

20 ★ THE MINNEAPOLIS STAR Thurs., Dec. 28, 1967

## Former St. Paul Ski Jumper Solves Snow-making Cost

WHILE THE REST of the Twin Cities remained snowless, the white stuff fell softly and gently on Mt. Sitzmark, Shoreview ski area, each cold night this week.



**RALPH  
THORNTON**  
Ski Country

And there was no miracle involved.

It's the result of putting an engineer and skiing together.

Dismayed by the cost of commercial snow-making machinery (high-rent compressors, gallons of diesel fuel to run them, ear-shattering noise), corrosion engineer and contractor John Rysgaard found a better way. It could revolutionize the U.S. snow-making industry.

Rysgaard and Bill Wegleitner, partners in Mt. Sitzmark, simply piped water through a dozen nozzles similar to those farmers use to spray fertilizer, put a fan behind them and—presto—snow!

They are in the process of perfecting the simple technique so others can buy the rights to the process.

Snow-making has become so important to modern skiing that Telemark owner Tony Wise, for one, spent \$60,000 last season to put 60 inches of artificial snow on his ski hill. It is the compressors which make the cost so high; Rysgaard has eliminated them.

A former St. Paul ski jumper who didn't ski from the 1930s to the 1960s, Rysgaard has been busy enough since resuming the sport four years ago. He was one of the investors who created Mt. Frontenac two seasons ago, owns half of Mt. Sitzmark and is opening another ski area called Villa Park in Roseville soon.

He also invented a hydraulic drive for his rope tows which avoid starting with that arm-tearing jerk common to most such tows.

Visionary that he is, Rysgaard is practical, too. When he takes a day off to ski he loads his wife, daughter and two sons into the family airplane for a flight to Indianhead, in northern Michigan, where natural snow usually abounds.

"You just can't beat the real thing," he admitted.

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