

# SPORTS and RECREATION



## S K I I N G I N O N T A R I O : a guide

By MYLES DAVIS

On December 20, Toronto was hit with its heaviest snowfall of the season. The weatherman had predicted that only about two to three inches would fall but, as usual, he was far from correct. About 10 inches fell, with drifts as deep as four feet piling up in some places — our driveway for instance.

As in the story of Rudolph and his big red schnoz, the smiles on many people's faces turned quickly to angered frowns when they saw the pre-Christmas snow, not because they thought ol' Kris Kringle wouldn't make it to their doors, but because they figured ol' '66 Chevy wouldn't make it to the doors of the nearest shopping plaza. I was perhaps the most surprised person in Metro when, at 5:30 that morning I walked out the door to play ice hockey only to discover in my half-awake daze that I was standing waist-deep in frozen H<sub>2</sub>O.

### BATH IN THE STUFF

But some people in the city got up that morning so pleased that they were ready to take a bath in the stuff. They probably rushed about here and there in their houses, preparing their equipment for a day of fun and frolic. Who were these strange folks who took such delight in the weatherman's mistakes? Why, skiers, of course. For them, the snowfall was something of a Godsend, an early Christmas gift from the Santa Claus of the slopes.

By that time, of course, the ski season was already well underway, but with the strange warm-cold winters we've been having the last couple of years, the heavy fall insured at least another two weeks of good conditions of the hills.

Altogether, Metro received 64 centimetres of snow in December (about 25 inches for those of you who don't take math or listen to the radio), a figure which, for skiers, means more than the monthly rainfall count means to

golfers. You can play golf in the rain (even though they say it never rains on a golf course), but it's rather difficult to swerve and swoosh your way down a grassy hill.

So, with the winter looking as if it's here to stay, here is a list of a number of major ski areas in and around Toronto for those who received skis for Christmas, those who don't know where the best places are, and those who just like to take a Sunday drive to the slopes to watch people break their necks pretending to be Jean-Claude Killy.

### SHORT DRIVING DISTANCE

There are three places within short driving distance of downtown: Caper Valley, Centennial Park, and Don Valley Ski Centre.

Caper Valley is situated on the Twyn River and can be reached via number 48 highway. It has three major hills which include one T bar and five rope-tows. The hills have a vertical drop of 40 metres and a maximum length of 240 metres. Caper Valley also has a rental service, a snack bar, snowmaking equipment, and ski patrols on duty during its daily opening hours.

Centennial Park Ski Hill is located on Renforth Dr. and can be reached by way of highway 427. There are four major hills and two T bars. The vertical drop is the same as Caper Valley's and the maximum length of the runs is 210 metres. It's open from Tuesday to Sunday during the day and the evening.

### DON VALLEY

If you take the 401 to the Don Valley Parkway, you'll have no trouble finding Don Valley Ski Centre. It's smaller than either Centennial or Caper Valley, but has four rope-tows and one poma lift to make it easy to get back up the hill after you've come down. It's open from Tuesday to Sunday during the day, and from Tuesday to Friday during the evening.

All three resorts are members of the Ontario Ski Resorts

Association.

If you care to undertake the 45-mile drive to Barrie, you'll find six excellent ski resorts: Moonstone, Mount St. Louis, Pine Ridge Ski Club, Snow Valley, Horseshoe Valley, and Medonte Mountain.

Moonstone is open during the day from Tuesday to Sunday and is accessible by highway 400. Aside from the six big hills, each with a drop of 128 metres, there are also cross-country trails. Skiers can take their choice of two double-chairs, two T bars, one poma lift, and one rope-tow to get up the hills.

Mount St. Louis can also be reached by way of highway 400, and is about the same size as Moonstone. It's open daily.

Pine Ridge is located north-east on City road 22, off the 400. It's slightly smaller than Moonstone or Mount St. Louis and is only open on weekends. There is one double-chair and one T bar there, with five hills to ski down.

### FIVE MILES NORTH

Snow Valley Resort is situated five miles north on Snow Valley Road off highway 27 and is open during the day from Wednesday to Sunday and at night from Wednesday to Friday. Each of its six hills has a vertical drop of 105 metres and a maximum length of about 960 metres. There are one double-chair, three T bars, and one rope-tow.

Horseshoe Valley is a well-known resort located 15 miles north-east on City road 22 off highway 400. The nine hills there have about the same dimension as those at Snow Valley and there are two double-chairs, 5 T bars, and one rope-tow.

The last of the Barrie resorts is Medonte Mountain, also well-known to most veteran skiers. It's right beside Horseshoe Valley on City road 22 and has about 12 different runs, each with a vertical drop of 120 metres and a maximum length of 1,200 metres.

All of the resorts around Barrie, except Pine Ridge have

snowmaking facilities, snack bars or dining rooms, ski patrols, rental facilities, skiing professionals, and package plans from Toronto. Pine Ridge has a snack bar and a pro on duty.

There are about seven other ski resorts which are in easy reach of those living in Toronto.

### MOST FAMILIAR

The four which are most familiar to Metro skiers are Boyd Conservation Area in Woodbridge, Uplands Ski Hole in Thornhill, Toronto Summit Ski Club in Richmond Hill, and King Valley Ski Centre located in King City.

Boyd Conservation Area is more noted for its cross-country trails than for its alpine hills, largely because it has only two hills and they only have a vertical drop of about 20 metres. Boyd is situated 3 miles north on Islington Avenue off highway 7 and is open on weekends only. It has only one rope tow and a snack bar but is very easy to get to from anywhere in Toronto.

Located one mile west on Uplands Avenue off highway 11, Uplands Ski Hole has five ski runs each with a drop of 35 metres and a length of about 360 metres. It's open daily and Monday to Friday at night and has snowmaking facilities, rentals, a snack bar, a real bar, nightly entertainment, and ski patrols on duty. There are two T bars and one rope-tow.

### CRESCENT OF THE HILL

Toronto Summit Ski Club in Richmond Hill is located on Highway 11. Skiers begin their runs from the crescent of the hill which is accessible by five two-ropes, and can ski down on any side of the hill. The runs are 90 metres in length each with a vertical drop of about 25 metres. Summit is open on weekends and also has cross-country trails as well as its alpine facilities.

King Valley Ski Centre is perhaps the most frequented of the Toronto area ski resorts and is located off highway 400 about 35 miles north from City Hall. There

are six downhill runs as well as numerous cross-country trails at King. The runs have a drop of 40 metres and maximum length of 210 metres; there are two T bars, two poma lifts, and eight rope-tows. It's open both daily and nightly with rental and snowmaking facilities, a snack bar, nibbly entertainment, and package plans from Metro.

Three other ski areas located near Toronto and worthy of note are Chinguacousy Park Ski Club in Brampton, Talisman Ski Resort in Kimberley, and Montclair Ski Centre in Orangeville.

Chinguacousy is situated one mile north on Bramalea Rd. off highway 7 and is open daily and nightly. The hills there have a maximum length of 180 metres and a vertical drop of 30 metres and can be ascended by either a poma lift or a rope-tow. Rental and snowmaking facilities, as well as cross-country trails and a snack bar are also included.

### WELL-KNOWN RESORT

Talisman Resort in Kimberley is another well-known resort to Toronto skiers. Located one mile north off highway 10, Talisman has five downhill runs with vertical drops of about 180 metres. It's open daily and nightly and, aside from the standard facilities, has a heated outdoor pool, nightly accommodation, and licensed dining room.

If you take the Hockley Valley Rd. cutoff from highway 10, you'll find the Montclair Ski Centre in Orangeville. There are five hills at Montclair, each with a vertical drop of 75 metres and a length of 540 metres. It's open on weekends and has rental facilities and a snack bar along with one T bar and one cable lift.

So there they are: 16 ski resorts in or near metro Toronto. If you are skier, this will give you a chance to find a favourite spot and, if you aren't a skier, it'll provide you with a list of places to choose from if you ever decide to try it.