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State Park Site Is Ready

Developing a ski area at Pere Marquette State Park near Grafton, Ill., has been one long hill to climb for Don Caplan, developer of the project.

After five years of planning, surveying, watching the weather, recording data, relocating a site that had been carefully selected and cleared, revising plans developed for the original area and fitting the chair lift system to the new hill, the Pere Marquette Ski Area opened in the summer of 1970 with the operation of the chair lift as a scenic sky ride.

It was too late to install and operate snow-making equipment. There was sufficient snow for about six hours of skiing last winter.

Now there is a two-lane paved road into the area, a hill with double rope tows for beginners and novices, an intermediate-expert run, a ski rental shop, a staff of ski patrolmen and instructors, a day lodge and a gift shop.

The area, which is in the eastern end of the park, is five miles from the park's main lodge on Illinois Route 100, the Great River Road.

Night Skiing

New York state has 58 ski centers lighted for night skiing, 53 have snowmaking equipment and 34 offer cross-country trails. Skiers can rent skis, poles and boots at 79 centers and nursery service is available at 24 sites.

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