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Straw-skiing Seen as Possibility for Michigan Lovers of the Snow Sport

Michigan skiers may discover a new twist to their favorite sport in the near future.

It's skiing on a straw-strewn hill against a background of gaily-hued autumnal foliage.

Alpena, whose new ski center, Lookout Hills Ski Park, opens this winter, is flirting with the idea.

Two young Alpena lassies experimented last week as they heralded the approaching winter sports' season.

SURE, IT WAS a gag so that EMTA Photographer Andy Munch could get some "cheesecake" shots. But even though they shivered in abbreviated bathing suits as the mercury hovered at 38 degrees, they liked it.

The experimenters, Edythe Moisan and Bernadette Seguin, found "skiing on straw" even more fast and tricky than traditional snow.

It was after they couldn't wait for official opening of Alpena's new ski park, that Chamber of Commerce Secretary Frank Catto found a few bales of straw to give the girls a chance to get the jump on other skiers.

And that's how it happens that maybe next year a ski slope at the Alpena park will be loaded with hay to let Michigan skiers try out a new form of the sport.

ALPENA'S NEW PARK, located 18 miles south of Alpena on US-23, overlooking Thunder Bay, will be ready for operation with the first snowfall.

The new ski center has three slopes and two rope tows will be in operation when the season opens, Catto said.

STRAW-SKIING is fast and tricky finds Edythe Moisan as she spills on a slope of Alpena's new Lookout Hills Ski park. In abbreviated bathing suit, she was experimenting with the new version of the traditional sport.

NORTHEASTERN Michigan and three electric rope tows. Additional slopes have been cleared and three tows will be in operation at the enlarged ski park at Waters, where a slope for advanced skiers is planned. A ski school will be operated by Alain and Stevie Almon and night skiing will be inaugurated. The park is located on U. S. 27, 11 miles south of Gaylord.

OTHER WELL-KNOWN ski parks and winter sport centers in looking Higgins Lake, with 1,000 there are four ski tows; Skyline, Valley, near East Tawas; Silver on US-27, south of Grayling, where ski tows and runs take care of 600 skiers an hour; Hubbard Lake; Lewiston, with five ski runs and a tow; the private Oscego Ski club, Great Lakes area with six ski tows, near Gaylord, showplace of the ski instruction and superb valley skiing; Pioneer Hills Sports park, three miles from Roscommon over-

slopes are being cleared. Four rope tows will be in operation.

THE QUEEN'S SELECTION ball is scheduled for Jan. 15; Michigan Senior Scouts second annual Rendezvous, Jan. 22-23; Coronation Ball, Feb. 19, and Tri-City Ski meet, Feb. 19-20.

Winter carnivals will be held at Lewiston Jan. 21-23 and Feb. 11-13. Election of queen by ballot is scheduled Jan. 21 and she will be crowned Feb. 13.

Selection of the Tawas queen for Silver Valley festivities is scheduled Jan. 11 and the Silver Valley queen will be selected Jan. 25. Grand Finale Ball and carnival is scheduled Feb. 4-6.

Communities are still working on plans for the winter sports' season to make the state one of the key ski and toboggan centers in the country.

Northeastern Michigan, especially is aiming for a longtime program that will entice city-dwellers to take their vacation, or part of it, in the winter time.

LABORING HARD on this project, with numerous ideas still in the formative stage, is the Winter Sports council, Wynne Steuermol, of West Branch, elected area president in the recent annual meeting at the EMTA session here, has a jock of ideas which some day may be reality.

He's working with a committee also well supplied with ideas that are destined to place Michigan on the winter sports' map. Right now the group is planning a meeting for discussion of the winter program. Tentatively it is set for Nov. 11 at Oscoda.

HERE THE ALPENA lassie heads down the straw-strewn hill against a back ground of blazing autumn color. Yes, her spill comes later.

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