

Ski patroller has a passion for competing

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What the skiers are "making it through" are slalom courses with gates (poles) set up in a zigzag course down the hill which skiers have to make turns around. Of the regular slalom, which has many more gates, Uhley says, "you want to go as fast as possible but you're constantly putting the brakes on to turn."

The other course is the giant slalom with fewer gates set wider apart on the hill. "In the GS the skier builds up more speed because there aren't so many gates but he cuts a wider zigzag."

Uhley not only participates in the Boyne Mountain race weekends, but she also practices during the week at Pine Knob, Pine Knob and Mt. Holly

ski areas are owned by another Team Rust member, Joe Kosik, Jr.

And over Christmas she participates in two three-day racing camps at Alpine Valley, which are run by Bobbie Vial, who runs ski camps all over the country. Describing the camp, Uhley says, "You run gates, they make videos of you and you get a lot of coaching. It really helps me for the season, gives me things to work on."

When she's not racing or training or ski patrolling, Uhley keeps in shape by running and aerobics. If all this sounds like a lot of work, consider that Uhley also teaches nutrition at Wayne State and has a 2-year-old son. But regardless of her busy schedule she's not about to give up racing. "It's great," she says. "It makes skiing more challenging."



Other forms of fun

Not everyone likes to ski, and most resorts are accommodating, offering snowboarding courses and snowmobile trails. It's

good to check out your route before setting out, as this family does at Cabotfao Ski Resort.

Ski clubs add to the fun when you hit the slopes

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"You make games up, get students having fun. We have a lot of engineers in this club (originally started by Ford employees, membership in the Thunderbirds and in all the clubs is now open to everyone) and you try to teach them to ski, they want to analyze it."

"So we have them do something absurd, like make the slowest turn they can. They fall — literally — out of their engineering mode and begin to have a good time."

Besides the ski school, the Thunderbirds offer a Beginner's Weekend every January up at the Schuss/Shanty Creek resort in Bellaire, with more than 800 members participating. The three-day package includes lodging, lift tickets, dinner, two breakfasts and several parties as well as lessons for between \$185 and \$215 (depending on accommodations).

According to Bill, this is the ideal initiation. "We get a bunch of people started on the slopes early in the season up north and if they like what they learn, they can join our weekly lessons at Mt. Brighton."

Other weekend offerings include trips to Boyne Mountain, including an end-of-the-season St. Patty's Day Carnival, which includes condo lodg-

ing, lift tickets, dinner, breakfasts and "parties, parties, parties!" for between \$160 and \$180.

With well-priced ski weekends, ski weeks, and ski nights offered by one club or another almost every day of the winter season there is the opportunity to try slopes in every area of the state, as well as out west, out east and as far away as New Zealand. For the Thunderbirds, this was the destination of their most memorable trip of the year, which they made in August.

"New Zealand has a very rugged terrain," recalls Bill. "There were no gondolas to take you up the mountain, just a little bus creeping up these winding switchback roads with no guard rails. You ski at the very top — about 300 feet of vertical footage. But it's not crowded. They might have 600 to 1,000 skiers in a day. Compare that to Vail with 40,000 in one day."

"Besides the lack of crowds, the cost of the trip was another enticement. Our \$1,800 included round-trip air fare, several days in Honolulu, hotels, plus two weeks of touring in New Zealand and extras like white water rafting and bungee jumping off a 143-foot high bridge in Action, New Zealand. "It was absolutely the most incredible experience ever," says Bill.

In addition to skiing around the globe, the Thunderbirds offer a smorgasbord of non-skiing activities throughout the year — golf outings, ball games, canoe trips, racquetball and parties every month. It is enough to attract a number of non-skiers who just want to get in on the fun.

"I really hate winter sports," says Ann Winslow, a divorced woman in her 50s. "I tried the Beginners Weekend and felt all over the place. But I like the people in Thunderbirds so much. They have picnics in the summer and boating trips. And in the fall there's a square dance and hayride. There's just so much to do."

Smaller than the Thunderbirds, but no less enthusiastic, is the G.M. Club with about 800 members, mostly in Oakland County. Marilyn Green, a retired schoolteacher from Bloomfield Hills stresses that "we're open to anyone who shares our interests. You don't have to be a skier to enjoy the benefits." G.M. has a higher percentage of singles than some of the other clubs, which has earned it a reputation for having a good time.

"We throw the best parties of anyone," says Green, "and they're open to any club in MDSC. So are all of our trips." Like the Thunderbirds, G.M. has a very full calendar with

subsidized lessons at Pine Knob in January and February and three weekend clinics at Schuss/Shanty Creek.

The clinics include lodging, breakfasts, lift tickets, cross country skiing, eight hours of instruction and Warren Saturday night banquet and Warren Miller (the crazy guy who skis off cliffs) party, a live band, free beer and wine, door prizes, pool and hot tub.

"Those hot tubs turn into great parties," says Green. All this for a mere \$160, double occupancy and even less, \$130, for foursomes. Green stresses that children are welcome to join the weekend clinics at a reduced price.

G.M. also offers plenty of far-flung skiing opportunities — Blue Mountain in Ontario; Jackson Hole, Wyo.; Keystone, Colo.; Sun Valley, Idaho and Courmayeur, Italy. Green, an avid skier, plans her winter schedule around the ski trips.

"I'm not going to Keystone this year. My first trip will be to Shanty Creek, then Jackson Hole. I may go to Shanty in February and then, of course, to Italy. And then, Sun Valley in April. Well, I might take a FAM trip too." (That's a freebie offered by different ski resorts to ski club members to familiarize them with the facilities.) Green adds wistfully,

"This will be the first time I've missed Aspen in years."

Such passion for skiing is typical of ski club members and often infects entire families. Like Livonia's Mario and Joyce Galindo and their children, Brian, 13 and Andrea, 10. They are four of the 150 members of the Livonia Ski Club and, in spite of the expense, they ski as much as they can.

"The club does a family ski trip every year. This year it's at The Homestead. It's so special because they have special races just for the kids — one race just for fun and then a wide, slalom course. We time the kids and make videos to show them later. There's an awards night and every kid that participates gets a trophy."

The Galindos joined the Livonia Ski Club seven years ago and Brian and Andrea Galindo have been skiing since they were 6 and 3. "My husband grew up skiing in Bolivia," says Joyce, "and he said if we were going to ski we should join a club. We wouldn't ski at all as a family if it weren't for the ski club."

Though all of the larger clubs welcome children and offer special discounts for families, some of the smaller clubs are more specific about their membership. Somerset Singles, for example is open to single

skiers over the age of 21.

Up until recently, any skier that married had to leave the club, but because of so many weddings within the club membership they decided to change the by-laws. A younger club with a reputation for apres-ski parties is the Skiis with an age range of 25-35. There are also the Ski Prix, Skiniks, Ski Jets, Ski Dinks and a couple dozen others in metro Detroit.

With so many clubs offering so much skiing, not to mention tobogganing, partying, traveling, dancing and hot tubbing, what's your excuse for sitting in front of the TV, sipping hot chocolate all winter?

For more information about the Metropolitan Detroit Ski Council, and their member clubs, call the MDSC Hotline (313) 593-1188 and ask for their 1990-1991 Ski Club Guide, how to find the club nearest you, etc. The Guide lists the MDSC Social Calendar, businesses that are registered with the Council, and club trips.

Sample MDSC trips open to all club members include a Dec. 7-9 instructional weekend and a Jan. 12-13 Race Weekend and a March 15-17 Spring Carnival, all at Boyne Mountain; a Mid Winter Frolic Jan. 25-27 at Schuss Mountain/Shanty Creek and other events.

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