

28 RACINE SUNDAY BULLETIN Sunday, January 29, 1956



Last time Racine Ski Club was host to the Central United States Ski Association convention this group got together for a club session. From the left, they are Merritt Cook, president of association; Art Knudsen, president of Racine Club; Arthur (Red) Barth, one of the founders and first president of the Racine club; and Joe Ferraro, one-time holder of the national ski jumping record. The Racine club will again entertain the convention in April as a high point in its 30th anniversary year. Barth died at his home in Milwaukee Friday after a long illness.

Racine Ski Club Grows Over 30-Year Period

By Keith Brohm

Maybe the first 30 years have been the hardest and the going will be downhill (no pun intended) from now on, but Racine Ski Club today has reason to be proud as it holds its 30th anniversary tournament at Mt. Tom.

It certainly wasn't easy to keep going all these years—there were some particularly rough periods like the early Forties when much of the club's potential membership was in military service—but today the organization is at its peak strength, with better than 50 members in its recreational class, a strong junior club and a fine group of Class B and Class C riders to represent Racine in competition throughout the Midwest.

Today's tourney, which draws the best field to compete here in years, is only one of several outstanding events which make up the anniversary celebration. In April Racine Ski Club will be host to the Central United States Ski Association convention—a big anniversary dinner at that time—a sort of homecoming event for the many persons who have carried the club through the first 30 years.

Organized in 1926, a group of fellows that included William Wenton, James Peterson, Arthur Barth, Ted Schommer and Milton Hansen organized the Racine Ski Club, which, by the way, is a charter member of the Central U. S. Ski Association. With the co-operation of the Chamber of Commerce funds were raised to build the first slide on Windy Knoll, a site at the foot of Prospect Street.

"Red" Barth, who died at his home in Milwaukee Friday after a long illness, was the club's first president and became one of the best known figures in U. S. skiing various times he was president and secretary of the National Ski Association, and president of the Central U. S. Ski Association. One of the high points of his long career came on Dec. 14, 1947 when he was named a ski jumping judge for the 1948 winter Olympics at St. Moritz, Switzerland.

The new club drew many topnotch riders as members and its own annual tournaments brought outstanding talent from close-by and distant points alike. Annually the tournaments were held at Windy Knoll, the last big one being the Finnish Relief fund benefit meet in 1939.

World War II depleted Racine Ski Club membership, but the club still held regular business sessions and kept things going until the bulk of the membership returned from service.

Select Mt. Tom.

Then in the spring of 1947 Racine Ski Club began a search for a new, larger ski hill. Mt. Tom, highest point in Racine County, was selected. It is located on County Trunk J, a few miles east of Burlington.

By November of 1947 a slide had been erected and the first Central U. S. Ski Association tourney was held in February of 1948. Annually since then the hill and the slide have been improved. In 1954 the club purchased the Mt. Tom property—which it previously had leased—from William Warren of Burlington.

Now the club has slated a new, big project for this, its 30th anniversary year. The old 75-foot tower and slide at Windy Knoll has been dismantled and hauled to Mt. Tom. In the spring this steel scaffold will be re-erected near the present slide. It will be placed in such a manner as to permit jumps of up to 165 feet. (This compares with the present Mt. Tom hill record of 113 feet.)

The club had to seek permission of the U. S. Air Force to erect the slide since Mt. Tom is located on the proposed west boundary of the new jet air base. That has been granted and the way cleared for erection of the tower and slide in the spring.

Strong Junior Program.

While Racine Ski Club's fame for jumping tournaments have been steadily improved there has been considerable activity in other directions. A few years ago the club undertook an extensive junior ski club program and under the direction of Brady Emerson and with the help of various other adults the youngsters have developed into a fine delegation of ski jumpers.

They have their own facilities in Washington Park and recently a group of them went on a training trip to Upper Michigan.

In 1952, Roland Seyferth, then club secretary, organized a group known as the Recreational Unit. This has a large membership of downhill skiers who weren't necessarily interested in jumping competition but who love to ski. A ski law and other accommodations were installed at Mt. Tom principally for use by this group.

In addition to using their own Mt. Tom facilities, the Recreation Unit skiers make auto and bus trips to various Wisconsin ski areas.

All in all, the Racine Ski Club program has shown excellent growth, particularly in recent years—and things may be even better during the next 30 years.

Mantle Hopes For Best Year

NEW YORK — Hope League home run title last season—high in the heart of Mickey Mantle that this will be the year he lives up to his billing as the "new Joe DiMaggio."

That was the tag New York Yankees hung on him when he came up in 1951. For here was a youngster with everything in the way of speed and power.

Up to now he hasn't made it.

There have, however, been seasons are 27 homers, 102 runs batted in and a 311 average. Only once did he top 30, been plagued by injuries. Fight in homers and only once has he made, he also has been crippled by a knee and a thigh injury.

Yet most of his trouble home run were compounded by his ad-46 and 167 runs batted in as a sophomore plus two batting tape measure every time he blasted a home run. When he struck a prodigious blow at 138 RBIs and never was Washington in 1953 it was under .323 in the batting average. Mantle's averages are 24 home runs, 71 RBIs and .300.

This, plus the ballplayers' ride in Cadillacs, naturally, who reputedly would hit for hits. Mantle was home run season as an illustration.

His 97 times. Eighty of these were accumulated by Casey Stengel's theory that this switch hitter should stop swinging so hard, from which he hits the major concentration on getting his bat and let the home runs come at Mickey won the American

37 Homers Last Year.

Compare his figures with DiMaggio's first five years and see how far short he has fallen of the immortal Yankee Clipper: he was supposed to replace.

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