

There's Ski Fun in Iowa For Beginner and Veteran

(By the Associated Press)

Time was when Iowans thought of skiing as something to do in Colorado, Vermont, New York and other far-off places, not to mention neighboring Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Iowa skiers still go to these places, but skiing as a sport and as a business is growing in the Hawkeye state.

Iowa has about three dozen slopes for accomplished skiers and beginners — slopes that aren't especially long or nestled among towering pine trees or boulders.

Many skiers say it's possible to learn to ski in Iowa much more economically than at Aspen, Colo., for example.

The owners of Iowa ski resorts are working hard to make sure the quality of ski instruction is the best obtainable.

Typical rates for private instruction start around \$7.50 per hour, or down to \$2.50 per hour in groups of from four to 11 people.

The longest ski slope in the state is 2,600 feet — Fun Valley at Montezuma. The average is 750 feet to 1,000 feet.

The average drop on the slopes is 200 feet. The largest drop is 250 feet at Decorah's Nor-Ski Run.

There are 19 rope tows, three motor-powered, one T-bar and a Poma lift.

Most Iowa ski areas have

shelters and a hot lunch counter. Nearly all have skis, boots and all other skiing paraphernalia for rent.

Last year there were more than 45,000 ski visits to Iowa slopes.

Following is a list of the slopes in Iowa. The telephone numbers can be dialed for more information, including reports on snow conditions.

Decorah, Nor-Ski Run—On U.S. 52, 1½ miles north of intersection with Iowa 9; six slopes from 1,500 feet intermediate, 1,000 feet expert and 300 feet beginner; four rope tows, one cable tow; rentals; nights. Closed Mondays and Wednesdays; 319-382-4251 or 319-382-9962.

Clear Creek Ranch, Lansing — 500 feet slope; one rope tow; rentals; snowmobile trails; lights; 319-533-4166.

Hickory Hills — South of Waterloo on County Road X; three slopes 1,000 feet; three rope tows; rentals; instructors; cross country skiing; snowmaking equipment; night lights; 319-266-6813.

Winter Playground — Three miles east of Humboldt on Iowa 3; three slopes from 750 feet advanced to 700 feet beginner; two motor powered, one rope tow; rentals; toboggan run; snow-making equipment; 515-332-1316.

Pilot Knob — Three miles east of Forest City on Iowa 9; three slopes; one rope tow; rentals; weekends only.

Dayton Dells — Five miles east of Dayton on Iowa 175; three slopes, three rope tows; rentals; 515-547-2410.

Holiday Mountain — One mile southwest of Estherville on Iowa 4; three slopes from 750 feet advanced to 800 feet novice; one T-bar, three rope tows; rentals; instructors; snow-making equipment; closed Mondays and Tuesdays; 712-362-9028.

Horseshoe Bend — Three and a half miles southwest of Milford off U.S. 71; four slopes, 250 feet to 750 feet; one power tow; 1,000 feet toboggan run; snowmobile trails; 712-338-4007.

Fun Valley, Montezuma — Two and a half miles west of Iowa Highway Commission store on U.S. 63; three slopes from 2,600 feet advanced to 100 feet beginner; three rope tows; rentals; instructors; 150 acres snowmobile trails, 515-623-3456.

Ted's Hill — One mile north of Grimes intersection on Iowa 141; three slopes, three rope tows; rentals; instructors; weekends only; 515-986-9092 or 515-279-0677.

Dexfield — Two miles north of Dexter on County P-48; two runs, 1,400 feet and 200 feet; two rope tows; rentals; instructors; nights; 515-789-4597.

Crescent Hills, Council Bluffs — 15 minutes from downtown Omaha; two runs; one rope tow; one Poma lift; rentals; snow-making equipment.