Local Slope Open for Skiing

Season Lengthened By Snow Machine

By DOROTHY DRASHER

Hundreds of students who enjoy the sport of skiing now have a new local facility to use in polishing up their ski skills.

The new ski slope and lodge, dubbed "Skimont", is located just five miles south of State College on Rt. 322. Skimont opened for business last week but parts of the base lodge are not yet completed. Other facilities, besides skiing will be offered in the near future, Thomas Smith, manager, said recently.

For students who want to learn the sport, lessons are given daily by certified ski instructors. For those who don't have any transportation to the slope, the Boalsburg Auto Bus Lines will be running two daily busses to and from the ski area.

And for students who want to get to the top of the 600-foot slope, a mechanized T-Bar is provided to shuttle them up the incline.

The skiing season will be lengthened until April by using a unique snow making machine. The machine is the largest in Pennsylvania and the third largest in the country, Smith said.

To provide snow for the slope over a continuous period of time in the winter - months, only freezing temperatures and the machine are needed, he said.

THE MACHINE operates similarly to an irrigation system on a golf course. A sprinkler, which resembles a machine gun, sprays water over a large area as it rotates. When the temperature is below 32 degrees Fahrenheit, the spray of water freezes into snow.

A tractor is used to groom the slope at intervals as needed, Smith said.

The tractor grades and packs the snow, smoothing out bumps and scraping off ice which would hinder skiers, he added.

This weekend, lights will be strung along the skiing areas, so night skiing will also be possible. In the coming weeks, three rope tows to the top will also be in operation in addition to the T-Bar so larger crowds can be accommodated, he said.

For non-skiers who want to see the slope, bob sleds attached to the tractor will soon be available to haul them to the summit.

THERE ARE TWO main ski areas facing the lodge at the base of the mountain. Both are about 100 feet wide. These slopes are for "intermediate and expert" skiers. A beginners' slope curves in a half-moon shape to the side of the other two providing a more gradual downward trip.
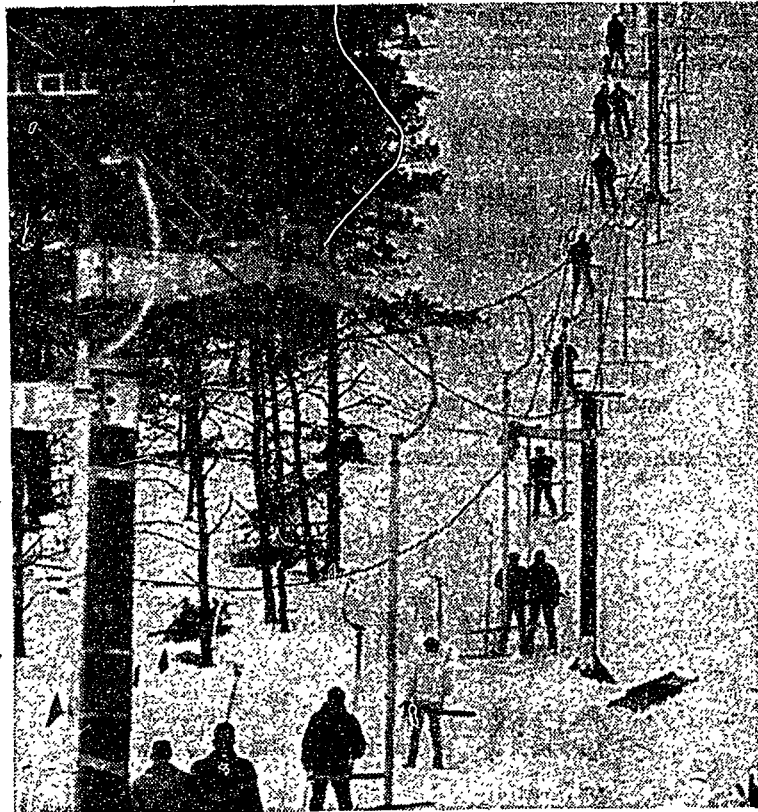
Buses to Skimont leave the Corner Room at 9 a.m., 1 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. daily. Buses leave Skimont for State College each day at 11:30 a.m., 4:30 p.m., and 10 p.m.

Skimont will be open from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily. Hours for night skiing are 7 to 10 p.m. at a rate of $2.00. The rates for using the ski facility during the day hours is $3.50 and for Saturday, Sunday and holidays, the rate is $4.50.

Individual student tickets for the entire skiing season are $35.00. Ski equipment may be rented.

OBSTACLE COURSE: A skier hopefully rounds another turn in a trail dotted with flags to mark the way. Lessons are provided in both advanced and basic skills by certified ski instructors. Skis, poles and boots may be rented.

GOING UP: Skiers head for the summit on the T-Bar tow to take the downward journey once again. With a backward glance while going up the incline, skiers can view a 50-mile area of the Nittany Valley.

Collegian Photos
By
Bill Goodman

COMING DOWN: A skier maneuvers down the slope at Skimont to make a "landing" on the home stretch at the base of the mountain. The verticle drop on the sloping mountain totals 385 feet. There are experts trails of 1,700 feet and a beginners trail of 3,000 feet.

SKIMONT BUS SCHEDULE

Skimont is open to the public every day 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and from 7 to 10 p.m. Weekday rates are $3.50, evening rates are $2 and weekend and holiday rates are $4.50.

Buses leave State College from the corner of College Ave. and S. Allen St. at 9 a.m., 1 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. daily.

Buses returning to State College leave from Skimont at 11:30 a.m., 4:30 p.m. and 10 p.m.

ALL ABOARD—A student sits on T-Bar for the ascent to the top. With feet (or skiis) on the ground all the way, he will be pushed up the grade of the slope. One T-Bar can accommodate two persons per trip. The only facility for a similar downward trip is the skier's ingenuity and skill.