

Park offers cross-country ski rentals

Is cross country skiing an increasingly popular sport—the water activity for me? Those who have contemplated the question but hesitate to purchase the necessary equipment without first experiencing the sport now have an opportunity to experiment through a pilot program at Maybury State Park in Northville.

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(Edward P. McCabe, Manager)

In an agreement with state recreation officials and Round River Adventures, an Ann Arbor-based outdoor recreation package, a cross-country ski rental concession has been instituted at Maybury for a one-year trial period.

The purpose of the program, which primarily concerns rentals but also group instruction and moonlight tours, is to enable novices to develop a taste for cross-country skiing.

Both Doug Maddox, a freelance writer who launched the project, and Robert Horner, Maybury park manager, agree that potential for success is good for the first ski concession of any kind in a lower peninsula state park.

Maddox, who was researching an article on the booming sport of cross-country skiing, discovered that "it looked like an open market."

"I talked about it with Dick Taylor, president of Round River. He took the idea to his board of directors and they allocated \$10,000 to try and make it work."

Horner said that state recreation authorities had thought of starting its own rental concession, but decided against it due to a lack of money and manpower. "Again, we didn't have the expertise to start out on our own," Horner said.

Round River negotiated with the state on the particulars of the concession and came up with a one-year contract. According to Maddox, the state will receive two percent of the gross revenues Round River secured an option for a second year.

"As far as the park is concerned," Horner said, "anything that brings people in, especially family units, is greatly appreciated."

"Our program is for the kind of person who has been thinking about cross-country skiing but doesn't want to go out and buy a lot of equipment before he knows whether he'll like it or not," Maddox stated.

Maddox, who will manage the concession for Round River, said that the biggest problem getting started to date was obtaining a stock of skis.

He said that many manufacturers of the longer, narrower cross-country skis have been deluged with orders and unable to fill orders until next year.

After checking around the country, Maddox was able to acquire about 200 pairs to launch the program. "The state of the ski industry lacks the overwhelming demand," the manager said.

Maddox can be contacted when he talks about the merits of cross-country skiing.

There are three or four major reasons why it's a good sport," he said. "It's an exercise thing in that it's a good way to get in with nature. Maddox began.

"It's also something you can do by yourself. If you go out to Mt. Brighton (down-hill skiing), you try not to get run over. As far as cost, it's a cross-country is a very reasonable compared to other sports."

"Kids, older people and the nonathletic type can learn how to cross-country ski in an afternoon and it's something the whole family can do."

"You don't need a big weekend," Maddox continued. "You can be driving along in your car, come across a field, pull off the road and ski for awhile."

Maybury's trails will be jointly maintained by Round River and the park services, Maddox said. The state will be helping with trail clearing, the manager said, but will inspect them (trails) and if they get too compact, well drag and groom them.

As during previous winters, cross-country skiers with their own equipment are welcome at Maybury, which has developed into a popular setting for the sport.

The thing that has really surprised us is that we've had so much cross-country skiing," Horner said.

Rental rates are \$2 per hour for the first two hours and \$1 per hour for each additional hour. There are special children's and family rates and a handful of group programs and tours.

Rentals are available noon-4 p.m. weekdays and 8 a.m.-6 p.m. weekends. Weekend times will prevail on weekdays the week between Christmas and New Year.

The rental hotline number is 971-1373. Maybury is located at 2043 Beek Northville and is easily accessible to area skiers. The most direct route is to travel west on Eight Mile.

An added attraction for cross-country skiers is that no motorized recreation vehicles are allowed in Maybury.

Cross-country skiing at Oaks County

Cross-country skiing enthusiasts can now enjoy 7.5 miles of scenic trails at Independence Oaks County Park near Clarkston.

The park will be open from 8 a.m. until dusk, daily during the winter months. Admission is \$2 per car.

Warning fires and shelters will be provided at the site. Ice fishing will also be available at the park when conditions are safe.

Independence Oaks County Park, which is owned and operated by the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission, is located two miles north of Pine Knob off I-115 and the Sackabaw Road exit.

OU matmen 'closing gap'

In the past two Oakland University wrestling meets, coach Matt Hase has started seven men who weren't even on the squad last year. And even though his team hasn't scored a victory yet, he feels his squad is "closing the gap."

The Pioneer matmen lost a 27-5 decision to Western Illinois University and then suffered an even closer defeat to Illinois Macomb.

Junior co-captain, Rich Hufnagel, from Hazel Park, continues to lead the Pioneer attack. He underlined 130 in dual meets this season, including a 4-3 decision over Western Illinois.

"I have only three wrestlers with us from last year," said Hase. "But we're scoring a lot of points and the young kids are starting to come and are closing the gap (individually)."

Hopefully, in January, we'll do better," he said. "If we can stay healthy and keep the grades up we'll be okay."

Oakland University-Western Illinois 118: Shaffer (W) dec. Fortune (OU) 5-1.

126: Kidag (W) dec. Eble (OU) 10-0.

140: Hufnagel (OU) dec. Niebur (WI) 10-0.

145: K. Niebur (WI) dec. Christensen (OU) 14-5.

150: Carson (WI) dec. Toth (OU) 8-1.

Snowmobile trails

Seven miles of snowmobile trails are now open from 8 a.m. until dusk each weekend during the winter months at Addison Oaks County Park.

Admission is \$2 per car. This price includes one snowmobile, with additional snowmobiles priced at \$1 each.

A concession stand will be open at the park. Addison Oaks County Park, which is owned and operated by the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission, is located on West Huron Road, 12 miles north of Rochester.

126: Hufnagel (W) dec. Smith (OU) 7-1.

140: Laitinger (WI) dec. Whitford (OU) 4-0.

145: Weisenborn (WI) dec. Shumaker (OU) 3-1.

150: Leigh (OU) dec. Hayes (WI) 2-2.

155: Hays (WI) dec. Hays (WI) 2-2.

160: Majors (OU) 2-1.

165: Nelson (OU) dec. Fortune (OU) 6-4.

170: Nagayama (OU) dec. Eble (OU) 4-1.

175: Hufnagel (OU) dec. Bangert 4-3.

180: Dooms (OU) dec. Toth (OU) 10-0.

185: Moore (OU) dec. Smith (OU) 7-2.

190: Wilfield (OU) pinned Wiener (OU) at 4:51.

195: Bargan (OU) dec. Chappel (OU) 9-2.

200: Leigh (OU) dec. Hase (OU) 5-0.

205: Moore (OU) dec. Major (OU) 4-0.

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