

Michigan's Winter Sports Areas Get Dolled Up for Their Biggest Season

BY ARTHUR JENTENEN
For Free Press

With just a little more help from Old Man Winter, Michigan is going to give the Sun Valley and Lake Placid some real competition this winter.

Michigan may even lay claim to the title of "nation's leading winter sports area."

The State's experts already rate winter sports along with summer vacationing in importance.

Law winter areas 200,000 persons by conservative estimate—look part in the skiing, tobogganing, ice skating and other sports in the State's snowfields.

Robert J. Purting, administrative secretary of the Michigan Tourist Council at Lansing, estimated that 19 to 20 per cent more snow and ice fans will get out this winter.

Thousands of dollars already have been spent in improving some 40 snow sports areas throughout the State.

Two years ago only 25 per cent of the outstate resorts remained open after Labor Day.

Now about 47 per cent keep the fire going, lunches hot and cash registers rolled up.

Derry N. Hogan, travel manager of the Automobile Club of Michigan, keeps his fingers on the pulse of the snow-sports industry, too.

Recently, he reported, there's been an increasing trend to some of the "new circuits."

People pile into their cars, hit the road and try perhaps a half-dozen popular snow areas rather than just one.

They do in a three-day week-end, covering the major spots in one tour.

The only chair lift in the Midwest, for instance, is at Boyne Mountain, in the northwest section of the Lower Peninsula.

Calder's Calder's area, equipped to the summit with facilities from towers to chalets, drew more than 65,000 snow-sports fans last year.

This year the figure may double.

Central and East Michigan spots like Grayling, Gaylord, Tawas-Oscoda and Alpena have spared neither men nor money to add glamor and convenience to their snowfields.

Deep in the Upper Peninsula, 20 miles west of Ontonagon overlooking Lake Superior, is a brand new development known as the Porcupine Mountain State Ski Area—complete with ski tows and toboggan runs.

The Copper Country's Hancock-Houghton area is a little bit of Switzerland, some of Michigan's best ski resorts.

"Air shows" at Slide Hill, named for the obvious.

Ice fishing—the practice of bobbing for or spearing fish through the ice, in or outside of little shanties and windbreaks—used to be considered a sport only for the hardy breed of men who spend most of their lives in the outdoors.

But, as cigarette unavailability to popularity when women took to the fish, ice fishing became a more popular sport when the women moved in.

Now it's claimed pretty much with snow sports and ice skating.

Not that the women have taken over completely. They're merely joined in—to make it more interesting.

Some country promoters are most concerned over the old idea that "winter isn't here 'til it snows in Detroit."

People just wouldn't get their ski logs out until snow had cleared the streets in the Motor City.

But they're getting over it. They watch the snow reports from meteorologists and find there's usually snow and plenty of it though the squalls dry in Detroit.

January is expected to bring adequate snowfall, despite a slow start. But February and March still are the traditionally best snow-sports months.

THE SKIERS. Tobogganists, fishermen, hunters and other outdoor people will account for revenue up to \$20,000,000.

Purting wouldn't venture a guess as to exactly how much the snow and ice sports areas in Detroit and outstate. But it's a good guess that the average fan spends from \$50 to \$100, in all.

MOST SNOW-SPORTS areas are within a few hours' drive of Detroit. Any of them can be reached in 11 or 14 hours.

Rail, bus and airline services also have been vastly improved and expanded to accommodate snow-sports addicts.

Some of the longest, trickiest and most exciting ski and toboggan runs in the country are in Michigan.

NO ARTIFICIAL ski slides anywhere in the world has yet been able to beat—in height—the Pine Mountain ski slide at Iron Mountain.

At Ishpeming-Negaunee, daredevils still put on skiing



Here's your Free Press Winter Sports Guide for 1950, compiled with the cooperation of the Michigan Tourist Council and Automobile Club of Michigan:

East Michigan

ALPENA—Lookout Hills ski area: whitest, fox, rabbit runs; skating, two ski runs, rope tow, shelters, Hubbard Lake ski and toboggan slopes, snowshoe trails, ice fishing, skating events.

CHEBOYGAN—Graveland Mountain: skiing, Cheboygan River, Miller and Hawk Lakes, skating, ice fishing.

GRAYLING—Grayling Winter Sports Park, ski slopes, four rope tows, three-course toboggan slides, illuminated skating rink, snowshoe trails.

TAWAS-OSCODA—Silver Valley: skiing, two 2,100-foot toboggan slides with extra slide, ski tow, lodge, center rises and ski-jumping instructors.

SAGAUNAW—Skiing trails, illuminated; toboggan and coasting slides.

GLADWIN—Skiing, winter hunting, fishing.

WEST BRANCH—Ogema Hills, ice skating rink, fox, rabbit and wildcat hunting; four rope ski tows, lodges, ski rental.

GAZLORD—Snow Valley: eight ski slopes, six electric tows, lodge and dining room, ice skating, instructors, Waters Ski Village: three slopes, electric tow, skaters, snack bar, instructors. Chicago Ski Club, Private: seven rope tows, multi-lodge and cottages, dining, ski shop, instructors.

INDIAN RIVER—Graveland Mountain: Ski slopes, rope tow, shelter, fox, rabbit and wildcat hunting. Burt and Mifflin Lakes: ice fishing. Chubb, hotel, restaurant.

LANSING—Stearns Valley: skiing, tobogganing, three slopes, two rope tows, skaters, snack bar. Twin, Tea and Wolf Lakes: ice fishing, accommodations.

CLARE—Snowflake Mountain: Skiing, three rope tows,

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chubbaw. Ice skating, night skiing, fox, rabbit and wildcat hunting. Accommodations.

POCONO—Saginaw Bay: ice fishing; fox and rabbit hunting.

POCONO—Plover Hills Sports Park: Skiing, tobogganing, five slopes, three electric tows, night skating, lodge, dining, toboggan slides, ski instructors.

SAGES LAKE—Ski run, rope tow, ice fishing, skating, winter hunting, accommodations.

STANDISH—Winter sports crossroads, ice fishing on Saginaw Bay; rabbit and fox hunting, slopes.

HARBORVIEW—Skiing, tobogganing, good slopes, track, ice fishing.

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ROGERS CITY—Hunting and fishing take-off point, ski trails, tobogganing.

Houghton Lake—Ice fishing, cross country skiing, tobogganing, bobcat and fox hunting.

West Michigan

BOYNE CITY—Boya Mountain: Skiing, tobogganing, chair lift, new lodge facilities, three ski runs, new trails, tows, ski shop, dining, instructors, Skintana, ice fishing village, on Lake Charlevoix.

CADILLAC—Calder's Ski Area: Skiing, tobogganing, 16 power tows, 14 ski runs, up to 2,000 feet; ski shop, ski jumps, 15 and 20 meters; chair, overnight accommodations.

NEWAYGO—Newaygo Winter Sports Park: Tobogganing, skating on lake, snowshoeing, ski trails, year-around archery.

BONAVILLE—Winter Sports Park: 2,500-foot toboggan slide, skiing.

ELBERTA—Skiing, tobogganing, highest ski jump in Lower Peninsula.

LELAND—Traverse-Super Leaf Mountain: Ski trails,

Upper Peninsula

ESCANABA—Winter Sports Park: Skiing, tobogganing, skating; hockey events, skating races.

HANCOCK-HOUGHTON—Ripper Hills: Michigan Tech winter carnival, intercollegiate skating, ski tow, tobogganing.

IRON MOUNTAIN-KINGSFORD—Skiing, tobogganing, skating, hockey, winter sports tournament, Pine Mountain, world's highest artificial ski jump.

IRONWOOD—Mt. Hope-Wolverine Hill: Skiing, tobogganing, snowshoeing, skating, ski tournament.

ISHPEMING—Skiing, tobogganing, skating, snowshoeing, Slide Hill ski jump, ski jumping meets.

Instructors, tobogganing, site of Michigan International ski championships.

PITTSBURGH—Pittsburgh Park: 2,500-foot toboggan slide, skiing, skating, shelters, special skating events.

HARBORVIEW—Butt House Hill: Fox-shooting, skiing, tobogganing, skating, accommodations.

KALAMAZOO-BATTLE CREEK—Battle Valley, eight miles east of Kalamazoo, 16 miles west of Battle Creek: Four toboggan runs, skating rink, downhill and slalom.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION on any winter sports area and special events, write to the Chamber of Commerce of that locality, the Michigan Tourist Council, 114 S. Walnut, Lansing, or Automobile Club of Michigan, Detroit.

The Michigan Tourist Council also maintains information service at 19 Cadillac Square, Detroit.

sking, two ski jumps, two ski tows, lighted for night use, clubhouse food service.

LEWISTON—Huntin Lake State Park: Skiing, tobogganing, ice rinks in town.

Upper Peninsula

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Other Upper Peninsula Winter Sports Areas

DETROIT AREA FACILITIES, in addition to 300 rinks managed by the Parks and Recreation Department, include:

Belle Isle: 40 acres of skating ice, skaters, lunch rooms, can accommodate 100,000 skaters.

Palmer Park, Woodward Ave. North of Six Mile Rd.: Skating on lagoons, refreshments.

Indian Golf Course (Berg and Seven Mile): Toboggan slides, skating, skating rink, Michigan.

River Rouge Park (Plymouth and Burt Rd. and West Warren at Pershing): Six toboggan slides, skating rink, ski jump at Outer Dr. and Joy Rd., ski trails at Burt and Plymouth Rd.

Warren-Cayuse Site (East Warren and Canyon): Hill for skating and angling, two new toboggan slides, lighted at night.

Middle Rouge Parkway, largest in County park system: Skiing, tobogganing, hiking, night sliding, toboggan slides near Six Mile, Northville. Skating on Newburgh, Wilson, Phoenix and Nardin Lakes.

Other country parks for winter sports: Elizabeth, Trenton, Lela Valley, west of Telegraph between Five and Six Mile; Huron River Park, Willow Rd. and Huron River Dr.; Lower Rouge Parkway, paralleling Michigan Ave. between Guller Rd. and Wayne village; Red Creek Park, Five Mile and Inlander Rd.

NEW HIRSHON—Keweenaw Metropolitan Park, three miles west of Kent Lake, 33 miles northwest of Detroit: Skiing, tobogganing, sliding, ice fishing, ski facilities.

ORTONVILLE—Ortonville State Recreation Area, four miles south of west of Five Mile Ski Club and Conservation Department sponsorship; Ski tow.