

Speaking Of **SPORTS**

By MIKE LEDNOVICH

He Shall Return

The familiar white Lincoln Continental with the blue stenciled letters, "Snow Valley Ski Resort-Kellyville" was packed full of boxes outside of Sapulpa's Glenwood Plaza apartments.

Willis and Yvonne Barrows, the innovators of Oklahoma's first ski area, trudged back and forth from the apartment to the car with household items.

"We've decided to go to Vermont," Yvonne revealed.

But in a manner not quite as spectacular as Gen. Douglas MacArthur wading on the shores of the Philippines, she declared, "But we shall return."

It had been a long, hard battle for the Barrows fighting Oklahoma's temperamental weather changes.

The Barrows had planned to open their ski resort on Dec. 1. When Christmas day arrived the huge compressor and nozzle guns still remained silent.

The mercury hung in the mid 70's that day and we were greeted by a Barrows' one liner as we scaled the beginners hill, "Welcome to Miami Beach," he quipped.

When the freezing weather did come, a Sapulpa court order silenced Barrows' snow guns with a temporary injunction. A Kellyville neighbor complained that the compressor made too much racket at night.

After a week in court Barrows had solved the noise problem, but the cold wave had vanished and again like a man stranded on a deserted island, Barrows began the wait for his cold rescue ship.

Finally the moment came

when the thermometer dropped to 29 and Barrows was able to fire up his machine to create Oklahoma's first man made snow covered hill.

It didn't last long, only a week or so. From that point on it was a battle of laying snow down only to watch it slowly melt as thermometer readings jumped up and down like a yo-yo.

In three months of actual operation, Kellyville's Snow Valley Skiarea had a grand total of 14 good days.

"We're not going to quit," vowed Yvonne. "We've learned a lot of things this past winter."

With their gear in storage, the Barrows headed for Vermont where Willis plans to install several snow making machines until September rolls around.

"We had thought of making Snow Valley a summer resort also," Yvonne revealed. "But it's really too hot for us in the summer so we'll return in early September."

Willis Barrows vows to make Snow Valley a success even if he has to bring back the cold Vermont winter weather with him.

COURT STANDOUT

LOS ANGELES (UPI)—Elgin Baylor, who retired in 1971 after 13 seasons with the basketball Lakers, left the game as the third highest scorer in the history of professional basketball.

Baylor scored 23,149 points for a 27.4 points per game average, surpassed only by Wilt Chamberlain and Oscar Robertson. Baylor now is a Lakers front office executive and broadcaster.