

Cannon Mt. Has Been Ski Center Nearly 3 Decades

Milestones Of Sport Recalled

Three and a half decades ago, when skiing was a rugged form of exercise enjoyed by a comparatively few outdoor enthusiasts, Roland E. Peabody foresaw its possibilities for family recreation.

While operating a general store in Franconia in 1929 at the age of 33, he was first attracted to the sport to which he devoted the rest of his life. The history of skiing in Franconia, and New Hampshire and, to a certain extent throughout the country, parallels his career and that of Robert P. Peckett, Sr., founder of the famous Peckett's-on-Sugar Hill, the first inn in this area to cater to winter guests.

Peckett Decision In 1929

Peckett, who was host to winter guests as early as 1900, decided in the fall of 1929 to bring skiing, which was then becoming increasingly popular in Europe, to this region. With his daughter, Katherine, he imported Sig Buchmayr, the Austrian ski wizard, and three other Europeans to teach his guests the proper techniques.

Peabody, accompanied by Peckett and Edward McKenzie, a Franconia innkeeper, were amazed when Buchmayr demonstrated his skill. Peckett hired Buchmayr on the spot and the two, with Peabody, cleared open slopes and logging roads that fall for skiing. Guests swarmed in to try the sport in the winter of 1930 and have since in ever-increasing numbers.

Sometime in the winter of 1931 Peckett established what is believed to be the first organized ski school in the United States and Peabody enrolled as a student. In December, 1932, Peabody organized, operated and instructed the second one in the nation.

Franconia innkeepers and other residents, assisted by Civilian Conservation Corps crews, cut the Richard Taft on Cannon Mountain in the fall of 1931 or 1932 (authorities disagree on the year). Believed to have been the first in the nation for racing and skiing, the course was laid out by Katherine Peckett.

Recognizing the growing popularity of the sport, villagers formed the Franconia Ski club in 1933, electing Peabody as its first president.

"Alec" Bright, Boston broker and outdoorsman who had skied with hundreds of others in the White Mountains before any lifts existed, conceived the idea of the now-famous Aerial Passenger Tramway. After riding one of the more than 40 then in use in Europe, he returned from participating in the 1933 Olympics convinced that New Hampshire should have such a lift.

Weather hits the headwall

Tuckerman Classic off

By Tony Chamberlain
Globe Staff

PINKHAM NOTCH, N.H. — Although the ski race down the headwall of Tuckerman's Ravine was canceled because of dangerous weather conditions here yesterday, that did not stop several thousand ski fans, skiers and hikers from making the 2-hour trek up Mount Washington on the day that was to re-establish the fabled Tuckerman Classic.

Race officials are now hoping to run the 3/4-mile giant slalom tomorrow, although it is not clear yet how many of the approximately 80 original entrants will be on hand. One of those is Wayne Wright from Mt. Snow, winner of \$10,000 in last week's Peugeot Grand Prix Pro Race at Stowe, Vt.

The Tuckerman Classic, once called The Inferno (although there are several differences), is an Easterime event at Mount Washington that dates to the 1930s. In those years, the race began at the headwall, descended through Tuckerman's Ravine, then went down the entire mountain over a network of fire trails and frozen rivers.

In World War II, when most of the top Northeastern skiers were in the famed 10th Army Mountain Division, the Infernos came to an end, although Tuckerman's has continued through the years to lure the hearty, those rugged types who do not mind half a day's hike for a single awesome run from the highest peak in the East.

Race organizers from the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) said they were not prepared for the size crowd that showed up beginning early yesterday morning. By 9:00, the lots were full of hikers with skis and boots mounted on their backpacks. And soon enough the mudge was on, up through the slippery slush of the Tuckerman's Ravine fire trail.

At Washington's base in Pinkham Notch, the weather was balmy and springlike, but as hikers, many wearing shorts and stripped to the waist, emerged at the AMC hut near the base of the bowl, a cold wind was blowing to 60 mph and the clouds in some areas reduced visibility to zero. The Ravine itself was socked in, causing the race cancellation.

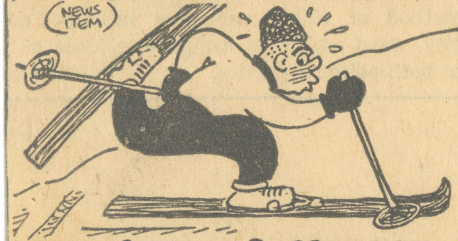
"It kind of makes you wonder," said Peter Lynge of Concord, as he stopped to survey the line of trudging hikers, "where the line falls between devotion to one's sport and pure idiocy."

News of the postponement hardly diminished the day, however, as a lunchtime party broke out at the base lodge hut.

SKIING THE HARD WAY

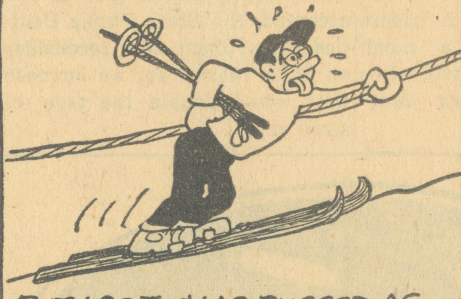
By Dahl

RUSSIANS REFUSE TO USE SKI-LIFTS. THEY HERRINGBONE UP THE SLOPES BECAUSE "SPORTS WITHOUT TOIL AND SWEAT --- ARE NOTHING MORE THAN AMUSEMENT?"



THEY USE THEIR SLIPPERIEST DOWN HILL WAX FOR CLIMBING UP HILL.

WHEN SKIING DOWNHILL THEY PUT THE SKINS ON BACKWARDS



BUT ARE THEY AS RUGGED AS NEW ENGLANDERS WHO USED OLD ROPE TOW AT SUICIDE SIX?

FROM WHAT WE HEAR, THOSE EUROPEANS SKI DOWNHILL FOR TWENTY MILES —



AND TAKE THE TRAIN BACK.

HAVE THE RUSSIANS EVER TRIED DODGING SNOW BUNNIES, SNOW SHOERS



AND CAMERA FANS?

NEW ENGLAND SKIERS HAVE TO SKI IN TEMPERATURES OF 15 TO 20 BELOW ZERO —



AND COME BACK TO AN INN WHERE IT'S ONLY 72 DEGREES.

BUT HERE'S THE CRUSHER —



DID THE RUSSIANS EVER TRY TO SKI WITHOUT SNOW?

ATTENTION:
PIPE SMOKERS

NETT RESEARCH, a major mar-

IT'S MERCH
POWER

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