

6C The Gazette, Sat., Dec. 7, 2002

RECREATION

Sundown Mountain in Dubuque is a popular Eastern Iowa winter sports location. Jim Wachtel of Dubuque negotiates the downhill slalom course during the Iowa Winter Games last January. The Winter Games are Feb. 7-9 this winter in Dubuque.



Photo by Dave Kettering, Dubuque Telegraph-Herald

Skiers off to flying start



Photo by Clint Austin, Dubuque Telegraph-Herald

Snowboarding continues to grow in popularity and is available at most area resorts. Dylan Schipley of Freeport, Ill., catches some air on this routine last Saturday at Chestnut Mountain Resort near Galena, Ill.

Last year at this time, snow was merely a wish for winter sports enthusiasts. This year, the temperatures have been more cooperative for the making of artificial snow. Terry Bergfeld drives the Pisten Bully Groomer down a ski run last week at Sundown Mountain in Dubuque. Resort operators made snow at mid-week and opened for business Friday.



Gazette photo by Kevin Molf

Gazette staff report

For snow skiers, this winter is off to a much better start than what transpired a year ago. (The rest of you are out of the loop on this one. We know you liked last year's mild December much better than this one.)

Last winter, Iowa's ski resorts were still only dreaming of getting the season under way at this time. This year, snow has already been made at some resorts and skiers have taken to the slopes.

To help you with your winter skiing, snowboarding and tubing plans, here's our annual guide to Iowa's ski resorts (plus a few in neighboring states).

CRESCENT HILLS

• **Location:** 1704 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:** 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily, 9 a.m.-midnight Fridays and Saturdays

• **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.

FUN VALLEY

• **Location:** 1066 500th Ave., Montezuma

• **Trails:** Thirteen downhill, one half-pipe snowboard, four tubing

• **Lifts:** One tubing hill tow, one rope tow, two double chairs, one triple chair

• **Snowmaking:** 100 percent

• **Longest run:** 1,500 feet

• **Season:** December to mid-March

• **Special events:** Snowmobile races 9 a.m., Dec. 15; New Year's Eve party 10 p.m.-1 a.m. includes fireworks

• **Price:** Tickets rental packages range from \$22 to \$38 for adults, \$17 to \$33 for students and \$15 for children

• **Hours:** Noon-9 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Sunday; 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Saturdays; Dec. 26-Jan. 1 open 10-9

• **Web site:** skifunvalley.com

• **Information:** (541) 623-3456

• **From Cedar Rapids:** About 1:30, south on I-380 to I-80 west to 63 south.

RIVERSIDE HILLS

• **Location:** Highway 4, southwest of Estherville

• **Trails:** Six downhill

• **Snowmaking:** 100 percent

• **Longest run:** 1,200 feet

• **Season:** Mid-December to mid-March

• **Hours:** 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Saturdays; noon-9 p.m. Sundays; Dec. 26-Jan. 3 open 10-9

• **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.

SEVEN OAKS

• **Location:** Boone

• **Trails:** 11 (snowboarding and tubing available)

• **Longest run:** 1,800 feet

• **Snowmaking:** 100 percent

• **Lifts:** Three surface lifts, one triple chair

• **Season:** December to mid-March

• **Hours:** 4:30 p.m.-9 p.m.

Wednesday and Thursday; 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Friday and Saturday; noon-9 p.m. Sunday; 10 a.m.-9 p.m. holidays

• **Prices:** 12 and younger, \$11-25; adults, \$15-35; snowtubing \$8 per hour

• **Information:** (515) 432-9457

• **Web site:** sevenoaks-rec.com

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

SLEEPY HOLLOW

• **Location:** Des Moines, east of state fairgrounds

• **Trails:** Eight (also terrain park for tubing and snowboarding)

• **Snowmaking:** 100 percent

• **Lifts:** three rope tow, one chair lift

• **Season:** Early December to mid-March

• **Hours:** 4:30 p.m.-9 p.m. Wednesday-Thursday; 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Friday and Saturday; noon-9 p.m. Sunday

• **Information:** (515) 262-4100

• **Web site:** sleepyhollows-portspark.com

• **From Cedar Rapids:** About 2:00, south on I-380, west on I-80

SUNDOWN

• **Location:** 17017 Asbury Rd., Dubuque

• **Trails:** 22 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, one ski carpet

• **Uphill lift capacity:** 9,000 per hour

• **Hours:** 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Sunday-Thursday; 9 a.m.-10 p.m. Friday-Saturday; Dec. 26-Jan. 1 open 9-10

• **Lift passes:** Ranging from \$24 to \$34, adults; youth (6-11) and senior citizens (55-69), \$18-28; beginners area, \$10-22; season pass, \$300

• **Web site:** Sundownmtn.com

• **Information:** (563) 556-6676

• **Snow report:** 1 (888) SUN-DOWN

• **From Cedar Rapids:** About 1:15, north on Highway 151.

Editor's note: Nor-Ski in Decorah will not be open this season

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 four surface lifts. Call 1 (800) 397-1320.

AND IN WISCONSIN ...

There are several ski resorts located just a few hours from Cedar Rapids:

• Cascade Mountain, 30 miles north of Madison; information: 1 (800) 922-2754

• Devil's Head, south of Baraboo; information: 1 (800) 338-4579

• Mount La Crosse, south of La Crosse on Highway 35; information: 1 (800) 426-3625

• Tyrol Basin, five miles west of Mount Horeb (full schedule starts Dec. 18); information: (608) 437-4135