

Let It Snow Is the Theme of 344 Here

Skiers Are Out and
Down in Valley View

By JAN MELLOW

Of Greater Cleveland's estimated population of 1,500,000, there are 344 persons who want more snow.

In their defense, we must admit they are skiers.

(It is hard to imagine any other defense.)

Our recent unpleasant weather has provided the first good opportunity of the year for flashy, snow-plowing maneuvers on the 700-foot slope in Valley View of the Cleveland Skiing Club—which has exactly 344 members.

Usually the club counts on two weeks a year of satisfactory skiing weather in this section of the ridiculously named North Temperate Zone.

So far it has had two days. But the other 12 may be on their way.

Luck?

"With any luck at all," said Richard A. Schleicher, who in his less sensible moments is a ski patrol leader, "we should have cold enough weather and enough more snow to get through the weekend beautifully."

(Bless his stem-christed little heart!)

Armed with sunglasses, new boots and a borrowed woolen scarf, this Plain Dealer reporter went calling yesterday on the Cleveland area's only ski slope.

During the day, the junior mountains are practically deserted.

At night, on those rare (fortunately) winter occasions, they are so jammed that passengers to the top of the ski lift must be counted carefully to prevent strain on the V-8 automobile engine that operates the cable.

Sometimes, said Schleicher, half the membership is waiting in line to ski.

And if cartoonists are to be believed, the other half is tangled in a morass of broken legs.

Schleicher, whose title as sky patrol leader means he is in charge of first aid, discounts the old rule that specifies first snow, then traction for the broken bones.

"We've had no more than one injury a year at our club," he said, readjusting the safety binding on his shoes.

But he does teach a class in ski slope first aid, under auspices of the Red Cross.

The most important thing to learn is transportation of victims on a toboggan, a vehicle that is to sking approximately



ADJUSTING SAFETY
BINDING on his wife's skis

is Richard A. Schleicher. It is really just part of his job, as safety instructor for the Cleveland Skiing Club.

what an ambulance is to traffic.

"Yes, we study safety," he said of his 10-member patrol.

"Not that we need it here. The whole slope is easy to watch at any time. It's all floodlighted at night, and you can see for yourself what it looks like by day."

(Yes, we could. So we didn't ski.)

"But a lot of our people," he continued, "go out of town for ski trips. Sometimes it's a good idea for us to know how to help the patrols in New York or Michigan."

"All in the interest of safety, you understand."

(Yes, we did. So we didn't ski.)

To be serious for a moment, if possible—ski patrol members must learn how to find injured skiers, transport them on a toboggan without making the injury worse and, of course, get themselves back safely to the warming hut.

Protection against cold is an important part of treatment.

(Thanks for the loan of your scarf, Homer.)

Specific problems of transporting the wounded include the generally uneven terrain of ski slopes. It takes careful steering to get the victim to "mobile transport"—always assuming the car or truck isn't mired in snow.

"You know, ski injuries require careful handling," said Schleicher.

(Yes, we knew. So we didn't ski.)

