Wed.)
- 38 Stone Hill (London, 1 R, 1 T, W and Wed.)
- 39 London Ski Club (6 R, W and Wed.)
- 40 Skway (Manifold, S, 3 T, W)
- 41 Meaford
- 42 Glen Eden (Milton, 3 R, W)
- 43 Mountain View (Midland, 2 R, 1 P, W)
- 44 Nacona (Newnes, 1 R, 1 P, W, some evenings)
- 45 Hareway (New Hamburg, 2 R, W and Wed.)
- 46 Laurentian (North Bay, 1 R, 1 T, W and Wed.)
- 47 Cedar Springs (Orangeville, 3 R, 1 T, W)
- 48 Happy Hills (Orangeville, 1 R, 1 P, W)
- 49 Hockley (Orangeville, 5 R, 1 P, Wed. to Sun.)
- 50 Twin Heaths (Orangeville, 2 R, 1 T, D)
- 51 Valley Schuss (Orangeville, 2 R, 1 P, 1 T, W and Wed.)
- 52 Kirby (Oshawa, 6 R, 1 T, W and Wed.)
- 53 Camp Fortune (Ottawa, 1 C, 2 P, 2 T, D)
- 54 Bay Motor (Owen Sound, S, 4 C, 2 T, D)
- 55 PARRY SOUND (1 R, W and Wed.)
- 56 Bethany (2 R, 2 T, W, Wed. and Mon.)
- 57 Pine Lodge (Port Sydney, 1 R, W)
- 58 Rockway (St. Catharines, 1 R, W)
- 59 Sandridge (1 P, 2 R, D)
- 60 Ice Valley (Toronto, S, 4 R, 1 P, D, night)
- 61 Summit (Toronto, 2 R, W, Wed evening)
- 62 Valley (Toronto, 1 R, W)
- 63 Woodstock (2 R, W)
- 64 Sir Sam's (Haliburton, T, D)
- 65 Forest Valley (Toronto, S, 2 R, W, night)
- 66 Palisade (Chesham, 1 R, D)
- 67 Forest Valley (Toronto, S, 2 R, D)
- 68 Honey Pot (Maple, S, 6 R, 2 P, D)
- 69 Sportmenland (Dunbar, 4 R, W)
- 70 Camberline (Cobourg 2 R, W and Wed.)
- 71 Mt. St. Louis (Barrie, R, 3 T, Wed. to Sun.)
- 72 Mt. St. Louis (Barrie, R, 3 T, Wed. to Sun.)
- 73 Ski Bowl (Kincardine, 1 R, W and Wed.)
- 74 Mt. Glen (Harrison, 1 R, W and Wed. night)
- 75 Geneva (1 R, W)
- 76 Peterborough (2 R, 1 T, W)
- 77 Happy Valley (Walkerton, 3 Bavarian lifts, W, nights)
- 78 Sooten Valley (Daham, 2 R, W)
- 79 Carleton (Ottawa, 1 T, D, nights)
- 80 Oak Hills (Belleville, 3 R, W and Wed.)
- 81 Knipston (3 R, W)
- 82 Colton Bay (Kingston, 2 R, W)
- 83 Batwa (2 R, W)
- 84 Eagle Nest (Teeswater, 1 R, W)
- 85 Paisley (1 R, W and Wed.)
- 86 Perth (1 R, W)
- 87 Eagle's Nest (Orangeville, 2 R, Bavarian lift, W)

You can spend \$2 or \$1,000

A trip to the ski hills could cost you anywhere from a couple of dollars to \$1,000.

The first would take you to one of the Metro area and pay your lift fees. The second would cover two weeks in one of the finest Alpine resorts, including your nights.

A local ski club estimates that its members spend an average of \$11 a year on the sport. A person heading out for a day of skiing at a good Collingwood hill could figure on spending about \$10

including his gasoline, lift fees and food.

For those without cars, the Coach Lines will run special ski buses to Collingwood this winter. The Saturday and Sunday morning specials will cost \$7.75 return, including lift fees, and \$9.00 without. Children under the special for \$6.45. The CNR has abandoned its Sunday morning ski trains because they lost money.

The cheapest good ski weekends available are probably those run by the Canadian Youth Hostelling Association. They have properties right in the ski hills. Members pay \$10 a night for lodging and \$3.00 for weekend packages which include eating for two nights and five lifts at scenic areas.

Here's a selection of ski trips, large and small, with their prices:

Rules of the road on the ski slopes

1. You're moving across a ski slope at a pretty good clip when suddenly you spy another skier approaching on a collision course. What do you do?

If you're alert and following the skier's courtesy conduct code, you'll turn to the right. The skier going from right to left is expected to turn downhill and the skier traversing from the left to right should turn uphill.

At least that's what members of the local committee of the U.S. National Ski Areas Association hope will happen.

The committee was formed to draw up a code of behavior that would serve as a basic guide for skiers.

The courtesy code is being instituted this season in its present form and will be reviewed for possible expansion or revision at the NSAA's next convention in June at Aspen, Colo.

A study is also being made by the Federation Internationale de Ski legal committee in Europe on the same subject. It will be correlated with the NSAA code next June.

The courtesy code is:

1. All skiers shall ski under control. Control shall mean in such a manner that a skier can avoid other skiers or objects.
2. When skiing downhill and overtaking a skier,

including his gasoline, lift fees and food.

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Two weeks in the Alps at Kitchener or St. Anton

This includes return airfare from Toronto, lodging (two in a room) in a standard hotel, two meals a day, transportation to and from your hotel from the airport and to and from the ski hills, lift tickets, tips and taxes.

Two weeks at St. Moritz

This covers a deluxe hotel and renowned Alpine ski area and includes the same as above.

One-week (actually eight nights) at Banff

This includes return flight from Toronto, lodging (two in a room) in a standard hotel with bath, luncheon from the airport in Calgary to Banff and back, transportation to the ski area and equipment (ski boots, skis and poles).

Five days (Sunday to Friday) at Huntsville ski resort

This includes ski rental, lodging, ski lifts and some free instruction. The two in a room. The full week rate would be \$50.

Weekend at the Laurentians (St. Sauver) \$32.95

Price as part of ski group includes return railway fare, chartered buses to the ski hills from Montreal, meals, tax and tips.



COY SKI BUNNIES ARE OUT

I've skied Ontario for 20 winters (started in Grade 2) and I don't like some of the changes.

Too manyphony skiers are on the slopes today. There are too many snow bunnies who are more interested in man than mountain; and too many fancy-pants male schuss-boomers who couldn't berrinobose back to the lift broke down.

In some areas, fast-track developers have wrecked lovely runs with badly-located tow and ugly buildings.

Treasure you bunnies, show-off boomers and ill-conceived developments are out.

For a serious skier, finding an in or unspoiled ski area with agreeable inhabitants has become a vexing problem in Ontario.

This season a record 116 commercial ski areas are operating in all parts of the province. Here's a highly personal guide to help you tell the lies from the Ours.

Watch for signs of change on your early trips. Continued improvement programs

indicate good business last season; confidence in the future. Jojo Weder, whose 1,100-acre Blue Mountain resort started the Collingwood boom when I was a lad, always attracts serious skiers because his facilities are constantly being upgraded.

This winter a 55-per cent increase in uphill transportation capacity is expected, including a new T-bar, the Applebowl who has snow-making pipes.

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enlightened to the hill, should give it a brand new appearance. Membership of this small, close-in area is 2,200. Go when lift's not busy, or you'll be smothered.

And other close-in hills on nice weekends, unless you like steering around lumbermen Don Valley, Forest Valley, Oshawa Kirby and Chokeake (Hamilton) Toronto Summit, operated and Chokeake (Huntsville) by the Toronto Ski Club, is still the best place to learn in Metro, and the old course is big enough for everybody, though not as tough hills and limited day-gate accommodation in the season.

Better still, try cross-country over the top of the mountains at Collingwood. With the multitudes of people using the lift lines, pack sandwiches, a juicy pulskin snow bag and slide off with a friend.

On by skijumping, build a snowman on a lake or dry field, with perhaps a little jump picked up over a wood case. That is really in this year. Driving the snow-