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family/leisure

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Two resorts set up slopes in Nashville

(Second of four articles)
By John Kaminski

NASHVILLE, Ind. — A lone bewilderer hawk circles overhead, looping, floating and diving with uncertainty, its familiar points of reference obliterated.

Far below, the big Cats — Caterpillar earth-moving vehicles — start up and down the muddy hillsides, reshaping the late autumn countryside into yet another Brown County tourist attraction.

The scenic Schooner Valley's traditional autumn tourist lure will expand into winter this year.

Two new ski areas — Nashville Alps and Long Mountain — are planning to open in early December, although the current state of each — open, unfinished buildings, muddy inclines and exposed or unslid pipes that in a few weeks will be squaring man-made snow all over the place — belies those optimistic plans.

The creation of the two new ski resorts brings to four the total of new downhill areas in southern Indiana. Ski Peaks opened to enthusiastic crowds in Paoli, Ind. last winter and Ski Starlite is a mammoth venture scheduled to open by Christmas in

the suburban foothills northwest of Louisville, Ky.

Steve Bergdoll, mountain manager at Nashville Alps, doesn't mind words explaining the rationale of his Alpine venture — "Paoli started it all. They've been very helpful to us and we're very thankful."

Four miles east on Ind. 46 at Long Mountain, which is one mile west of picturesque Nashville village, Dr. Ronald Long, an Illinois animal breeder, says Paoli had no bearing on the decision to open his ski area, which unlike the other three in southern Indiana, is a corporation wholly owned by him. "We've planned to do this for a long time," he says.

Whenever the two new Nashville ski areas open, the Brown County tourist apparatus will be ready for them. Already, the ski areas have become a key part of the Brown County Winter Festival, a first-time event scheduled for Feb. 8-10. Ice fishing, balloon races, sleigh and hayrides and a play will be topped by events at each ski area.

Bergdoll bills Nashville Alps as "the closest ski area in the country to a major university." Some 13 miles west of Bloomington, Nashville Alps undoubtedly will benefit from being close to Indiana University's 37,000 students, so will Long Mountain.

The two areas will focus to the north for skiers, and probably won't do as much business from the Tri-State area as either Paoli or Starlite, being three hours from Evansville by car while the other two are only 2½-hour drives.

Nashville Alps is the larger of the two new ski areas in Schooner Valley. Its five advanced trails will be longer and higher in its nearest competitor. So will its two training pipes.

Rates for both lift tickets and lessons to learn how to ski are virtually the same at all four ski areas.

A 10,000-square-foot, log-and-fieldstone lodge at Nashville Alps will include a full-service restaurant, two lounges and a pro shop.



Schooner Valley sprawls in the distance from the summit at Nashville Alps

ski equipment rentals, perhaps because of the lesson in chaos learned the hard way at Paoli last winter, will be based in a separate building and offer 1,155 sets of skis, boots and poles.

Like Paoli and Starlite, Nashville Alps will be funded by public stock sales. According to Harold Bratton, the area's vice president in charge of finances, the sale is going well.

And like Paoli, Bratton predicts: "Once the skiers have started coming down the slopes, the sale will be over."

Nashville Alps aims to be a year-round resort. A 4.8-acre man-made lake on Schooner Creek may have sailboats or "bumper boats" in the summer, Bergdoll speculated. In addition, an Alpine slide and foliage tours on the area's two chairlifts probably will be offered, Bergdoll said. Total chairlift capacity will be 4,200 skiers per hour.

Bergdoll and Bratton put their expectations of success on luring ski clubs — particularly the giant Indianapolis club — to the area, either to provide training for club members before they take long trips to

more established areas or by providing a substitute for the long trips.

One market they hope to cut into is the Michigan market. "If you had to rank Paoli or Nashville Alps against the 88 ski areas in Michigan," Bergdoll asserted, "we'd be in the top nine."

Nashville Alps has at least one hill that's steeper than anything Paoli or Long Mountain offers, called White Devil. "It's short but for the guy who wants the speed, he's going to get it," said Bergdoll, gazing across the bustling valley from the top of that trail.

Schooner Express, at 2,100 feet long, is the longest single trail at Nashville Alps, but White Devil, only 1,000 feet long and seemingly straight down, offers the best view, with the lodge, pond, highway and other side of the valley in the background.

Him Run, a combination of two trails, actually offers the longest run at the Alps, 2,400 feet.

Nashville Alps has progressed the furthest of the three new areas, but lacks grass on many of its slopes. "To be realistic, it takes about 3 or 4 more inches of snow (for viable skiing) if you don't have grass,"

Bergdoll admitted.

Long Mountain is a more modest effort than its nearest competitor, with its two major runs averaging 1,800 feet shorter and 100 feet lower than Nashville Alps.

But Dr. Long is not ready to concede he's No. 2 in Schooner Valley.

The Illinois cattle-rancher is counting on superior snowmaking ability and unparalleled hospitality to keep customers coming back.

"The only way we're going to get 'em and get 'em to come back is to entertain 'em the best," he said. "Plus, I think we'll have snow when some other people don't," he predicted, alluding to what he termed the superior Canadian method of making snow.

One asset of the 15-acre Old Berry Farm is a 13-acre lake in back of the ski area, which Long hopes to develop into another recreational complex.

A 3,800-square-foot lodge will contain a small restaurant that will seat about 200 diners. A separate building will house the rental section, with about 1,200 sets and 370 rental lockers available.

In addition to Longway and Longwood, two trails about 1,000 feet long, Long Mountain will open two more trails, Pokalong (400 feet) and Ski School (180).

Lift tickets prices virtually are the same at both Nashville Alps and Long Mountain: \$8 during a weekday day and \$6 during a weekday evening. Weekend rates loop to \$11 at Long Mountain and \$12 at Nashville Alps during the day. The Alps considers Friday part of its weekend, so Long Mountain has a \$4 price advantage on that day.

Season passes cost more at Nashville Alps, \$175 for the first member of a family, compared with \$150 at Long Mountain.

Hope low rates at both areas are the same \$8 during the week and \$9 on weekends.

Both ski areas in Schooner Valley will benefit from existing Brown County recreational and lodging facilities. "There are 4,800 rooms for rent in a 20-mile radius," Bergdoll boasted, noting that figure includes hotels in Bloomington, Nashville and Columbus. "And we're working on package deals with some of the major hotels," he added.

In all, Nashville's two new downhill ski facilities figure to be major additions to Brown County's tourist lure, but whether they will get much business from the Tri-State area, considering the two other closer areas, remains to be seen.

Tomorrow, Ski Starlite: The big boy of Indiana skiing is taking its time getting ready.

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THE LAMPLIGHTER PRESENTS

Ski Indiana

Control key to avoiding ski mishaps

Common sense is the rule to avoiding most ski accidents. The Paoli Peaks Ski Patrol reminds you to ski cautiously and to always follow these "rules of the road":

1. **Ski under control.** Control means in such a manner that a skier can avoid all other skiers and objects.
2. **Right-of-way.** When skiing downhill and overtaking another skier, the overtaking skier shall avoid the skier below him. The skier further down the slope has the right-of-way.
3. **Pass on the right.** When skiers approach each other from opposite directions, they always pass on the right.
4. **Stop on the edge.** When you have to stop do so at the edge of a trail. Skiers must not stop in a location that will obstruct a trail or impede the normal passage of other skiers. NEVER stop at a point where you are not visible from above.
5. **Look before entering.** A skier entering a trail or slope from a side of intersecting trail must first check for skiers coming down the hill.
6. **A standing skier must check** for approaching downhill skiers before starting down.
7. **Climbing or walking.** When climbing or walking on a ski slope, skis should be worn, and the climber or walker should stay to the side of the slope.
8. **Safety straps.** All skiers using releasable bindings should wear safety straps to prevent runaway skis.
9. **Head signs.** Skiers shall stay on trails, off trail areas and trails that are closed can be hazardous — and observe all other posted areas, traffic signs and other regulations as prescribed by the ski area.



Dr. Ron Long surveys construction of Long Mountain

Plumbing is becoming a do-it-yourself project

CLEVELAND — Many an average American consumer is taking wrench in hand these days to repair home plumbing.

A study by a Cleveland business information and market research firm indicates do-it-yourself plumbers will represent a \$3 billion retail market by 1990.

By then, do-it-yourselfers are expected to account for one-fourth of the more than \$6 billion in manufacturers' sales of fixtures and fittings — an 18 percent increase from the last year's total.

The study by Prodata, Inc. says two factors are responsible: the scarcity of professional plumbers and their rising labor charges.

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