Consumer snowjob can be avoided by wise skier

By KATHY O'TOOLE Collegian Staff Writer

Heavy snowfalls and chilly temperatures are drawing record numbers of skiers to the white-capped mountains of Pennsylvania ski resorts

And with crowded slopes come empty wallets as more and more people are realizing that skiing is an expensive

A little shopping around, however, can usually lead skiers to areas able to challenge their abilities without drastically challenging their pocketbooks.

Oregon Hill, on Rt. 287, north of Williamsport, is probably the best bargain a Centre County skier will find.

Located within a 90-minute drive of State College, Oregon Hill has four slopes and one trail that includes something for every skier, from beginner to advanced, despite a vertical drop of only 515

The price of a lift ticket is \$6 on weekdays and \$8 on Saturdays and Sundays, with a \$1 discount after 2 p.m. Rental of equipment is \$8:50.

Weekdays offer the best opportunities for economical skiing on uncrowded slopes. "On weekends we get pretty

busy," said Joe Aichholdz, manager of Oregon Hill. "But during the week you practically have the place to yourself." The one chairlift and two T-

bars keep lift lines moving sufficiently, even on busy weekends.

"I've never had to wait in

line more than 15 minutes," said Joan McHenry, a season

pass holder at Oregon Hill. As an added attraction, Tuesdays and Thursdays are. College Days at Oregon Hill, and college students get \$1 off the price of their lift tickets by presenting their I.D. cards.

On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays the regular ski hours, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., are extended to 10 p.m. at no extra cost, which means 11 hours of skiing for the more durable skiers for \$6.

For those who enjoy long drives, Denton Hill, just east of Coudersport on Rt. 6, near the New York line, has even lower prices than Oregon Hill. A weekday lift ticket is \$5.50 and a weekend ticket is \$6.50,

with \$1 off after 1 p.m. "Denton Hill is state owned and receives state funds," Gary Dunn, equipment operator, explained. "That's how we manage to keep the year. prices down."

With 13 slopes and trails, and a 570-foot vertical drop, Denton Hill also caters to all classes of skiers. Ski instructors are on hand at all times, offering group lessons for \$4.50 an hour and private lessons for \$9 an hour. Lift lines are moved adequately by the one chairlift and three poma lifts.

Closer to home, but more expensive and less appealing is Blue Knob, on Rt. 869 in Newry, near Johnstown. Blue Knob not only charges more for a lift ticket - \$8 on weekdays and \$11 on weekends; but also has less to offer for the

Blue Knob has a good

joyable intermediate trail. about one and a half miles long, but no wide open slopes such as the ones found at Oregon and Denton Hills. It's one advanced slope is rarely

There are two chairlifts, but their proximity to each other causes the two lift lines to merge, creating crowds, confusion and long delays getting up the mountain.

The most common complaint many skiers have about Blue Knob is the coldness, a result of bone chilling winds that never seem to cease on the mountain. There is a vertical drop of 1,052 feet, the biggest of all Pennsylvania resorts. One regular customer described it as "the coldest spot in the world." This may be questionable, but nevertheless, the attendance

One employee believes the decreased number of skiers came about because the main lodge burned down last

at Blue Knob has declined this

November. "We still have complete facilities — food service, warming areas, rental equipment and a repair shop," she said. "But few people realize this and that's what's hurting our business."

For skiers who like to go in style, a three-hour drive to Somerset, will lead to the most luxurious ski area in Western Pennsylvania

A year-round resort, Seven

beginner's slope and an en- an indoor swimming pool, bowling alleys and a convention center to exclusive gift shops, cocktail lounges and a 1,500-room hotel.

The main feature, however is the ski area with eight slopes and about 15 trails, including the Northface, which ski instructor Andy Gumberg calls the "best skiable hill in Pennsylvania." Gumberg, who is also coach of the Penn State ski team." said Seven Springs is "far superior to any place in Pennsylvania.'

Lift tickets at Seven Springs are \$8 on weekdays, \$10 on weekends, and \$6 for all night sessions.

Lift lines generally move more quickly with the aid of seven chairlifts — including one triple chair lift - four rope tows and two poma lifts. Lines at two of the chairlifts, leading to the more popular beginner and intermediate slopes, tend to get congested occasionally, but the wait is seldom more than about 15

Luckily, for those with simpler tastes, the cheapest ski area is only a 30-minute drive from State College. Black Moshannon, in Black Moshannon State Park on Rt. 504, sells lift tickets for only \$3 on weekdays (\$2 after noon) and \$4 on weekends.

Because there is no snowmaking equipment, however, Champion, off Rt. 31, near there tends to be a little base at times and occasional icv patches. Also, there is not rental equipment or eating facilities.

The one trail and one slope Springs has everything from may not provide a wide



Skiers are carried upwards through the trees at Oregon Hill. The return trip is certain to take less time.

termediates and beginners. It less. In fact, a brochure

selection of skiing routes, but mentioned have snow-making ment reported that Pennthey do present some equipment that can provide challenges for the advanced good ski conditions if the skiers as well as in-temperature is 28 degrees or has a vertical drop of 250 feet. released in 1975 by the Black Department of Commerce's Moshannon, all the ski areas Bureau of Travel Develop-

sylvania ski areas have the best snow-making equipment in the East.

"Why depend on the weather?" it says. "Pennsylvania ski areas can fool

Although there hasn't been much need to fool Ma Nature this winter, this should ordinarily come as good news to skiers whose budgets won't take them to the more dependable Northern ski

African official suggests joint militia

ABABA, Ethiopia (AP) - Eteki Mboumoua, secretarygeneral of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), yesterday urged the creation of a joint African military force to help defend African countries against mercenary at-

Eteki also said he

sign" the visit to Africa by Andrew Young, the Carter administration's newly named ambassador to the United Nations.

"The very fact that he made the visit shows his preparedness to consider African problems in a new light," the OAU chief told a news conference.

However, Eteki said it welcomed as a "healthy was still too early to judge

whether American policies toward Africa have really changed substantially. Many African nations have been highly critical of what they view as neglect of the continent when Henry A. Kissinger was secretary of state.

Eteki said Africa should not remain passive in view of developments including last month's reported coup

attempt in the tiny West African state of Benin, where the Marxist military government claimed a mercenary force including whites staged an airborne invasion.

The OAU chief also cited operations against Mozambique by troops of Rhodesia's white minority government.

IRA gunmen sentenced to life terms

LONDON (AP) — Four told he was (on the ex- called themselves soldiers Irish Republican Army gunmen were sentenced yesterday to life im- threat of an IRA campaign as prisonment for seven killings and a dozen bombings during an 18-month IRA offensive in English cities.

of IRA violence in reprisal for the stiff sentences.

The judge in the case, Sir

from commenting on the he imposed the sentences in Central Criminal Court, known to Londoners as the Old Bailey. He recommended Authorities said they were that each of the four men bracing for a possible upsurge serve no less than 30 years in prison before being paroled.

Afterward, Cantley declared: "I have been Joseph Cantley, who had been dealing with criminals who extra precautions were being

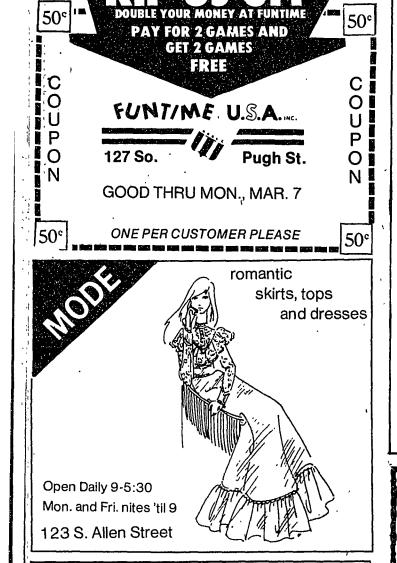
tremists' death list, refrained and shot unarmed men, murdered unprotected and unsuspecting women, sneaking up and throwing a bomb through a restaurant before running window away."

Outside the court, units of specially armed Scotland Yard officers were posted at public buildings in the heart of the British capital while taken to protect prominent people considered likely # targets for IRA reprisals.

London's police chief, Sir Robert Mark, warned the public: "Don't relax — be doubly cautious."

During the 13-day trial of the four IRA men, 12 bombs exploded in central London Jan. 29, causing extensive damage to stores but no in-

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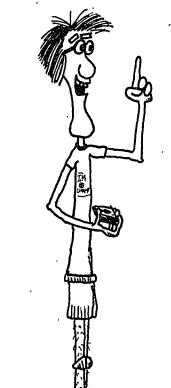
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