

8c The Gazette, Sat., Nov. 27, 1999

RECREATION



SKI IOWA

A scene much like this will be taking place at Sundown Mountain near Dubuque any day now. This snow-making activity was taking place in 1997. Sundown officials expect to start making snow soon, then open the Eastern Iowa ski resort for business. Sundown is just one of seven ski resorts in Iowa, a fact that no doubt would amaze people who are convinced the state is absolutely flat.

AP file photo

It's just about time to hit the slopes

Iowa resorts will start making snow any day now

Gazette staff report

When the snow begins flying and it will, and it doesn't have to be the natural stuff, either — Iowa skiers will find more opportunities for winter fun than the uninitiated might believe.

And when that snow does hit the ground, Sundown near Dubuque will have downhill trails and snow jumps awaiting Eastern Iowa ski enthusiasts. Sundown, west of Dubuque on Asbury Road, has carved its runs into a natural setting on its 45-acre mountaintop location in a century-old cedar forest.

Ski coaches, a Skiwee program for the youngsters and special opportunities for groups are just part of the appeal at Sundown.

New at Sundown this year is a half-pipe facility built into the ground for snowboarders, a relocated terrain park and expanded racing runs.

A spokesman at the facility said Wednesday they hope to begin making snow any day now.

They just need night-time temperatures to level off in the high teens or low 20s to get the job done, he said.

SUNDOWN ISN'T ALONE when it comes to Iowa skiing. Fun Valley Ski Area in Montezuma is within a two-hour drive of Cedar Rapids and Nor-Ski in

Decorah is also about 2 hours away.

In central Iowa, skiers can get their fix of winter sports at Sleepy Hollow Sports Park in Des Moines or Seven Oaks Recreation Area near Boone.

To the west, Riverside Hills in Estherville and Crescent Hills Ski Area just north of Crescent near Council Bluffs beckon to Iowan skiers.

But don't try to ski this winter at Silver Creek Ski Resort in Humboldt. That operation has gone out of business after many years.

SKI IOWA

Here's a brief rundown of Iowa's ski resorts. Use the phone numbers below to check on opening dates:

RIVERSIDE HILLS

- Location: Highway 4, southwest of Estherville
- Trails: Downhill
- Snowmaking: 100 percent
- Longest run: 1,400 feet
- Season: Mid-December to mid-March
- Hours: 3:30 p.m.-9 p.m.

Wednesday-Friday: 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Saturdays

- Information: (712) 362-5376; snow phone, 1 (800) 286-5376
- From Cedar Rapids: About 4:15, north on I-380 to 218 north to 18 west to 4 north.

CRESCENT HILLS

- Location: 17034 Snow Hill Lane, two miles north of Crescent
- Trails: 10 downhill, four tubing chutes
- Longest run: 2,000 feet
- Snowmaking: 100 percent
- Season: December-March
- Hours: Noon-9:30 p.m. daily, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. weekends
- Information: (712) 545-3850
- From Cedar Rapids: About 4:30, south on I-380 to I-80 west to I-680 west to 183 south.

SUNDOWN

- Location: 17017 Asbury Rd., Dubuque
- Trails: 23 alpine and snowboarding
- Season: December through mid-March
- Snowmaking: 100 percent
- Longest run: 4,000 feet
- Lifts: Two double chairs, two triple chairs, one quad chair.
- Uphill lift capacity: 9,000 per hour
- Hours: 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Sunday-Thursday; 9 a.m.-10 p.m. Friday-Saturday
- Lift passes: Ranging from \$21 to \$32, adults; \$16-26, youth (6-11) and senior citizens (55-69); free, under 6 years old and over 69
- Information: 556-6676
- Snow report: 1 (888) SUN-DOWN
- From Cedar Rapids: About 1:15, north on Highway 151.

FUN VALLEY

- Location: 1066 500th Ave., Montezuma
- Trails: Nine downhill, one snowboard
- Lifts: One tubing hill tow, one rope tow, two double chairs, one triple chair
- Uphill lift capacity
- Snowmaking: 90 percent
- Longest run: 1,500 feet
- Season: December to mid-March
- Hours: 4-9 p.m. weekdays; 10 a.m.-10 p.m. weekends
- Information: (515) 623-3456; snow phone, 1 (800) 352-0746
- From Cedar Rapids: About 1:30, south on I-380 to I-80 west to 63 south.

NOR-SKI

- Location: Highway 52, Decorah
- Trails: Five downhill
- Lifts: One rope tow, two J-bars
- Longest run: 1,200 feet
- Season: Late-December to February
- Hours: 11 a.m.-5 p.m. weekends and school holidays
- Information: 382-4158
- From Cedar Rapids: About 2:00, north on I-380 to 150 north to 52 north.

SEVEN OAKS

- Location: Boone
- Trails: 11
- Longest run: 1,800 feet
- Snowmaking: 100 percent
- Lifts: Three surface lifts, one triple chair
- Season: December to mid-March
- Hours: 4 p.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 11 a.m.-9 p.m. weekends; 10 a.m.-10 p.m. holidays
- Information: (515) 432-9457

• From Cedar Rapids: About 2:30, west on 30

SLEEPY HOLLOW

- Location: Des Moines, east of state fairgrounds
- Trails: Eight
- Snowmaking: 100 percent
- Lifts: Three surface lifts, two rope tow, one quad chair
- Season: Early December to mid-March
- Hours: 4 p.m.-9 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday; 4 p.m.-10 p.m. Friday; 9 a.m.-10 p.m. Saturday; 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Sunday
- Information: (515) 262-4100
- From Cedar Rapids: About 2:00, south on I-380, west on I-80

AND IN ILLINOIS ...

Chestnut Mountain Resort near Galena offers skiing and snowboarding. Located on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River, Chestnut has 140 acres for skiing, a seven-acre terrain park, 17 downhill runs ranging from beginner to expert, five chair lifts and three surface lifts. Call 1 (800) 397-1320.

AND IN WISCONSIN...

In addition to ski resorts in Iowa, there are several located just a few hours from Cedar Rapids in Wisconsin:

- A: Cascade Mountain, 30 miles north of Madison; information: 1 (800) 952-2754
- B: Devil's Head, south of Baraboo; information: 1 (800) 338-4579
- C: Mount La Crosse, south of La Crosse on Highway 35; information: 1 (800) 426-3665
- D: Tyrol Basin, five miles west of Mount Horeb; information: (608) 437-4135



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