

Michigan Adds Ski Trails After Survey in Laurentians

Frank Davis, East Michigan Tourist Association publicity man, was commissioned late last season to make a survey of Canadian winter sports facilities to learn what Michigan could do to improve its own program in the snow. This article indicates the trend Michigan is following as a result of Davis' study.—Ed.

By Frank Davis

Michigan is learning from Canada that the fundamental winter sport is skiing. Ice skating, toboggan runs, snowshoeing, dog sledding and bob sledding are essential but not quite as important.

Michigan is getting wise. At Grayling, the Department of Conservation has built one of the most completely equipped winter sports parks in the Middle West. The Department is marking out new ski trails through the green forest land and over open masses of hills. The ski jumps and downhill courses are constantly being improved.

A few miles inland from East Tawia, the United States Forest Service has constructed an attractive park at Silver Valley in the Huron National Forest. The open hills and the trails in the surrounding hilly country are particularly adapted to beginners.

Plans are under way at Alpena to utilize the rolling hills south of the city by laying out and clearing snow trails.

Mechanical Ski Tows

Vanderbilt and Petoskey have mechanical ski-tows to haul the weary skier back to the top of the hill, conserving his energy for more sport.

Other Michigan centers such as Cadillac, Muskegon, Blaney Park, Escanaba, Iron Mountain, Iron-

wood, Ishpeming, Marquette and Munising are all shifting the emphasis toward skiing.

After skiing became the fundamental winter sport in Canada, the interest in winter sports received a tremendous push. On one Sunday last winter 10,000 enthusiasts left Montreal by train for the Laurentians! The aisles and sides of the cars were plugged with rows of skis.

And they take their sport as seriously as a religion. The fascination is similar to trout fishing or golfing—the individual competes in skill not against others, but against himself. He learns something new every day. He has a chance to strut his stuff in new and colorful clothing. He has the inner satisfaction of overcoming the natural obstacles of ice and snow.

For Youth and Age

It is not a youth movement, but an activity that attracts participants of all ages. Men and women in late middle age and youngsters of 7 or 8 years often enroll in the same beginners' ski class. They are taught to handle their skis competently enough to do cross-country skiing with leisurely stops at cheering inns for meals along the way.

Competitive ski-jumping is for the select few who have been carefully trained since childhood. It's too dangerous for much pleasure.

Laurentian ski activities center about Montreal, metropolis of the Dominion, and Quebec City. The Laurentians begin only 45 miles north of Montreal and are reached by daily snow trains making many stops at centers along the way. From Quebec the Laurentians are reached by electrically heated busses running to Lac Beauport, a favored spot.

Good skiing is continuous from December to April, with an average snow depth of 26 inches. Snow is deeper near Quebec City—the district is somewhat farther north.

1,000 Miles of Trails

Eastern Canada boasts of hundreds of winter sports centers ranging from a quiet, inexpensive boarding house or "pension" to the most palatial of winter hotels. The extent of this development is illustrated by the fact that the Canadian Pacific Railways have charted a network of well marked ski-trails north of Montreal totaling 1,000 miles and constantly increasing in extent.

These ski trails are the best feature of Canadian skiing. It is possible to plan a brief afternoon outing, or the ski voyager may plan an itinerary of several days' duration, stopping at charming chalets and Habitant farm houses along the way. Such a ski run is the Maple Leaf Trail that winds its way for 90 miles over frozen lakes, through the green spruce forestland that lies between Shawbridge and Mont Tremblant.

Not all visitors visit the Laurentians to ski; many go to learn to ski. Experts advise professional instruction rather than picking up the knack casually. This is based on the old sports theory that it is easier to learn it the right way than it is to unlearn it the wrong way.

Anyone Can Ski

Heinz Von Allmen, director of the Alpine Inn's Snow School at Ste. Marguerite, states that his purpose is not to instruct the student to be a daredevil skier, but to teach him enough control so that he can ski safely as well as enjoyably within the limits of his natural ability. Von Allmen stresses the point that anyone with average physical equipment can ski—there's nothing magical about it.

Michigan is learning from Canada to lay out new ski trails; to encourage skiing by holding cross-country races for the youngsters; to build new ski-tows to prolong the pleasure of downhill sport, and to engage competent instructors to teach the right methods.

Queen of the North Contest Given Soo

Winter Sports Plans Made at Marquette

Sault Ste. Marie was selected as the site for the 1940 "Queen of the North" contest by delegates from the Upper Peninsula Winter Sports Club and the Winter Sports Committee of the Upper Peninsula Development Bureau who met at Marquette last week.

Dates were not set for the queen contest, but it is expected that like the first two annual eliminations held in Ishpeming, this year's contest will be staged late in February. Plans for winter carnivals in a number of Upper Peninsula communities were discussed, although dates for these also were left for determination later. Formation of an Upper Peninsula Sports Council also is contemplated.

Sault Ste. Marie's new community building, to contain an artificial ice rink with a seating capacity of 4,500, and an auditorium seating an additional 1,200 persons, will be ready for at least partial occupancy by Dec. 1 and will be in full use well in advance of the queen contest.

Made possible by the late Mrs. Sarah Pullar, of Tampa, Fla., who was a former resident of the Soo, and by the WPA and the City, the new building will cost \$180,000. Furnishings represent an additional \$75,000.

Airline Extending Summer Service

United Air Lines announces the extension of full summer service throughout the autumn months. Harold Crary, vice president in charge of United's traffic, reports that the outbreak of hostilities in Europe is lending further impetus to domestic vacation air travel, which set an all-time record this past summer.

"In addition to overnight sleeper plane service to Los Angeles and San Diego United will fly directly to Del Monte and Santa Barbara as well as maintain its frequent direct service to San Francisco and northern California