

WHAT'S NEW IN ASPEN

More moguls . . . and January price breaks

BY CHARLIE MEYERS

Startled Aspen residents awoke one snowy morning last December to discover their mountains suddenly were infested with two kinds of moguls instead of just one. There were those deep-cut snowy mounds up there on the steep pitches that everybody already knew about. And now, with the stunning purchase of three-fourths of the uphill transportation by Twentieth Century Fox, Aspen now has movie moguls.

For a while the principal preoccupation in the town which holds the world record for diversions by a mountain community was trying to determine which Fox characterization would be running the show. Would it be Luke Skywalker or Darth Vader? But then all that snow continued to fall and everyone went back to business as usual.

And that, precisely, will be the posture of Aspen under Twentieth Century Fox, despite the magnitude of the deal—\$48.6 million—and the charisma of the participants.

But you can't really blame the home folk for wondering a little. Aspenites always have assumed an abiding proprietary posture toward the skiing on the four big mountains which comprise the nation's most spectacular ski resort complex. In their minds, the skiing is theirs. The fact that the business is owned by the mammoth Aspen Skiing Corporation is a mere inconvenience to be endured as best they can.

And when the announcement came last December that stockholders controlling 40 percent of the corporation had accepted a bid from those folks who gave us *Star Wars*, the town instantly went into a tizzy.

Against the unknown posed by the movie moguls, many locals took the sale as a good omen. After all, many Aspenites have suspected for a long time that Vader, the black-robed ogre of the all-time box office draw, has been running the ski operation all along disguised as the independent and strong-willed D. R. C. Brown.

The relationship between Brown, who began directing the fortunes of the infant resort way back in 1959 from a back room of the old Hotel

Jerome, and the town has been an enduring if not endearing one.

Brown variously has been painted as either hero or villain. A particular curiosity of Aspen—a town which has been blessed with many—is the often open animosity between city officials and the ski corporation. Nothing really serious, you under-



Another scene from Twentieth Century Fox? No, just a Chaplinesque local making his way through the streets during Winter-skol, Aspen's annual January festival.

stand, just little tiffs to give the townsfolk something to talk about.

Throughout, Brown has maintained the silly notion that his role as corporation president is to build a sound and profitable ski operation suited to the needs of all its users.

In this he has succeeded admirably. The Aspen Skiing Corporation often is cited as the archetype of ski area efficiency. As such, it has emerged as the largest ski lift operation in the country. Its holdings include Aspen Mountain, Snowmass and Buttermilk in the Aspen complex, along with Breckenridge in Colorado's Summit County enclave. It also is developing Fortress Mountain in the Canadian Rockies, owns an interest in Baqueira-Beret, Spain, and has taken a role in the development of still another resort in Argentina.

Rebounding smartly from the

drought, the corporation saw a record 1,112,000 skier days last season at its three Aspen areas (another 216,000 at independent Aspen Highlands) and 650,000 at Breckenridge.

This surge of skiers—coupled with the prospect of rapid future growth—has influenced the major changes skiers looking to an Aspen vacation will encounter this year. Like most Colorado resorts, Aspen experiences crowding during certain key periods (Christmas, president's birthdays, March) but has plenty of space left over much of the time.

Marketing thrusts will be aimed at altering this imbalance and skiers with a good grip on their pocketbook will do well to pay attention. Basically, it's going to cost you more to ski during "high" season and proportionately much less during "low."

The real savings come in January, when the majority of Aspen's lodges reduce their rates 10-25 percent, and that can mean savings of up to \$130 during a seven-day visit. Contrary to common belief, in fact, the average occupancy of Aspen's lodges in January runs about only 68 percent. What that translates to, of course, is fewer skiers, easier-to-book (in some cases discounted) air transportation, and the avoidance—at lifts, restaurants and the ski schools—of overcrowding and peak-season waits. Need a reservation? Write Aspen Reservations, Inc., P.O. Box 4546, Aspen, Colo. 81611. ARI is a computerized operation that can plug in the number in your party, arrival date, the amount you want to spend and what you want to do while in Aspen and shoot out all kinds of useful data relative to lodge availability, rates and skier amenities, then connect you with the lodge of your choice.

The bad news is that the daily lift ticket price has jumped to \$15 this season. The good is that if you act quickly you can put together packages for considerable savings.

The Aspen Skiing Corp. will offer lowest ticket and lift packages in January and comparable reductions in early December and April. At Highlands, the most attractive packages are offered during Thanksgiving (\$79.50 for four days and four nights per person/double occupancy) and pre-Christmas (six nights, five days

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WHAT'S NEW IN ASPEN

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of lessons, rentals and lifts for \$184.50).

There will be a \$78 four-area interchangeable six-day lift ticket this season (discounted in January to \$66, or \$11 per day) after considerable shuffling through a variety of political processes. Three years ago the Colorado attorney general began making menacing noises over the cooperative package between Aspen Skiing Corp. and Highlands, hinting at collusion in the fixing of prices. The two have been forbidden to discuss prices and have worked out a rather complex means of communicating their common goals through the attorney general's office.

But things are never simple in Aspen, whose sociological complexities well could become the subject of some sort of government study. Aspen and its environs are under strict environmental and building control and the physical changes from year to year are slight.

It is a place where officials debate endlessly over whether to permit one or more entire new ski areas in the valley and delay for three years the installation of a chairlift at Snowmass.

After reclining in storage all this time, Snowmass' 12th chairlift (bringing the Aspen total to 38) has been installed, opening a wealth of expert and advanced-intermediate terrain located above the Alpine Springs area with a connecting run back into the upper reaches of Elk Camp. At 11,808 feet, its upper terminal becomes the highest in the Aspen complex, edging out the Loges Peak summit at Highlands by 8 feet.

The Loges lift, which whisks Highlands skiers up on a breathtaking ride with a panoramic view of the snowy, 14,000-foot spires of the Maroon Bells and Pyramid Peak, has been overhauled to increase capacity. Highlands also will offer glade skiing down its new Steeplechase area, plunging through steep, deep-powder terrain down into the Castle Creek Valley and connecting into the midpoint of the ski mountain. Future plans call for a new lift to further open what is termed one of the finest lift-served powder slopes in the nation. The 3,800-foot vertical drop at Highlands is the greatest in Colorado.

Following its successful experiment at Buttermilk last season, the Aspen Skiing Corporation installed snowmaking across the base of As-

pen Mountain, further paving the après-ski route to The Center, that favored watering hole where Beautiful People gather to ogle each other and perhaps even lie a bit about everything from marital status to skiing the trees on Bell Mountain.

You'll also find getting to and from the other areas and Aspen's après-life easier this year. A fleet of 18 new 44-passenger buses are being brought in to shuttle skiers back and forth from downtown Aspen to Buttermilk and Snowmass.

The latest skirmish is at the new airport. This hairpull involves the two major users, Aspen Airways and Rocky Mountain Airways, which collectively ferry in most of the skiers arriving through Denver.

Rocky Mountain, which has expanded its fleet of 19-passenger Twin Otter aircraft with eight daily flights of the new de Havilland Dash-7 50-passenger craft, last season installed lights on a part of the runway to accommodate its short takeoff and landing craft. Not to be outdone, Aspen Airways got permission to add lights to the remainder of the runway so its larger Convair flights also might land after dark.

Rocky Mountain's next move was right out of the history books on frontier feuding. It simply turned off its share of the lights when it wasn't using them, leaving its competitor in the dark and out of luck. Officials promise to get that one unsnarled in time for this season.

And so it goes. . . .

It is no minor property that Twentieth Century Fox bought for what will come to a cool \$48.6 million. The wizards of finance who make it their business to lie awake nights contemplating such things concede that Fox paid a heavy price to get into the ski business. But they also feel that even at almost twice the going rate, the corporation may well be worth it.

Fox Chairman Dennis Stanfill said the move had been pondered for some time. "We had made active efforts to acquire control of one major area and had considered investment in other areas," Stanfill said. "We always considered Aspen the No. 1 company in the industry."

While Aspen city officials hailed the coming of Fox as a bright new chapter in the history of this century-old former mining town and hinted at the impending solution of every community ill from potholes to double parking, the truth is that little is likely to change.

From the Aspen skier's standpoint, that isn't such a bad thing. **SKI**

Lift problems are alleged at Highlands

by John Sabella

Allegations by a former Aspen Highlands ski lift operator that numerous safety hazards exist at the ski area have been relayed to a quartet of state and federal agencies charged with regulating ski area operations.

An Aspen Highlands official has denied that any safety hazards exist.

Michael Williams, a nine-year Aspen Highlands employe, who was a key figure in a court case last year that resulted in a Highlands plea of nolo contendere to charges that it unlawfully required certain employees to waive their rights to unemployment benefits, has alleged that faulty equipment, improper maintenance and operational procedures and poor employe morale combine to produce safety hazards at the ski area.

The allegations have been forwarded to Colorado Assistant Attorney General Lou Kelley, who said last week that he has relayed the information to the Colorado Tramway Safety Board and the state Division of Employment and Training for investigation.

High Marks

Robert Lesage, a spokesman for the tramway board, the agency charged with inspecting ski lifts, said he had not yet contacted Williams. He gave the ski area high marks for its past record of performance in the area of promoting safety, however, and said he knows of no safety problem.

Kelley said allegations by Williams that harrassment and intimidation of employees by Aspen Highlands management results in low morale and poor performance by lift operators would be investigated by the state Division of Employment and Training. He said, however, that the division's meager budget probably would mean no on-site inspection of the ski area.

US Forest Service snow ranger Ron Thompson, the official responsible for ski area inspections in the Aspen area by the federal agency, said this week that he would recommend to his superiors that four allegations made by Williams be investigated.

Four Allegations

The four allegations are that the Nugget Lift emergency brake

was not capable of actually stopping that lift in case of emergency, that faulty wiring and a defective gearbox on the Cloud Nine Lift rendered that lift unsafe and that many Aspen Highlands lift operators have received little or no job training.

Aspen Highlands mountain ranger Don Robinson Wednesday denied that the Nugget Lift emergency brake posed a safety hazard. He then declined to comment on any other specific allegations made by Williams but said neither the ski area, its insurance company nor the state (apparently in the form of the tramway board) feels that safety problems exist at the ski area.

Not Afraid

"Our records are here," he said. "We're not afraid. The state can see the records at any time.

"I don't want to answer allegations I believe to be groundless."

Another former high-ranking Aspen Highlands official who declined to be identified said last week, however, that "we all know that nothing is fixed until it breaks and there is no preventive maintenance at Highlands.

"As far as employe-management relations are concerned, there are none. If you do a good job, you're in trouble because it makes the higher-ups nervous.

"If you do a bad job and don't bother anybody, you're okay."

He said, "If you ski there as often as I have, you're aghast" at the safety problems.

Williams charged that lift operators at the ski area often have been hired off the street and given only 10 or 15 minutes worth of verbal instruction before being given the responsibility of operating a lift.

Mashed Chairs

To illustrate what he called a resultant safety hazard, he said an insufficiently trained lift operator allowed five "mashed" chairs to go around the Loges Peak Lift bullwheel after high winds had driven them against a lift tower.

The operator's action could have caused a derailment, he said.

Williams also said lift operators at the tops and bottoms of lifts often have no means of communication so that they cannot relate

potential safety hazards to one another.

No Training

Another former lift operator, Wally Voight, corroborated these two allegations and said that neither he nor is partner had received any training before being given the responsibility of operating the Thunderbowl Chair Lift.

Voight said he had merely been sent "over there" to a lift with which he was totally unfamiliar.

He said winds frequently cause bad swinging of the chairs near the top of Thunderbowl Lift and that the top operator is instructed to call down to the bottom operator (who cannot see the upper chairs) to slow the lift in case of bad swinging, but that he remained without any form of communication for one three-day period.

Williams said he frequently remained without communication on the Exhibition Lift.

Williams also alleged that low morale, created by Robinson, has produced a "don't give a damn attitude" among Aspen Highlands employees, so that they do their jobs poorly. Some employees drink and smoke marijuana on the job, for which a group was fired last year, he charged. Voight corroborated this allegation.

One Operator

Another allegation Williams made is that even after an accident in which a chair popped off the Nugget Lift cable near the loading station, the ski area management allowed the lift to be operated by a single employe when safety called for two operators at all times.

In contrast, however, Lesage said the tramway board's records indicate that the ski area "does a reasonably good job of examining its equipment" and that "records prove...a pretty good, a very good, operation."

Board secretary Tom Glass said that he had never heard of "glaring problems" at Aspen Highlands. He said the area had reported four lift accidents or fai-

lures last season, none of which resulted in injury, and that this total "is not a high percentage for a ski area."

He said the tramway board makes one announced and one unannounced inspection each year, and that the inspections are "pretty thorough."

He did say that poor reporting by ski areas has been a problem in the past, but that "I know of no problems," at Aspen Highlands.

Working Order

Thompson said a Forest Service inspection last season indicated that the Nugget Lift brake was in apparent working order.

He said, however, that he hopes District Ranger Tom Bell will authorize further inspection of this piece of equipment as well as the

alleged problems with the Cloud Nine wiring and gearbox.

He said he will personally investigate lift operator training this fall.

Williams also alleged that Robinson threatened him with the loss of his job if he testified in last year's employe intimidation case, in which Aspen Highlands agreed out of court to pay the maximum \$1,000 fine on four counts, a total of \$4,000.

In addition, Williams said Robinson forced him to work on a chairlift that aggravated a previously sustained shoulder separation, after he had spent eight seasons on the poma lift that serves the ski school at the bottom of the mountain.

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HERSHEY CHARGED WITH BREACH OF PROMISE IN DRUEDING LEAK

DETECTIVE SARGEANT BILL DRUEDING, OUSTED FROM the police department last Sunday, charged yesterday that it was Police Chief Martin Hershey himself who leaked the story of his involvement in a loan from a suspected drug dealer to the radio press. In a statement, Drueding also charged that Hershey planned to conduct an extensive undercover campaign against him but was stopped by other police agencies. Drueding described Hershey's plans as "intent to abuse his powers unnecessarily." The Daily News has confirmed that both Drueding charges are correct. Hershey leaked the story to KSPN, which ran it Tuesday afternoon, after the Daily News reported Tuesday morning that Drueding was pressured from office and that a loan was involved. Hershey questioned the Daily News Wednesday, desiring to know our sources, unsuccessfully. Then, Hershey held a press conference to outline the "resignations" of Drueding and two other officers, John Wood and George Freidell. Drueding said that Hershey had promised to keep the reasons behind his resignation "confidential."

ASPEN HIGHLANDS COMPTROLLER JAMES WENTZEL has resigned, a formal announcement at Highlands yesterday said. Wentzel, a defendant and alleged key figure in Highlands' schemes to pressure employees into not filing for unemployment insurance or workmen's compensation, gave no reason for his leaving. Highlands plead no contest to state criminal charges in the scheme last year; a \$4,000 fine -- the maximum -- was levied. Wentzel's successor has already been appointed.

JAIL ADMINISTRATOR DAVE RANDLE quit Thursday, and Sheriff Dick Kienast said it was "no big deal," but that Randle was reportedly upset because Deputy Don Davis told him not to park his car overnight in the official parking lot. Kienast told the Daily News that Randle's contract expired at the end of June and he had "stayed on for a while."

A 43-YEAR-OLD SILT WOMAN is serving a 12-day jail term in Glenwood Springs for her refusal to pay two \$1 parking tickets. Helga Konecy demanded and got a jury trial on the charges, to which she plead not guilty. She claims she has no legal money because no U.S. currency is backed by gold and silver, which the Constitution requires.

CAR MALFUNCTION IS SUSPECTED in the rollover of a car yesterday a mile east of town; 5 were injured, one seriously.

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THE DENVER BRONCOS MEET THE BUFFALO BILLS this afternoon (5:30) in an exhibition game which will break, most likely, the Broncos' 1-1 record.

AN UNKNOWN GOLFER NAMED ED SABO who doesn't think he's good enough to win took a one-stroke lead over Jack Nicklaus yesterday at the halfway point in the Westchester Classic in New York.

NATIONAL BALL SCORES:		Boston 6, Oakland 3
Los Angeles 7, N.Y. Mets 3		Milwaukee 2, Detroit 0
Pittsburgh 6, Houston 3		Texas 4, Kansas City 3
St. Louis 5, Atlanta 1		Minnesota 4, Toronto 3
San Francisco 6, Philadelphia 5		N.Y. Yanks 6, Seattle 1
San Diego 3, Montreal 2		California 3, Baltimore 2
Cincinnati 8, Chicago Cubs 3		Chicago Sox 7, Cleveland 1

WEATHER: CLEAR TO PARTLY CLOUDY WITH CHANCE OF AFTERNOON SHOWERS TODAY AND TOMORROW. COOL THIS WEEKEND, ESPECIALLY IN HIGH-COUNTRY. HIGHS DOWNTOWN, 60'S. LOWS TONIGHT, 30'S.
DOW JONES INDUSTRIALS YESTERDAY CLOSED AT 896.83, OFF 3.29.

Dateline, ASPEN --- PITKIN COUNTY FAIR, Painted Valley Ranch, busses every hour from Rubey Park downtown, Includes dog ring, horse judging, barbeque, livestock judging, square dance contest, original song & fiddle contest, continues Sunday. ARTS & CRAFTS FAIR, Snowmass Mall, 9-5, last of summer. IN RUGBY: Gentlemen of Aspen v. Boulder, noon, Wagner Park. 2nd side v. Boulder, 1:30. Eastern Rockies Rugby Union v Rio Grand Union (Texas & New Mexico), 10:30 am & 3 pm. BEER MAKING WORKSHOP, 1:30, Crystal Health Food Store, Carbondale, 963-2418 for more info, free. CHAMBER MUSIC, 4, Tent, \$8. LACROSSE, Aspen Lacrosse Club v Eastern Slope all-stars, 4:30 pm, Wagner. WINTER TASTING benefit party for Music School Scholarship Fund, following concert, Tent, \$10. DRESSAGE SHOW, Tagert Lake, 6 mi. east of town, 8 am tomorrow. WOMEN'S RESOURCE PICNIC, Kiwanis Park, Glenwood, 12:30. Music, dancing, games, 945-5783. LAST CONCERT OF SEASON, 4 tomorrow, festival orchestra, Tent, \$9. COLO. VOLLEYBALL ASSOC. CAMP, pre-registered high school girls, 8 am, tomorrow, High School. FOOTBALL PRACTICE starts for High School boys, tomorrow, 8:15 am, High School. Show up in shoes, socks, shorts & towel.

THINK THE ASPEN POLICE HAVE THE HABIT? 26 MEMBERS of the U.S. House of Representatives told freelancers for Playboy that they've toked up, but only one-- Edward Pattison (D-N.Y.) allowed his name to be used. No Senators out of 17 surveyed admitted to using it, though. They didn't ask about cocaine. GEORGIA SENATOR HERMAN TALMADGE says he'll repay the Senate for \$37,125 in expenses that the Senate Ethics Committee says he improperly billed over 7 yrs.

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ASPEN MAN

Aspen Highlands official resigns, successor named

The Aspen Highlands Skiing Corporation has announced the resignation of James Wentzel, controller and vice president of finance, effective in November.

Highlands President WVN Jones said Wentzel cited personal reasons for the resignation. Wentzel had contributed greatly in the development of Aspen Highlands and will be missed, according to Jones.

Russel Fraser has been appointed as Wentzel's successor, Aspen Highlands has announced.

Fraser is a CPA and has been controller of Aspen Reservations, Inc for the past 2 1/2 years.

Friday

ASPEN DAILY NEWS

DAILY EXCEPT SUNDAY

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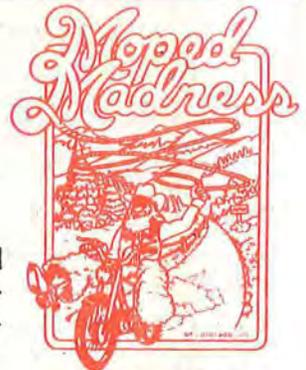
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DID HIGHLANDS INTIMIDATE EMPLOYEES EVEN AFTER COURT CASE?

A FORMER EMPLOYEE AT ASPEN HIGHLANDS SKI AREA, who worked for the company eight years, says he was told by Mountain Manager Don Robinson just before a court case in which he was to testify against the area that "we'll know who's with us after this, and those that aren't will be going down the road." Mike Williams, a lift operator, also told the Daily News that Robinson approached another lift operator who was called to testify and wanted to know his testimony the day before he was to take the stand. The case grew out of signed statements in which former Highlands employees said they were told they'd be fired if they filed for unemployment benefits during off-seasons. Highlands plead no contest to the charges last fall just as the case was to go to trial. Williams said, however, that he did apply for unemployment and was the only one of several lift operators to be moved off his normal post and later fired. Williams made a handwritten statement available to the Daily News and the Aspen Times in which he also alleges that Highlands allowed unsafe conditions to exist on its lifts. Some of Williams' claims are now under investigation by the same state office which probed the original intimidation charges and recommended charges.

AN ASPENITE WHO'S BEEN BLAMED FOR KICKING OUT Carbondale's only drug store by raising the rent ninefold says she simply felt the new rent was "what I regarded as fair market value." Mary Webster, who purchased the building in which Kenny's Pharmacy is located two years ago and last May indicated she'd raise the rent from \$200 a month to \$1875, issued a release yesterday in which she says she'll still negotiate with Kenny Wieseler, the proprietor, if he wants. Wieseler had earlier told the Daily News that he couldn't get Webster's phone number and couldn't contact her. But Webster says Wieseler never mailed her anything and instead "chose to make me appear badly in the media." The drugstore/fountain has announced closing the end of August.

ASPEN SHOULD KEEP ITS EYES on the good news that the town has won the 1978 Keep Colorado Beautiful award for small towns, not on allegations surrounding the police department, according to a local newspaper. The weekly Aspen Times said radio news coverage this past week of "rumors" that Chief Martin Hershey's contract might be purchased by the City represented "strange, even misleading" coverage. "Leadership" in the dep't is needed, the Times said.



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*Aspen Times
NOV 30/78*

Highlands, home of GLM instruction

by John Sabella

The Aspen Highlands Ski School, now under the directorship of Tom Williams, is currently conducting a hiring clinic designed to build the school up to its full winter complement of 120 to 130 working instructors.

Unlike previous years when the clinic has lasted only a week, this year's hiring effort will span two weeks.

During this first week, supervisors are observing both the skiing ability and the attitude of the hopefuls, according to Williams, and they will invite the most promising back for a second clinic week during which the candidate will be coached in how to relate the techniques they have learned to the class situation.

The ability to relate to the student is as important or even more so than raw skiing ability, Williams says.

"We're asking a lot of them," he says of the aspiring instructors who will be asked to go through the second clinic week, "but we want qualified people that we can be proud of."

May Have Slipped

Williams candidly admits that the school "may have slipped a little" in the past few years, but he pledges to create a smooth and professional organization with a nucleus of 60-80 regulars capable of providing qualified instruction and of achieving the basic goal of the school: having fun.

Ever since the days of the legendary Fred Iselin, according to Williams, the guiding philosophy at Aspen Highlands has been to enable the customer to enjoy his skiing experience and not to overwhelm him with drill sergeant ski instructors and dogmatic adherence to technique.

"If they have fun, we get them back," Williams says, and the means the school employs are twofold: first is the already alluded to attitude of the instructional staff, an attitude that emphasizes patience and the willingness to teach; and second is the use of the GLM (graduated length method) teaching concept and its three-foot skis.

Biggest GLM

The Aspen Highlands Ski School has evolved into what is probably the nation's largest GLM instructional facility, and while the use of the short ski re-



Tom Williams

mains controversial in some circles, Williams says that it unquestionably produces results.

As he points to a second-day-on-skis class that is executing true if shaky parallel turns just above the area's Quarterway Lift, Williams says that the three-footers enable the neophyte to actually get up on the hill faster because the short ski is so much easier to handle than is the conventional ski.

The skier finds it easier to turn, he says, and he is less plagued by the fear of injury. That, coupled with Highlands' gentle terrain below the Cloud Nine Restaurant, means that the beginner isn't relegated to the bunny slope but is almost immediately able to experience the feeling of getting up high on the mountain and can meet his more skilled companions in the restaurant for lunch, according to Williams.

And, he says, at Aspen Highlands the days of the long slow progression of snowplow, stem turn, stem christie and finally parallel are over.

First Parallel

"I remember my first parallel turn," says the 48 year-old director who learned to ski in a different era. "It's always a big thrill the first time you turn with your feet together and we want to give our students that feeling right away."

The school starts the beginner with parallel turns on three-foot skis, he says, and from then on everything that is taught is just a matter of polishing what the student learns on the first day out.

Use of the short ski reinforces everything that occurs in skiing on conventional skis, according to

Williams, and its best feature may be that it enables the student to cover far more terrain and make many more turns than would be possible otherwise.

That's the secret, he says: get them skiing, get them having fun, and the skills will come naturally.

As the skier progresses, he is shifted to four-footers, then to five-footers and finally to a full length ski, and Williams says the precise balance and precise feel that have been essential in maneuvering the three-footers are transferred along the way.

Three-Foot

Out on the Aspen Highlands slopes, Assistant Director Bob "Smitty" Smith is leading one group of clinic participants through their paces on the three-foot skis they will later use in class.

Some of the participants are already on the instructional staff but have been required to take the clinic because they didn't log enough hours the past season. Others are newcomers.

The group does not use ski poles and Smith explains that the Highlands philosophy holds that this technique is of benefit for neophytes who are thus encouraged to concentrate on their legs, to ski from the navel down as is the preferred method in modern skiing.

Later, when they have a grasp of what their feet and legs are doing, he says, they are introduced to poles and coached in what to do with their upper bodies.

GLM, pioneered by Cliff Taylor, emphasizes 13 basic exercises designed to stress all the techniques utilized in modern skiing.

Smith, dressed in the dazzling red he and Williams wear to distinguish themselves from the rest of the ski school, is silky smooth on the short skis, and he alternately demonstrates the various carving, steering, weighting and thrusting techniques he wants his instructors to master, then stops to watch them repeat the maneuvers with varying degrees of success.

Simulate Clinics

At intervals, he quizzes them about what their skis have done during a turn and what forces have produced the sought-after result. The atmosphere is relaxed and laughter is frequent. Smith says the clinics are designed to simulate classes.

On the chairlift riding back to the top, Smith is careful to state that GLM "isn't any better" than conventional ski teaching and



Smitty, center rear, said he needed a good laugh after demonstrating one maneuver he wanted the group to repeat.

that either method can take a student to the same point of ability within the same time frame.

Its advantage, however, he says in an echo of what Williams has said earlier, is that it gets the beginner up the mountain faster, allows him to do more turns and to have more fun than he might on a pair of long skis.

Interestingly, the vantage point of the chairlift later provides an example that supports what the pair has said. Two beginning classes are working in the same vicinity, one on GLM skis and the other on conventional skis the students have brought with them and refused to part with.

The levels of skill among the members of the two groups are roughly comparable, but the GLM skiers do numerous turns pretty much in the fall line, and when they tumble they pop back up on their feet as if they wear nothing more than a pair of oversized shoes.

The conventional ski group

makes long traverses, fewer turns, and when one of its members takes a nosedive she struggles with the unfamiliar appendages before she can align them to the point where she can regain her feet.

Williams, the man who has taken over the helm of the ski school from Lefty Brinkman, is a Chicago native who has resided in Aspen since 1968 when he purchased the Heatherbed Lodge across the road from Aspen Highlands.

After he and his partner sent guest after guest across the street to the ski school, he says, they decided it would be a plus for their business if they joined the school and took a hand in making sure that their guests had an enjoyable experience.

"If the ski school did a good job the guests tended to extend their stays," he says in explanation.

Since he sold his interest in the Heatherbed three years ago, Williams has devoted all of his winter time to ski instruction.

Aspen Times 11/30/78

Ski activities at Aspen Highlands are announced

The Aspen Highlands Ski Area will hold a GLM Rally Dec 7-10, weekly Inner Skiing clinics beginning Jan 6 and an Inner Skiing instructor's clinic Dec 4-9, the area has announced.

The rally includes a party and banquet, an Inner Skiing demonstration, a racing clinic and free skiing. It is designed to improve skiing ability in an informal setting, and the cost is \$73 for certified GLM International skiers and \$95 for non-certified skiers.

The package includes three nights lodging, four lift tickets and the social activities.

The Inner Skiing weekly clinics, to be held exclusively at Aspen Highlands this season, utilizes the concept of improving ski performance by developing a positive get-acquainted parties and continue Sunday through Thursday with activities that include off-snow experimental sessions, on-snow instruction, exercise and evaluation.

The Inner Skiing clinics are conducted by Bob Kriegel, co-author of the book, Inner Skiing, and his staff. Cost of each clinic is \$310.

The Inner Skiing instructor's clinic will be offered to any qualified ski instructor for a cost of \$125.

For information, contact Bill Comstock at 925-5300.

Highlands offers weekend tickets for \$10 per day

Aspen Highlands celebrating its 20th anniversary, will offer the Aspen Highlands Club 20 Birthday Card to all skiers, according to Highlands President Whip Jones.

Jones said the card entitles the bearer to a \$5 discount on weekend lift tickets throughout the season and is the area's way of saying "thank you" for continuing support.

The card can be purchased at any Aspen Highlands ticket window for a one-time fee of \$15. Upon proof of identification, the cardholder may then use the card to purchase Saturday and Sunday lift tickets for \$10 instead of the regular \$15, according to Jones.

The card is non-transferable and non-refundable. For more information, call the area at 925-5300 or write in care of Post Office Box T, Aspen.

Aspen Times 11/30/78

Snowmass to open lifts 1-4 on Saturday

THE ASPEN TIMES

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Bob "Smitty" Smith, assistant director of the Aspen Highlands Ski School, leads some of the participants in the current ski school hiring clinic down the mountain on their three-foot skis. For a glimpse inside the Highlands ski school, see page 5-A.

Flip out Fridays at Flora Dora



Catch up with the daffy whirl and bottoms-up enthusiasm of free-style skiing at Aspen Highlands—home of the Dearborn Cup.

Every Friday, at high noon on Flora Dora, chow down and cheer. Or show off a few tricks of your own and compete for cash prizes with some of the fanciest free-stylers in the country.* And don't forget the weekly drawing for valuable prizes on KSNO 1260 AM as part of Aspen Highlands 20th Birthday celebration.

*Just to be sure everybody comes out of their high-noon spin in good shape, all free-style competition entrants must be pre-qualified by Aspen Highland's experienced judging staff.

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Here's how they ski down under

This competitor in Sunday's Aspen Cup giant slalom at Aspen Highlands just ain't going to make it. He's one of the young Australian skiers who are in Aspen for winter (our winter, not theirs) training, and he found tough going around this particular gate. The Aspen Cuppers are kids aged 10-13 who become introduced to competition in a relaxed atmosphere through the program. They have races most weekends during the winter, and the Aussies join the Aspen kids for races. Three times this winter, the kids will travel out of town for races to see how they stack up against others of the same age from around the Rocky Mountain Division, and those who qualify will travel to the division's age-class championship in the spring. Michael Kennedy photo.

THE ASPEN/SNOW GUIDE

DECEMBER

COMPLIMENTARY

Pro Sking's kingpin
Bob Beattie, close-up



Marty Hershey in Retrospect

What's Happening to Aspen's Working Class?

"A Fairly Old-Fashioned Christmas"



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Pielstick continues to win freestyle

by John Sabella

This season's Aspen Highlands-Dearborn Freestyle Series might as well be re-named the Erik Pielstick Showcase.

Pielstick, the 24 year-old Oregonian who now lives in Winter Park, just can't be beaten.

He won his 10th contest Friday to extend his insurmountable lead in the season standings. He could win the Dearborn Cup without even bothering to show up for one of the remaining contests, which is what happened the only time he has failed to win this year; he was off competing somewhere else and didn't show up.

Pielstick has been vying in the freestyle contests at Aspen Highlands for six years. Two years ago, before the inception of the Dearborn Cup, he was the highest money winner, and last year he was the Dearborn runner-up behind Kim Wilson.

Wilson, now a student at the University of Colorado, competed only in this year's season-opening contest and has not been back to Aspen Highlands since.

Misses Competition

Although Pielstick now says he regrets not having the competition Wilson could have provided, he can't have too many compunctions about the way his season has progressed. The most recent contest was typical: Pielstick's performance began with a hard-driving trip through the moguls atop Aspen Highland's Floradora Run. His feet swung back and forth through the troughs in the moguls with a quickness that was remarkable even considering his very short freestyle skis, and whenever a mogul presented itself before him like a launching pad, up in the air he went.

He executed "dago-bangers," torturous one-handed cartwheel affairs that seem to defy the laws of both gravity and sanity, and "burrito-bangers," similar inverted idiocies that involve flipping straight forward over a pair of planted poles.

X-Rated Announcer

Pepper Gomez, the zany voice of Highlands Freestyle who might have a future in television if the Tonight Show ever becomes X-rated, informed the crowd that this latter trick often causes brown blotches to be left on the snow.

When the pounding of the moguls gave way to the gliding smoothness of ballet, Pielstick began spinning around and around in all manner of 360 degree turns that seemed impossible to those of us on the sidelines for whom just turning back and forth across the fall line presents a challenge.

After he spun all the way around one of his ski poles, Gomez said, "That's a great trick if you make it. Miss it and you become a kebab."



Erik Pielstick.

And, near the bottom, Gomez informed us that there was a young lady on the sidelines cheering for Pielstick.

"I think it's his wife Lita," he said. "She's shouting 'Come oooooonnn Eric!' You hear that same cry late at night through the streets of Winter Park."

Double-Daffy

At the bottom of the ballet course, Pielstick pointed his skis straight downhill toward the big jump in preparation for his aerial, known in the trade as a "double-daffy cross-uncross."

Gomez has informed us that attempts to do three tricks off the jump often result in "two daffies and a wet your pants," but Pielstick makes it look easy.

Each daffy is a front-to-back split, and linking two of them together turns him into a space-walker. Then, when it has already seemed as if he has been in the air far too long, he crosses his tips.

An instant before catastrophe, the skis come back to parallel and Pielstick makes a smooth landing.

The run has given him a whopping 196.58 points, compared to 184.50 for second-place Steve Phipps. He has also won another \$350 for a season total of \$3,500.

In the quest for the Dearborn Cup and the \$1,000 prize awarded to the overall winner, Pielstick's win has given him 100 points to 73 for runnerup Dan Pierce, a 32 year-old from Aspen who is such an antique, Gomez has told us, that he is about to be embalmed.

First Glimpse

Pielstick began skiing at age six at Soldier Mountain, Idaho, and his first glimpse of a freestyle contest eight years ago inspired him to give it a try.

In those days, he says, there wasn't any coaching so that you "just went out and did it," and innumerable bumps and bruises later you perfected a trick on your own.

Today, according to Pielstick, who was for two years the director of the Winter Park freestyle program, the coaching has become sophisticated enough so that an aspiring freestylist can learn the tricks safely through simple progressions.

The most spectacular and dangerous of the freestyle maneuvers, the aerial, takes the most training and requires practice in the gym and on the trampoline before an attempt is made on skis, he says.

Inverted Aerials

The inverted aerial, the flip, has been banned in this country because of the injuries and subsequent liability suits ski areas have experienced in the past, but Pielstick says he wants to see the inverteds reintroduced because of the excitement they provide.

New legislation being passed in several states that clearly defines ski area liability will bring the inverteds back, he argues.

Another thing that augers well for the future of American freestyle, which started out with a bank that included big-money contest and lots of television exposure and then flopped just as abruptly, according to Pielstick, is the strength of the amateur programs like the one he directed at Winter Park, where the techniques and coaching methods continue to be refined.

Now, he says, the competitors are ready and are only waiting for the right promotional framework to come along and restore freestyle to its former prominence.

Not Enough Money

As far as his own career is concerned, Pielstick says that although he considers freestyle skiing his primary interest, there isn't enough money available to lure him out on tour.

Hence, he and Lita plan to continue in their present capacities as ski industry technical representatives, and to compete in

such low-key contests as the ones at Aspen Highlands.

Asked if he can maintain his enthusiasm for the Aspen Highlands freestyle series in which he has already demonstrated his superiority, at least this season, Pielstick says, "all the pressure comes from myself."

"I know I have the ability to win every week, but the problem is, 'How can I maintain the edge?'"

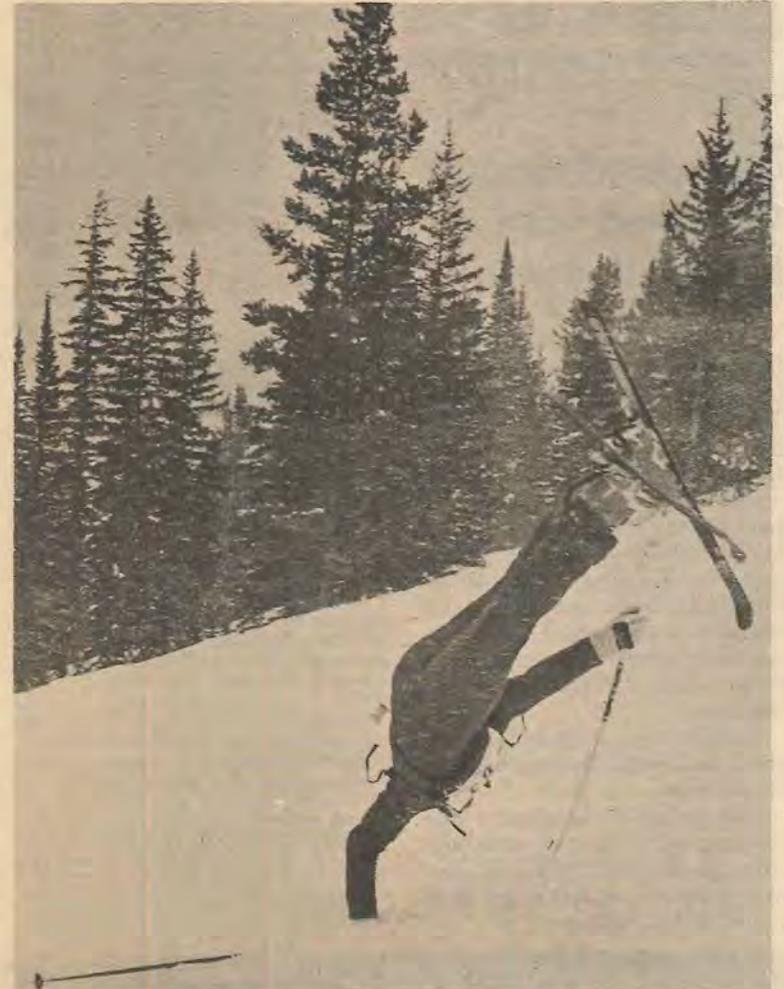
"I can't be concerned with winning or with the other competitors. I just have to strive to

achieve my own best performance."

One of the most important factors in his success has been his relationship to God, according to Pielstick, who calls faith his biggest driving force and expresses thankfulness that God has allowed him to fare so well.

And does he pray before a contest?

"You bet," he says, grinning. "I pray all morning long and the night before and afterwards."



Pielstick defies gravity and sanity with a "dago-banger." Michael Kennedy photos.

Glen's and Souper lead locals league

With two victories in two weeks, Glen's Ski Service is leading in the Men's A Division of the Aspen Highlands Locals Racing League. The newly-formed league, organized by Highlands racing director Buzz Fedorka, held its third race Friday.

After two organizational races on the Smuggler Race Area, this week's race was a 42 gate dual slalom on the more challenging Goldenhorn Racing Area.

In second and third place in the Men's A Division are Highland's Ski Shop and Souper.

Leading the women racers is the Souper women's team, followed by Aspen Business Services and the Shaft.

Rossignol

Rossignol Ski Company now is a major sponsor of the league and will be providing prizes for both individual and team seasonal winners.

Fedorka has expressed pleasure with the number of local racing enthusiasts that have been showing an interest in the newly-formed league.

"The league is proving to be a tremendous success," Fedorka



Friday race league action.

Michael Kennedy photo.

said. "So far, we've had 22 teams and 80 to 90 racers participating and next year we plan to expand the league into a program which will run throughout the season."

Jeff Smith set this week's race course on the hard snow and 80 racers participated in the slalom competition.

More than half of the racers in the Friday league have indicated that they also will participate in the series of Saturday races set to commence March 10, Fedorka said. The Saturday races will be run on double pole courses and registration for these races will be held from 8:45 to 10:30 on race

mornings at the base lodge restaurant at Highlands.

The \$12 entry fee includes a full-day lift ticket coaching and the two-run race.

For more information, contact Fedorka at the Aspen Highlands Race Department.

WOMEN

1. Souper

Paula Page	35.7
Marlene Maple	37.5
Polly Lucy	39.6
	112.8

2. Aspen Business Services

Catherine Thorsen	43.6
Ann Larson	43.6
Sharon Haddon	45.3
	132.5

3. Shaft

Susan Atwood	43.8
Polly Ross	46.3
Lynn Jahnke	47.7
	137.8

MEN'S A LEAGUE

1. Glen's Ski Service

Shane Burton	34.1
Robin Caudill	25.7
Tom Stiles	37.7
	107.5

2. Highland's Ski Shop

Jerry Sheimer	36.6
Steve Murphy	36.6
Phil Volckhausen	36.0
	109.2

3. Souper

Roger Carlsen	36.2
Rick Reynolds	36.7
Henry Pilip	38.4
	111.3

MEN'S B LEAGUE

1. ASA Cruisers

Tom Leny	34.8
Ace Lane	37.6
Ricardo Conti	40.6
	113.0

2. 714's

John White	38.3
Jon Strecher	38.7
Allen Drisinski	41.7
	118.7

3. Ute City

Art Mabonne	38.9
Howie Hatanaka	40.7
Chris Overall	41.1
	120.7

Fastest Individuals

Men

Shane Burton	34.1
Francois Borel	34.4
Robin Caudill	35.6
Phil Volckhausen	36.0
Roger Carlsen	36.2
Steve Murphy	36.6
Jerry Shimer	36.6
Rick Reynolds	36.7
Jon Mika	37.4
Jeff Smith	37.4

Women

Paula Page	35.7
Marlene Maple	37.5
Polly Lucy	39.6
Carol Luben	43.5
Ann Larson	43.6
Catherine Thorson	43.6
Susan Atwood	43.8
Sharon Hadden	45.3
Lynn Jahnke	47.7
Barbara Young	49.3

Out of bounds skiers to get \$1500 bill

Although there won't be any criminal charges against the four skiers who had to be rescued Sunday night after they skied past control markers at the Aspen Highlands Ski Area, mountain manager Don Robinson says the four will be receiving a bill for the \$1,500 expense of the rescue effort, and will have their season pass privileges revoked.

In an incident on Aspen Mountain last week, two skiers were arrested for skiing in a closed area above Spar Gulch. They were incarcerated overnight and fined \$50 each (\$25 suspended) by County Judge Bob Grueter.

In that instance, however, the skiers were within the permit area, on private property, so that they could be charged with trespass.

In the case of the four skiers at Highlands, they were outside the permit boundary on national forest land so that there was no trespass.

Picnic Point

According to Robinson, the

quartet violated a well-marked closure near Picnic Point on Olympic Run and headed down toward Maroon Creek Road about 3:45 pm.

They thought they were headed for a powder skiing experience, he said, but what they found was an unskiable set of cliffs only a short distance down from Olympic.

They were not accomplished skiers and apparently did not know the terrain in the area, according to Robinson, who said the steepness of the slope and the condition of the snow meant that they could not climb back to the ski area.

They managed to attract the attention of a cross-country skier in the valley below, Robinson said, and the cross-country skier reported their plight to the T-Lazy 7 Ranch.

Another Rescue

The Aspen Highlands Ski Patrol was alerted, and after determining that Mountain Rescue was preoccupied with a missing skier search then under way in the Conundrum Creek Valley, a team of patrol volunteers commenced rescue operations, according to Robinson.

The rescue began about 5 pm and included up to 20 men plus snow machines, he said. Three of the volunteers descended to the group at the cliffs and belayed them down with ropes, and finally got them out about midnight, he said.

Robinson said the quartet: Robert Milton Johns, 21, of Saginaw, Mich; Russel T Dermody, 21, of Milford, Mich; Terry Farrugia, 20, of Highland, Mich; and Scott Suomela, 21, of Rochester, Mich, initially reported that they were recent arrivals in Aspen but that the ski area subsequently determined that two of the four are season pass holders and have been living at the Silverking apartments.

Robinson expressed concern at the increasing incidence of out-of-bounds skiing. The same day the rescue occurred, he said, two expert local skiers were spotted skiing Maroon Bowl and were met at the bottom by ski patrolmen who issued a reprimand.

Pull Passes

All the area can do to out-of-

bounds skiers at this point is pull their passes, according to Robinson, who said the ski safety bill now before the Colorado legislature would provide legal recourse for ski areas in such cases.

Of the two Maroon Bowl skiers, he said, "They're not the ones who worry us. We know them and know that they're expert skiers.

"What worries us are the young kids who are likely to follow their tracks. Our concern is not for the expert skiers who know how to ski those areas but for the non-experts."

He said the three patrolmen who actually made the rescue risked their lives in darkness and in snow of questionable safety, and that the area had to mobilize 20 men and machines in order to extricate the Michigan quartet.

He said the problem of out-of-bounds skiing has grown more serious as more and more skiers have begun to "flagrantly violate" area closures.

To try and seek a solution, according to Robinson, ski area, county and Forest Service officials will meet March 15 to discuss possible alternatives.

In Utah, he said, counties are

empowered to set their own rules governing back country skiing and stringent penalties including arrest for violating certain closures have effectively controlled out-of-bounds skiing.