

# Travel



4C\*\* (Rc-8A, S-10A, F-7C, 4C\*)

O&E Thursday, January 29, 1987

## Insider's guide to state skiing

If you are an accomplished skier, you have already skied the slopes at the Boynes and probably in the Upper Peninsula. You can tell me more about skiing than I can tell you.

If you are a first-timer like me, you have got a long way to go before you need to know more than how to snowplough down a gentle hill.

But there are thousands of you out there who have skied the slopes around Detroit and would like to take a next step. I am definitely not a good source of this information, but I researched it for you and here is what I found.

First, how does Michigan fit into the ski picture of North America? The White Book of Ski Areas in the United States and Canada lists four U.S. areas: West, North Central, South and Northeast; two Canadian areas, west and east; and Helicopter/Snowcat Skiing in the United States and Canada.

THE MAPS in this book astound me. There is, apparently, some kind of downhill skiing in every state except Kansas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida and South Carolina; and in every Canadian province.

Obviously we need more winnowing out than that to get a true picture. I had a perfect opportunity to do that during a recent press trip to Boyne County with members of the Midwest Ski Writers Association.



**1-of-a-kind traveler**  
**Iris Jones**  
contributing travel editor

One afternoon I cornered a group of them at the Eagle's Nest, a short-order restaurant and fireside lounge at the top of the Hemlock slope, at Boyne Mountain Resort, Boyne Falls. I learned that Michigan has 300,000 skiers, 450,000 downhill and 150,000 cross-country.

There are 50-51 downhill areas, the second largest number of any state in the U.S. I checked that in my White Book. Wisconsin had 47 places listed. Michigan 45, Colorado and California 37 each.

"Where are the best ski hills?" That caused a flurry of indignation among the ski writers in the Eagle's Nest. It depends on the kind of ski experience you are looking for. Powder? Long runs? Volume? Unique conditions?

JIM SILBER of the Charlevoix County Press: "There are three or four ski centers in North America. In the U.S., there is the Midwest; the mountains from New Mexico to the Rockies, which have big hills, high verticals, wide runs.



"The eastern slopes are like the Midwest only they are more vertical. The Far West has heavier snow. If you want powder skiing, go to Utah."

Generally speaking, 50 percent of the skiing is intermediate, 30 percent advanced and 10 percent beginner. Jim also told me that many of the Western skiers are from the Midwest; that they are accustomed to short runs, so even on a long slope they will ski down about 1,000 feet and stop for a while.

I asked the ski writers to give me an insider's view of Michigan ski resorts. The consensus, from the advanced skier's point of view, was: Don't ski the slopes around Detroit unless you have to, Boyne Mountain, Boyne Highlands and Nubs Nob are the premier places for skiing in the

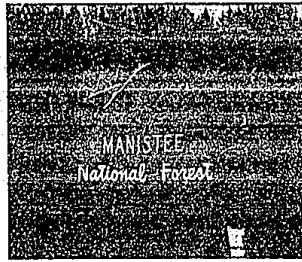
Lower Peninsula's best places in the Upper Peninsula are Indianhead at Wakefield, Marquette Mountain in Marquette, Big Powderhorn and Blackjack at Bessemer.

"Hey guys, you left out a lot of places." Well, said they: Sugar Loaf at Cedar is pretty good, it hasn't done as well as some because its a little too far from Traverse City. Shanty Creek has 350-foot verticals, its skier resort has 375-foot verticals, they are excellent for night skiing, but people go more for the plush resorts than for the advanced skiing.

Caberfae is close to the southern Michigan population areas, has short runs. It hasn't been taken too seriously by "real skiers," but the new 490-foot hill, recently built, may change that.

THE ONLY HILL in the Lower Peninsula rated by the Federation Internationale de Ski is Boyne Mountain, part of the Boyne USA Resorts, at Boyne Falls. There are others in the U.P.

My next stop was at a table where a lone Michigan skier sat, one of those hardy types who has skied every hill in Michigan and most outside of it. Where would he recommend that skiers go in Michigan? He agreed to talk if he could do so anonymously:



A skier goes airborne (left) on the slick slopes at Boyne Mountain. Caberfae (above) is known for its short runs among skiing bluebloods, but a new 490-foot hill could change that image.

"If you are a novice or even an intermediate, don't go to Boyne Mountain, even though it is the best known. For advanced skiers it's great; the most difficult run is Hemlock."

"Otherwise, consider Boyne Highlands, which has more variety. It's challenging but good for both intermediates and beginners. Lift tickets are interchangeable between the two Boyne resorts."

"The Homestead at Glen Arbor is a world-class resort and has a unique setting. Sugar Loaf is fun, and the best ski run is Awful Awful." That's the name folks, and about how I feel when I look down a long ski run: Awful, Awful.

"Caberfae is the oldest ski resort in the state, is excellent for short run skiers and has a new 490-foot vertical, the South Peak."

"FAMILIES would love Crystal Mountain, which is run by a family, the Pet Ritz pie family. Cannonburg is well run but they get the bulk of Chicago group travel, so it's too crowded."

"Nubs Nob has the biggest snowmaking gun in the world and is run by Jim Dilworth, the best snowmaking man in the world."

That's the best I can do for you where-should-I-go skiers. If you have any comments to make, or would like to add to the list, write me a letter. Don't expect to hear from me for a few weeks, however. I am on my way to Whistler Mountain, near Vancouver, British Columbia, which has the longest vertical ski drop in North America, 6,000 feet.

I'll send you a picture from the BOTTOM of the chair lift.

## 1st cross country lesson

By Iris Jones special writer

I have just finished my first cross-country ski lesson and I am lying on a couch in Room 127 of Boyne Mountain Resort listening to my hot blood circulate.

We met our instructor Lou Woodley "on the flat beside the duck pond," as instructed. The ducks that normally float the pond in the summer were huddled on a little patch of open water near the resort shops, possibly in the expectation that I would ski right into their cold wet home. I made a resolution not to point the tips of my rented skis in the pond's direction.

Lou was obviously born on cross-country skis, but it is equally obvious that he knows about beginners like me. He was informative but gentle as we learned to A) put on the skis and B) stand up. He showed us how to turn around and then we got into the real thing — skiing step by step toward the patch of green grass that was sure to stop us dead in our tracks.

The snow that had fallen two nights before was thawing and heavy. I watched the duck pond out of the corner of my eye as I went, following in his tracks as recommended, and trying to remember to bend my knees.

My problem was that whenever the skis started going out from under me I stood up, stuck out my arms and locked my knees to keep my balance — exactly what you are not supposed to do — and Lou hadn't told me how to fall yet.

(Rear-end first and don't try to catch yourself with your hands, in case any of you are already on skis and are using this as a primer.)

Micky did very well, in fact he didn't fall until the very last minute of the lesson, just after he had congratulated himself for not doing so. I fell several times and we spent half the lesson trying to get me up.

It is Monday today. Skiers that crowded the slopes Saturday and Sunday are gone and the midweek skiers aren't here yet. The red and blue jackets are still going up the ten chair lifts and down the 17 slopes, and they still stop at the top of Hemlock to eat hamburgers and hot dogs around the roaring fire at the Eagle's Nest. But mostly we've got the resort to ourselves.

As Lou led us to a nearby rise and began to explain how to go downhill without falling, a new adult ski class began behind us and six adorable little kids started taking lessons nearby. They didn't seem to have

any trouble, but then their legs were mad of rubber.

These resorts are very popular among families so there are a lot of kids on the slopes. I have to keep my eyes closed riding up the chair lift so I am flabbergasted when some five-year-old yardage swings off the

chair and leaps straight downhill, swooping and turning like a veteran.

One of these days I will write a column from up there, but in the meantime I'll do all I can do to stay upright on cross-country skis. And if I fall, I have much less distance to go before I stop.

**adams, lincoln, & woodward**  
travel service  
Airlines Call 313-646-5800 Cars  
Hotels Travel Insurance Cruises  
1157 S. Adams, Birmingham, MI 48011

**STRESS MANAGEMENT CARIBBEAN CRUISE**  
**A Cruise/Stress Management Seminar which will permit you to:**

- Relax away from the stress and rigors of Michigan winters
- Take back home the insight and techniques to better handle the stresses in our everyday lives

**DATE: March 21-28, 1987**  
Seven Day Cruise from Miami to Puerto Plata, San Juan, St. John and St. Thomas aboard Ms. Caribe

**INCLUDED:**

- Round trip airfare from Detroit to Miami
- Trip transfers from Miami Airport to Dodge Pier
- Baggage handling, tips
- All meals and entertainment during the cruise
- Stress Seminar - two two-hour sessions with timing staggered for island visitation and to permit you to put new learning into effect
- Trainers - Noted physician and two experienced psychologists

**INVESTMENT: \$1,421.00 per person**  
**TIME IS SHORT - CALL:**  
Marilyn Yurich of Creative Travel (313) 423-4330 to make reservations. Or if you have any questions regarding the Stress Management Seminar or the program in general call Judy Sheridan, The Wellness Group, Inc., (313) 540-3835.

**VACATION BARGAINS AIR/PACKAGES SANDERS TRAVEL TICKET CENTER**

<b>Acapulco</b>	From \$519.00	<b>Greece</b>	From \$669.00
<b>Aruba</b>	From \$649.00	<b>London</b>	From \$448.00
<b>Barbados</b>	From \$549.00	<b>Madrid</b>	From \$448.00
<b>Hawaii</b>	From \$599.00	<b>Munich</b>	From \$484.00
<b>Jamaica</b>	From \$549.00	<b>Paris</b>	From \$529.00
<b>Las Vegas</b>	From \$289.00	<b>Rome</b>	From \$599.00
<b>Nassau</b>	From \$349.00		
<b>Palm Springs</b>	From \$499.00		
<b>St. Thomas</b>	From \$799.00		
<b>Amsterdam</b>	From \$498.00		
<b>Brussels</b>	From \$448.00		
<b>Frankfurt</b>	From \$468.00		

**South Pacific Adventure**  
May 9-25  
\$2495 comp. pkg.  
\$1295 Air Only

28230 Orchard Lk. Rd. Open Mon-Fri 10:00-6:00  
Farmington Hills Call 855-2620

INSTANT TICKETING

**Ski BRECKENRIDGE**  
Deluxe 2 Bedroom, 2 1/2 Bath, Victorian Townhouses Available in Breckenridge, Colorado All With Individual Hot Tubs 2 Blocks From Lifts  
\$1000 Weekly 363-1750

# White sale.

Now you can ski and stay at famous Boyne Mountain at a special reduced midweek rate.

**59.00**  
per person, double occupancy.

Includes one night's deluxe lodging any day through Thursday, your next day's skiing and complimentary breakfast. Enjoy Boyne Mountain's 17 superbly groomed runs, 10 lifts, outdoor heated swimming pool, Jacuzzi... plus nightly entertainment. Call now for reservations and ask for our White Sale Package.



Boyne Mountain, Boyne Falls, MI 49713.  
1-800-632-7174 (MI) or 616-549-2441.

Diabetes is a major contributor to heart disease, kidney disease and blindness. So when you support the American Diabetes Association, you fight some of the worst diseases of our time.

