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Skiing Schools: Agile Ankles

By Tim Renken

Of the Post-Dispatch Staff

The closing of the St. Louis area's only skiing facility, Pere Marquette at Grafton, Ill., didn't exactly leave the area's skiers in the lurch.

Pere Marquette died because of financial difficulties, but skiing here is still very much alive.

Starting, traditionally, with the Thanksgiving weekend, St. Louis skiers will be traveling from places as close as northern Illinois to as far away as France, Italy and beyond. Most of these ski adventures will be of the organized variety—so-called package trips.

Of the four local organizations offering ski activities, the largest and most active is the St. Louis Ski Club, now 1200 strong. Its program for the 1974-75 skiing season contains 17 major trips. These range in cost from $63 per person for a weekend at Chestnut Mountain in northern Illinois to $738 for a week on the finest slopes in Europe.

The club's trips are open to members but membership is open to anyone and costs only $9 a year. The fee also covers weekly conditioning workouts at the Parkway Junior High School gym and numerous social activities.

Trips are tailored for various budgets and time preferences. On some, transportation is by chartered bus. A typical bus package for a week of skiing in Colorado costs about $130. The same trip by air will cost about $240. Flying weekends in Colorado cost about $150. Prices generally include all transportation and accommodations. Food, lift tickets and equipment rental are extra.

On a typical weekend trip skiers will leave St. louis Friday about suppertime and return home by 8 or 9 p.m. Sunday. On week-long trips some departures are on Friday and some on Saturday.

A club official, Joel Haffner, said that persons who have never skied shouldn't hesitate to join the club.

"About 90 per cent of our members hadn't skied before they joined," he said. "Most of our members are still learning to ski."

Weekly meetings, open to the public, are held the first Friday of the month, starting in September and ending in May, at the Ramada Inn on Brown Road. Persons wishing more information should write the club at Box 11503, Clayton, 63105.

The Edelweiss Ski Club, a child of Casey's Sports Stores, also offers an extensive list of trips. Included are five weekend trips to Chestnut Mountain. This resort, which uses snow making equipment, is at Galena, Ill., near Dubuque, Ill.

Cost of these trips is about $70 per person and that includes transportation, lodging for two nights, meals and lessons. Not included is equipment rental, which can be furnished for an additional $12.50.

Dave Hill, who manages the program, said that two of the trips to Chestnut Mountain will be for families and two for singles and young marrieds. He said, though, that other trips could be arranged if demand is sufficient.

Two Wisconsin weekend trips—to the Playboy Club at Lake Geneva and Alpine Valley—also are planned. These will cost about $65 per person, including tra and condominium dations. Not in meals, equipmer lift tickets.

Other trips works, Hill said. mation may be calling him at 96

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Tips

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