

Early residents interested in ore, not cold weather

LEAD — Terry Peak, three miles west of Lead, is 7,076 feet above sea level. This altitude is conducive to good skiing with plenty of snow — usually. Early stories document 10 or more feet of snow here with persons being snowbound for weeks at a time unless they had snowshoes. Early miners appreciated the warm,

mild winters and would probably have believed anyone wanting snow was completely off his rocker. Their interests centered on mining and milling silver. Rich silver ore was found here in the late 1870s with some assaying \$675 per ton. In the 1880s, gold came into prominence and mines by the score were busy working the extensive deposits. In Nevada Gulch alone, the Ben Hur, Snowstorm and the Alpha had operations. There were two mines on the other

side of the present Terry Peak ski lift — the Boscobel and the Double Standard. The latter had a tunnel from the town of Terry near the old water tower to the Nevada Gulch side near the chalet. Ed Johnson, a resident in the area, recalls going through the tunnel with only a few matches for light. The tunnel has since caved in. Some skiing was done in those early days, often on a pair of barrel staves. The first serious skiing in the gulch was in 1936 by members of the Bald

Mountain Ski Club, later known as the Terry Peak Ski Club, on land owned by Harry and Bertha Stewart, Deadwood. A rope tow was built with assistance from Homestake Mining Co. In 1952, skiing went big time when Black Hills Chairlift Co. bought out the ski club operation. A corporation was formed and stock sold. In 1956, a Poma lift was installed, a widely heralded innovation even if part of the way to the top was made by use of the rope tow. Through the years, chalets with

restaurants, a gift shop, office and ski patrol facilities were added. A nine-member board is responsible for the operation. Gilbert Moyle, Rapid City, is president; John Keene, Deadwood, vice president; Ed Keene, Deadwood, treasurer; and Tom Broadhurst, Spearfish, secretary. Keene remembers when Terry Peak was one of the first ski areas in the Midwest and busloads of skiers came from Minneapolis, St. Paul, Sioux Falls and other cities. Many of the top college skiers started out here, he said, recalling such skiing families as the Mattsons, Keenes, Berrys, Kennisons, Morcoms, Auers and Rachettos. Larry Kennison has turned pro, skiing the B circuit this past season, sponsored by the Black Hills Chairlift Co. Keene says if television viewers see a skier wearing the Terry Peak insignia and doing a giant slalom with skill and precision, it is Larry — a “home grown” product of the local ski trails.