

IMPROVEMENTS READY at NEW HAMPSHIRE SKI AREAS

MILLIONS of DOLLARS SPENT to ENHANCE SKIER EXPERIENCE

NORTH WOODSTOCK, NH – Every summer, New Hampshire's ski areas roll up their sleeves and get to work improving their resorts for guests. This past summer was no different with many improvements underway across the state. Following is a list of projects in the Granite State for the 2009-10 winter season.

ATTITASH, BARTLETT

A focus on snowmaking improvements leads the way at Attitash for this winter. New snowmaking pipe, snow guns, flow meters and more were installed to ensure optimal snow quality regardless of what Mother Nature provides. Guests will find enhancements to the base areas and lodges. The rental shop will have an upgraded inventory as well.

BRETTON WOODS, BRETTON WOODS

Bretton Woods is now home to one of the longest, year-round Canopy Tours in the United States. The tour descends over 1,000 vertical feet and consists of a series of treetop zip lines, suspension bridges and hiking trails. The tour concludes with the Williwaw Racing Zip, a dual, side-by-side zip line running right into the base area. The Williwaw Racing Zip can also be enjoyed without participating in the entire Canopy Tour.

CANNON MOUNTAIN, FRANCONIA NOTCH

Cannon is in the midst of phase two of its expansion. Among projects underway this summer were improvements to the Notchview and Peabody Base Lodge that will double the size of the pub, base lodge and family room areas. Cannon conducted small-scale brushing and trimming on the recently reopened Mittersill Ski Area. Other projects include the purchase of a Prinoth BR350 grooming machine, new snowmaking pump, upgrades to the mechanical and electrical systems for the facilities, and expansions to the rental shop and retail areas.

CROTCHED MOUNTAIN, BENNINGTON

Much of the work conducted this summer at Crotched Mountain was in direct response to guest requests. The lodge entrance has a new welcoming feel and sports a new high-tech floor covering. The upstairs of the lodge now has a fire-

place to add to the atmosphere. Improvements have been made to the snowmaking system as well as the natural snow trails.

GRANITE GORGE, KEENE

The rental shop at Granite Gorge has been expanded and relocated for more convenient service. The snow tubing area has added new Tube Pro tubes in both single and double rider formats.

GREAT GLEN TRAILS, PINKHAM NOTCH

Construction was started this summer on the fifth rendition of the Glen House. The Glen House will be a full service hotel located at Great Glen Trails and the base of the Mount Washington Auto Road. It will consist of approximately 80 rooms and offer views of the Presidential Mountains and Great Gulf. The hotel will include a large veranda, terrace, indoor pool and spa, conference facilities, great room, dining room and more. Upon completion, the Glen House will embody the look and feel of a classic New England mountain lodge. It will incorporate modern technology in order to be environmentally friendly and meet LEED standards. Cross-country ski trails will run directly from the Glen House to the Great Glen Trails network of trails.

GUNSTOCK, GILFORD

Gunstock worked this summer to completing a two-year \$3.25 million expansion. Guests will find a new fixed-grip quad chairlift along with two new trails and two extended trails in the Gunshy Beginner Complex. The new lift will result in almost quadruple the uphill capacity in the area. The snowmaking system was upgraded through the addition of 4.5 miles of new snowmaking pipe, 13 new tower fan guns and 25 Ratnik tower guns that were refitted to be more efficient. These snowmaking improvements, along with a capacity of 6,000 gallons of water per minute, will result in nearly double the snowmaking capacity compared to three years ago.

MOUNT SUNAPEE, NEWBURY

Mount Sunapee purchased 10 more energy efficient snow guns in order to make more snow using less energy. A new

gladed trail was cut on Mount Sunapee's South Peak Learning Area. The main terrain park will now incorporate part of a third trail with four progression lines and has been renamed "603."

PATS PEAK, HENNIKER

Pats Peak spent \$500,000 this summer on improvements, bringing the total spent in the past five seasons to \$5 million. Among the projects this summer were major improvements to the Bears' Den, home to the learning program, which doubled the area's size and includes new bathrooms and a separate kids' kitchen. High-end skiers and riders will find a new lift-serviced terrain park. Snowmaking has been improved with the addition of more fan guns, more HKD snow guns and more snowmaking pipe. The Alpine Training Center for racers has doubled in size. The rental shop will offer 400 new pairs of skis and bindings, 400 new pairs of boots and 100 new snowboards. Re-grading of the base area will result in an additional 50 parking spaces. New "secret gladed areas" have been added that require "secret lines" to discover, some of which involve hiking.

WILDCAT MOUNTAIN, PINKHAM NOTCH

Among the improvements made this summer at Wildcat is additional snowmaking pipe to enhance the snowmaking system. The Jib Lot was moved to the Lower Catapult Trail to improve the terrain park experience and the maintenance building was improved.

Ski NH is the statewide association representing 36 alpine and cross country resorts and more than 200 lodging properties in New Hampshire.

For more information on ski areas, lodging packages and updated winter events at Ski NH mountain resorts, call Ski NH at 1-800-88-SKI-NH (1-800-887-5464) or visit the Ski NH website at www.SkiNH.com

You can view this exact page online and link to SKI NH as well, by logging on to skiing's newest website at www.skiernews.net/NEF2010-NH

THE HISTORY of NEW HAMPSHIRE SKIING

LINCOLN, NH – Organized winter sports have been enjoyed in New Hampshire for over 100 years. While the equipment and venues have changed over the years, the exhilaration of spending a day on the snow in the cool winter air remains the same. Here is short outline of the history of outdoor winter sports in New Hampshire.

FRED HARRIS AND THE DARTMOUTH OUTING CLUB

At the time, the major New Hampshire area for skiing was Hanover, home to Dartmouth College. In 1909, an undergraduate named Fred Harris, class of 1911, proposed to the college community that a ski and snowshoe club be formed.

There were four stated purposes for Harris' club: stimulate interest in outdoor sports, have short cross-country runs weekly and one long excursion each session, build a ski jump and hold ski jumping contests, and hold a meet or field day during February. At that field day, a program of these events may be contested: a 100-yard dash on snowshoes, a cross-country run on snowshoes, an obstacle race on snowshoes, a 100-yard dash on skis, ski jumping contests and other events that may be suggested. Harris was impressed with other winter carnivals, like Montreal's, and the ski jumping contests held in northern and Midwest cities.

The outcome of the proposal was the creation of the Dartmouth Outing Club, formed in 1911. By 1920 two-thirds of the students were members of DOC. Winter carnivals have been held every year since the founding of the club, except in 1918 when coal and food were in short supply and the event was forced to cancel.

In 1922, Fred Harris suggested the club hire a ski expert to give lessons. Over a year later, Dartmouth hired the first ski instructor, who was available to both the ski team and Hanover residents. Other instructors followed, and in the winter of 1929-30, a new ski instruction arrived in Hanover with a new coach Otto Schneibs. A student of the famous Hannes Schneider, Schneibs brought the Arlberg method to Hanover, where it received preference over the traditional Nordic method. The Arlberg came from a region of Austria where the crouched style with lift and swing methods helped in getting down the steep hills. Schneibs also became the first spokesperson for ski racing and the joys of skiing in New Hampshire.

TRAILS, TOW ROPES AND T BARS

Ski races back in the 1920s and 30s were held primarily on trails cut by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The first in New Hampshire was cut on Cannon Mountain in 1933, the Richard Taft Trail. With this trail came the development of the "up-ski" device and a new era in snow sliding was beginning.

CANNON'S RICHARD TAFT TRAIL

The first rope tow began operation in Quebec in 1932. The following year, a copy was opened in Woodstock, Vt. In 1934, Ted Cooke ox-hauled his rope tow into position for a February 1935 opening at Gunstock with the world's longest rope tow. Rope tows dotted the New Hampshire landscape almost immediately. It was said by winter enthusiasts of the time that riding a tow rope was as much a thrill to go up as it was to come down. Temple Mountain in Temple was known to offer its guests resin so their gloves would not stick to the wet rope. At Black Mountain in Jackson, when Bill Whitney hung shovel handles from an overhead rope, the "He-and-She-Sticks" (later t-bar) was born. Original shovel handles can be seen today in Whitney's Pub in Jackson.

SUGAR HILL

Snow and winter sports, which were only being enjoyed by the hardy and adventurous few, were now a favorite winter past time. During the winter of 1929-30, the first recognized ski school opened at Peckett's Inn at Sugar Hill.

THE SNOW TRAINS

More rope tows opened as more winter enthusiasts headed for the outdoors. In 1935, North Conway's Carroll Reed brought over Benno Rybizka, another Hannes Schneider protégé, and opened the Eastern Slopes Ski School in North Conway. That first year, 6,000 lessons were given.

As the sport grew so did the interest. The Snow Trains started in January 1931. That winter, they transported the first 197 passengers, mainly ski club members, from Boston to New Hampshire. In 1934, one train alone carried 2,933 passengers to North Woodstock for snow play. By the end of the season in 1934, BandM Railroad claimed to have carried more than 41,000 skiers to various parts of New Hampshire and New England since it began operation in 1931. Winter enthusiasts watched the Friday Boston evening papers to see if they were off to Lincoln, North Conway or another New England ski destination.

WINTER BUSINESS GROWS

By 1937, New Hampshire businesses started to capitalize on the growing industry. First came lodging in isolated farmhouses, then the opening up of large and small inns that would normally cater only to summer visitors. Inns regularly hired resident ski experts to assist their new winter clientele. Skiing and winter sports were here to stay and helped to develop a new tourism market.

THE TRAM AT CANNON MOUNTAIN

Development of resorts and resort towns continued through the 1930s and 40s. In 1935, House Bill 131 provided for the construction and operation of New Hampshire's first aerial tram. The Tram opened for service in 1938 at Cannon Mountain and carried 36,589 passengers to its summit in one year. An original tramcar can be seen outside the New England Ski Museum at the tram base station of Cannon Mountain in Franconia Notch State Park. It cost 60 cents to ride the tram the first year.

CRANMORE SKIMOBILE

The unique skimobile lift at Cranmore in North Conway premiered in 1938. Financed by logging tycoon Harvey Dow Gibson, the original skimobile had 131 cars and cost 25 cents per ride. The following year saw the skimobile's length extended so it would reach the summit. The cost for a bottom to top ride was 50 cents. The skimobile was used until 1989, when it was dismantled and replaced with a newer more efficient high-speed quad chairlift. Original cars from the skimobile can be seen at the New England Ski Museum and at several establishments in North Conway.

MT. SUNAPEE

Mt. Sunapee also has an extensive skiing history. A Finnish community located in Newport started the Newport Ski Club in the 1890s. The club was active through the 1920s and 30s. In the early 1940s, residents took notice of the financial success Cannon was enjoying and persuaded their political representatives to push for legislation, which eventually became the Mt. Sunapee Tramway Bill in 1941. The Sunapee Tram was initially going to be used as a sum-

mer attraction, but the war delayed construction. By 1946, the amount allotted for construction was not enough to purchase an aerial tram but was enough to purchase a chairlift. Mt. Sunapee opened for skiing in 1948.

1940-60S

By 1940, New Hampshire skiing had all the ingredients for a mass market. It had been over 70 years since the Scandinavians saw their sport turned from cross-country trekking to the fast-paced alpine downhill.

In 1952, Waterville Valley added a 200-foot t-bar. In the 1960s, Ragged Mountain put in a double chair and a t-bar; Gunstock and Tenney both added chairlifts; and King Pine added an all-new j-bar. By the mid-60s, skiers were coming with such a rush that Attitash sold tickets by reservation and limited sales to keep the lift lines down. In 1967, the average cost for a five-day midweek ticket was \$25.

TUCKERMAN'S RAVINE

First skied in 1926, only the experienced dared to hike and ski the slopes at Tuckerman's Ravine. The spring ritual lives on to this day on the famous steep snow-filled ravine. Ski clubs throughout the Northeast started the tradition, and in 1939, as many as 1,000 skiers were in the bowl with a few daredevils on the headwall.

When racing began in Tuckerman's Ravine, contestants wore red avalanche strings from their trousers in case they had to be dug out. The most famous of all ski races held in 1934 was called the Inferno. It started in at the top of Mt. Washington, with the course winding its way down the mountain, over the famous headwall, down into the bowl to the Sherburne Trail, ending at the AMC hut at the bottom. In 1934, Hollis Phillips won the race in just over twelve minutes. This record remained unchanged until 1939, the year of the last Inferno. That year international skier Toni Matt plummeted into the ravine and disappeared into the Sherburne Trail at a speed witnesses said they had never seen before. Toni won the race in a time just under 6½ minutes, a record that still stands today!

MT. MOOSILAUKE

Another location in New Hampshire offering skiing was Mt. Moosilauke. In the 1920s, the Dartmouth Outing Club was instrumental in constructing a series of mountain high huts, making ski touring possible. These huts were built throughout the White Mountains and each about a day's hike or ski apart. The cabins built on Moosilauke and the Ravine Camp at the base of the mountain were instrumental in the first major down mountain races.

Moosilauke hosted the first downhill race in the United States on March 12, 1933. The Carriage Trail was used for the race trail for the first US National Downhill Championships. In all, 80 contestants were entered, but only 69 finished. Henry Woods ran the 2.8-mile course without a fall in just over eight minutes. No woman's class was offered but was suggested for the next year's race.

For more great history information check out the New England Lost Ski Areas Project website, www.nelsap.org, visit the New England Ski Museum or do a Google search for History of Skiing in NH. You will find great, old photos.

View this page online at skiing's new website, please visit www.skiernews.net/NEF2010-NH