

skiing  
**Barry ZeVan**

## 'Flatlanders' can boast respected downhill skiers

Skiers who read The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers are not only called "Michiganers" or "Michiganians" — they are also unceremoniously called "flatlanders."

That's what midwesterners are often called to skiing inhabitants west of Denver, Colo., or east of Albany, N.Y.

But to the ski-wise anywhere, "flatlanders" also are respected as some of the best downhill skiers in the United States.

Boyer City, for example, boasts former Olympic contender and current pro-tour racer Cary Adgate.

Wisconsin has Scott Brooksback, who captured several prestigious freestyle trophies in the early and mid-1970's when freestyle skiing was still referred to as "hot dog."

FOREIGN ALPINE experts also have found enjoyment on the smaller midwest hills. Norway's Olympian Stein Eriksen spent some of his early years at Pine Knob and Boyne Mountain.

Sigi Grottenhofer, who now splits his time by directing ski activities at Portillo, Chile and Sugarbush, Vt., also instructed at Boyne.

And nearly every racer of merit, from Jean-Claude Killy to the late Spider Sabich to Billy Kidd, has emerged from "flatland" tours with the same enthusiasm displayed in Rockies races.

Kidd claims he could train any U.S. Olympic team on the Michigan hills of Brighton, Pine Knob, Holly or Alpine.

And he insists he isn't being solicitous.

"Midwest icing conditions are the best training surfaces for downhill racers," Kidd says.

WHILE SKING on icing isn't a piece of cake, racing hopefuls know it as the "frosting" which can determine whether a skier can handle the most slippery conditions.

"Flatlanders" are a determined lot as demonstrated by the persistent efforts which led to the founding of the National Ski Hall of Fame in the Upper Peninsula community of Ishpeming.

Harold Grindes of Duluth, Minn., proposed the establishment of the hall when he was president of The National Ski Association (NSA) in the 1940s.

The NSA (now called the U.S. Ski Association) decided in 1944 that a permanent structure to house the facility should be in Ishpeming, birthplace of the NSA. In 1947, efforts to construct the facility began in earnest. An innumerable number of "flatlanders" solicited contributions from anyone remotely interested in the development and history of U.S. skiing.

The completed structure was dedicated Feb. 21, 1954.

NUMEROUS "FLATLANDERS" also have been among those receiving the Bronze Plaque Award — the Hall of Fame's highest honor.

These recipients include: Conrad Thompson, a Michigan native who won the first U.S. National Ski Jumping Championship in 1904 in Ishpeming; Iron Mountain's Walter Bielecki, jumper on the 1936 U.S. Olympic team and captain of the 1948 team; Farrington's Henry Hall, the first American to establish world ski jumping distance marks and a national champion in 1916; and Julius Blegan of Minneapolis, Minn., national cross-country champion in 1911 and 1912 as well as 1932's Olympic team coach.

This year's atmosphere has cooperated enough to allow a real beginning, middle and end to the 1980-81 ski season, and because of it, metropolitan Detroit's 250,000 flatland skiers can be proud to ski on the little hills which have helped create some of the ski world's big champions.

Barry ZeVan, the television weatherman, writes a skiing column for the Observer & Eccentric newspapers.

## THE BMW 320i. AN EFFICIENT LUXURY CAR WITH 36 MPG.

If the words "fuel efficient" conjure up images of small, practical cars hopelessly encumbered by their own virtues, we suggest you consider the BMW 320i.

For, with the 320i (with standard transmission) delivers an impressive 25 EPA estimated mpg, 36 estimated highway mileage and, based on these figures, an estimated mpg range of 23-33 miles and a highway range of 351 miles, it also delivers the sort of performance one associates only with a sports car. (Naturally our fuel efficiency figures are for comparison purposes only. Your actual mileage and range may vary, depending on speed, weather and trip length. Your actual highway mileage and highway range will most probably be lower.)

If you'd care to judge the 320i for yourself, phone us and we'll arrange a thorough test drive.

**THE ULTIMATE DRIVING MACHINE.**  
BMW, MUNICH, GERMANY



**ERHARD MOTOR SALES**  
"Where Only The Best is Good Enough"  
32715 Grand River Farmington 477-6405

## NOTICE

### PAY 1980 TAXES NOW

BEGINNING MARCH 1, 1981 ALL REAL PROPERTY TAXES BECOME DELINQUENT AND ARE PAYABLE AT THE OAKLAND COUNTY TREASURERS OFFICE. A COLLECTION FEE OF 4% AND INTEREST AT 1% PER MONTH WILL BE ADDED TO THE TAX.

**C. HUGH DOHANY**  
OAKLAND COUNTY TREASURER

SOUTH OFFICE  
31001 LAHSER AT 13 MILE  
BIRMINGHAM, MI 48010

NORTH OFFICE  
1200 N. TELEGRAPH  
PONTIAC, MI 48053

February 16, 1981



**Marilyn Fitchett**

## Fresh ideas for cross country skiing

Getting tired of the same old cross country ski areas but unwilling to risk an afternoon at a new area for fear of being disappointed? Here's a guide to some of the areas you may not have tried.

**MAYBURY STATE Park** on Eight Mile west of Beek Road in Northville has some of the better closeby trails. Skiers take to bridge, hiking and bike paths there which offer a wide variety of terrain in deeply wooded territory. Good spot for beginners or persons looking for a less strenuous outing although trails total 18 miles. Picnic tables throughout the park make that mid-trail breather easier to take. Rentals available. Major drawback: Trail markers are for the most part non-existent. And although it would be tough to get lost there, it would be helpful to know how much territory you've covered in an outing.

**PROUD LAKE State Park** off I-96 at the Wixom exit offers beautiful scenery especially among its grove of pine trees and where Kent Lake peeks through the snow. Trails which lead from Heaven's ski rental are well-marked but you're pretty much on your own if you venture beyond the beaten track. Trails total 20 miles. If you loathe the roar of snowmobiles, stay away. Separate trails for each sport, but one parking lot.

**HIGHLAND STATE Recreation Area** on M-59 near Milford ranks as my favorite in the metro area. A system of three well-marked trails traverses lakes and lovely woods. The trails are three, four and five miles in length. The four-mile loop will lead you into some open territory so be dressed for the cold, particularly if it's windy. The longest trail is also the most challenging with a number of hills and hairpin curves. For shorter jaunts, try the nature trails which are also on the hilly side. Rentals available.

**REDFORD GOLF COURSE** at Seven Mile and Berg in Detroit offers a boring stretch along Seven Mile but a decent tour along the back of the course. The main reason I stay away from golf courses is

the lack of protection from the wind. Redford is no exception along that first stretch, but is enjoyable after you get to the second half of the course. About two miles.

**SNOW GULCH** at the West Bloomfield Civic Center site on Walnut Lake Road west of Orchard Lake Road is a bit of a yawner. There's something about seeing subdivisions as you ski which is not what I call getting back to nature. The 1 1/2-mile course is ho-hum except for one hummer of a hill on which I managed to wrap myself around a tree. A beginner's trail is also offered.

If you're looking for a weekend trip, here are a couple of spots you might consider.


**POKAGON STATE Park** in Angola, Ind., is about a three-hour drive to a winter sportsman's feast. A short beginner's loop is offered in addition to a four-mile trail that's a real test of maneuverability on skis. Plenty of challenging hills through a well-wooded section of the park. Part of it runs along a lake. Deer have been spotted in the park. Pokagon is also the home of a 1,700-foot refrigerated toboggan track. After you've hung up your knickers, you may want to test your courage on the rented toboggans. Entrance to park is \$1.25. Ski rentals, also inn, cabin and motel rentals in the park. Winter camping. Nature programs. Take I-94 west to I-69 south at Battle Creek. Angola is just the other side of the Michigan state line.

**HINCHMAN ACRES'** main claim to fame has been its location on the AuSable in Mio where many a canoe trip has started. But now the Hinchman folk are using the AuSable to another advantage: as a great backdrop for cross country skiing. Six trails range from a bunny loop to 14km. Seeing the AuSable swiftly flowing in zero weather is quite a site when you've figured that everything must freeze over in that kind of cold. Cabins on Hinchman property for rent. Ice skating also available. Mio is about four hours north of Detroit. Take I-76 north to M-33 north at Alger. Hinchman is on the main Mio drag (M-33) with plenty of signs for easy location.

## Groves needs track coach

Birmingham Groves has a new all-weather track facility — but it has no coach to run its boys' track program.

Anyone interested in applying for the varsity boys' track coaching position, may contact Groves' Athletic Director Carl Pendrack at 642-6760 during school hours.



**TUES., FEB. 17 vs. WINNIPEG**..... 7:30 P.M.  
**THURS., FEB. 19 vs. N.Y. RANGERS**..... 7:30 P.M.  
**WED., FEB. 25 vs. ST. LOUIS**..... 7:30 P.M.  
AT JOE LOUIS ARENA

Wednesday, February 25 - Detroit vs. St. Louis - 7:30 P.M.  
**FREE PHOTO PAC NIGHT**  
EVERY FAN attending the game will receive a special photo pack of 10 photos of their favorite players and the Detroit Red Wings.

**TICKETS AT JOE LOUIS ARENA AND ALL CTC OUTLETS**  
Ticket information (and group sales) 962-2000

## Plenty of space for mobilers

While Michigan's trail system remains basically unchanged for the third straight season, it already is so vast that owners of the state's nearly 250,000 registered snowmobiles need not worry about running out of new trails to explore.

"Michigan's state forests are crisscrossed by nearly 2,300 miles of marked trails, and its four national forest systems add another 1,300 miles of trails and routes," says Auto Club of Michigan Touring Manager Joseph Ratke. "In all, it's enough to almost stretch from Detroit to Alaska."

With such a mammoth trail system already in place, this year's state budget cuts and other economic factors may force the end of major new trail construction, Ratke adds.

The three-year snowmobile registration fee will rise from \$9 to \$15 in 1981, and all of that \$6 increase is earmarked for new trail construction.

"However, because of Michigan's

present economic situation, the added money will replace funds for new trail" already cut from the budget, meaning no new money actually will be available for major construction," says Ratke.

IN ADDITION, some State Department of Natural Resources officials feel that if trends toward rising gasoline costs and closer-to-home travel continue, trails will need only minor changes to meet future demand.

"There already are paths to match every driver's ability, ranging from the two-mile-long Camp Nine Trail near Connoville in the western Upper Peninsula, to the 100-mile Huron Trail through the pines of northeast Lower Michigan between Oscoda, Hale and East Tawas," Ratke says.

Snowmobilers also can ride over 2.7 million acres of state forest land, on more than 95,000 acres in 76 state parks and recreation areas, and along rights-of-way on thousands of miles of roads in 37 counties.

**STARK HICKEY WEST**  
Since 1926  
Brand New

**1981 ESCORT**  
from **\$5265**

**ORDER YOURS NOW!**  
Michigan's #1 Ford Dealer  
For 14 Consecutive Years.

**STARK HICKEY WEST** FORD

24760 W. SEVEN MILE RD.  
AT GRAND RIVER 538-6600


## Great American Beer Switch

**THE FINAL SCORE:**  
OF  
200 LOYAL BUD DRINKERS  
**48%**  
PREFERRED  
TODAYS SCHLITZ

OF  
100 MICHELOB DRINKERS  
**50%**  
PREFERRED  
TODAYS SCHLITZ



Schlitz Beer




12 Pak  
12 oz.  
Cans

**LIMITED TIME TASTE-TEST SPECIAL**

A Public Service of the American Red Cross

Thanks, you saved my life



Every day, every hour, somebody needs your type of blood to go on living. A healthy person can donate blood several times a year. Be a regular blood donor. Your blood counts. Somebody needs you. Call us. Donate blood.

American Red Cross

**OAK DISTRIBUTING CO.**  
5600 Williams Lake Road 674-3171