



THEIR OWN PRIVATE SKI RUN solved the question of a place to ski for the Gary Dalbey family (Mrs. Dalbey, seven youngsters), it even has a groomed ski tow. At left above, Greg, 15, and David, 13, [in front] ride up the hill, holding to the rope operated by an electric motor in the little A-frame building. Right: Father is a warming house. Picture at right shows the whole family lined up at the top of the run, which they built on rented land above the Racoon river near Des Moines. From left: Peggy, 8; Patty, 12; David, 13; Greg, 15; Mrs. Dalbey and Mr. Dalbey, with Theresa, 5, and Danny, 4, standing on their parents' skis.

Family on Skis

By Mary Bryson

WHAT DO YOU DO if your favorite sport is skiing and you live on the midwestern plains?

There are several solutions, such as packing up and taking off for the hills of Minnesota or the mountains of Colorado. The Gary Dalbys, 50 Thompson ave., do this occasionally, but they found an easier—and harder—answer.

They built their own family ski run about 10 miles from their home.

Mr. and Mrs. Dalbey first discovered skiing 18 years ago when as novices they spent a week at Sun Valley, Idaho.

"We planned to go back to Sun Valley often, but down the years something always distracted us," Mrs. Dalbey explained as she stood in a bright ski outfit on the family's private ski slope.

Around her, then, major distractions—seven in all, and most of them on skis—frisked on the snowy slopes, herding and every.

They range in age from 4 to 15.

LAST YEAR, Mr. and Mrs. Dalbey finally went back to Sun Valley and came home so enthusiastic about skiing that they took the entire family for a weekend of skiing at Sugar Hills, Minn. Later, the family took a chartered

Bonerville. He leased 40 acres from the farmer who uses it in summer for grazing land. With the help of husky sons, Gregory, 15, and David, 13, and brother-in-law Tom Galt, Mr. Dalbey cleared out tons of underbrush, cut waist-high way grass, felled a few trees and laid out a quarter-mile ski run with a 100-foot fall.

The men built an insulated A-frame cabin as a warming house and a smaller one as a shelter for a small motor to operate a tow rope to pull skiers to the crest of the hill.

Then all they had to do was sit back and wait for snow.

THIS HASN'T BEEN the best of all winters for skiing here," Dalbey explains. "We've actually had only about two weeks of snow, but whenever it's possible to ski, we're out here as soon as we can get away from work and school."

When the snow covers the slope, some members of the family come out almost every evening, an spotlight strung up the hill make it easy to ski after dark.

Mrs. Dalbey packs a picnic lunch and the entire family comes out Saturday morning to stay most of the day and usually again after church on Sunday.

They also invite friends and ski club members to join them.

THE DALBEYS plan another family trip to Winter Park this year, also a

chartered bus trip with the Hawkeye Ski Club. Only the five older children will go along, however. They found last year that 5-year-old Theresa and 4-year-old Danny are not skilful enough to be interested in long skiing seasons and in ski lessons, though they enjoy a day of

skidding on the lower parts of the family ski run.

However, Theresa considers jumping, "Next year I'll get Peggy's skis, if Peggy gets new skis, I hope."

Mr. Dalbey, who planned

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Here comes Dad!



Theresa and Danny hold tight to their parents for a "piggy back" ride down the lower slope.

Hot chocolate and sandwiches are served in the snug insulated shelter, where a little oil stove gives heat. The two youngest Dalbys couldn't be enticed away from the snow. From left are Greg, Mr. Dalbey, Peggy, David, Greg, Mr. Dalbey, Tom Galt (Mr. Dalbey's brother), and Peggy.

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