

Vernon Ski Tow

Promotional Information From The Late 1940's

Compiled by Ted Hine – October, 2005

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The Vernon Ski Tow press releases were given to me by VST partner Woody Walker when I visited him at his North Caldwell, New Jersey home in 1980. The two book excerpts I received in 2003 from Liz Holste, a northern New Jersey resident who was at the time in the process of writing a book about early New Jersey ski areas. I provided her with a computer data CD containing everything I had (photos and the press releases) regarding the Vernon Ski Tow. In 2003 I also gave a copy of the CD to the New England Ski Museum in Franconia, New Hampshire.

Press Release (Probably from the Fall of 1946)

For Immediate Release:

THE VERNON SKI TOW

One of the newest winter sports spots within easy driving distance of New York, The Vernon Ski Tow, came into being last winter from the house-bound gripings of two New Jersey ski fans, Kirt Hine and Bill McKelvy. Both Hine and McKelvy had been intercollegiate competition skiers in their Yale days, both of them had been working in New Jersey for the past few years, both of them were missing their skiing. Last fall they decided to do something about their plight. The Vernon Ski Tow, an hour and a half from the George Washington Bridge, a 22-acre slope with a modern ski tow adjacent to wide and pleasant wooded trails, was the result.

There was considerable ground work before the finished ski tow was ready for use last winter. After the first decision of the two skiers to build their own slope, followed the important questions of where, when and how. "Where" was answered by application to U. S. government charts showing the area of the snow belt in New Jersey for the past fifty years. Once a mean boundary had been found, Hine and McKelvy rented a plane and scouted the section of the state safely above the snow belt from the air. They took aerial photographs and noted likely locations on a map. Then they took to the roads and followed up the leads they had scouted by plane.

After several disappointments -- good slopes that looked fine from the air but were hard to reach by car; good slopes that looked fine from the air and were easy to reach by car, but turned out to be pockmarked with boulders, good slopes that were unavailable for lease or purchase -- they found the spot they had been looking for all along, The Vernon Slope.

"When" had never been a serious question. As soon as they found the slope and made the necessary leasing arrangements, they went to work on the "How".

The "How" involved clearing by hand, on free evenings and weekends, the stones that might interfere with safe, pleasant skiing. Then the duo rented a bulldozer for the heaviest grading of the main slope, and, after the dozer had done its job, pitched in again by hand to manicure the slope, cut trails through the main woods above the slope, and install the tow. Slopes ranged from steep to gentle, with a maximum run of 1500 feet. Elevation is 770 feet to 1200.

The development of the slope was carried out last fall and winter. A 900-foot tow, amply powered by a gas engine, was installed, tested and found satisfactory. A late spring snow-fall was the final and proving test. It drew several hundred skiers to the slope and their reaction was enthusiastic.

This summer and fall, additional grading, clearing, seeding and tow modifications were taken care of. Now the slope and the tow are again open for operation. With the improvements of the past year they approach the best in skiing facilities to be found anywhere in the area. The slope this season will be operated by Kirt Hine and E. C. Walker. It will open Saturdays, Sundays and holidays to provide skiing for anyone from beginner to expert.

Skiers from New York, Newark or Jersey City can reach the Vernon Slope easily by car via the George Washington Bridge from New York or Hamburg, New Jersey, from points within the state. Like all good skiing grounds, the Vernon Slope is off the beaten path, but highway signs are posted giving clear guidance from both Stockholm and Hamburg, New Jersey. At present, there are no canteen facilities on the slope itself, but for visitors who don't want to bother packing a picnic lunch or thermos there are numerous taverns and restaurants in nearby Vernon, Hamburg, Sussex and Stockholm.

The Vernon Slope is a step forward for skiing in the New York-New Jersey area, bringing it closer and easier of access to skiers

THE VERNON SKI TOW

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in the metropolitan section. Good sport is now available without a long train ride, without sacrifice of the entire weekend's time.

The turnout of last spring should be only a drop in the bucket compared to the expected attendance this winter. There is evidence that other ski slopes are in the making in the northern New Jersey snow belt. With proper time and trouble, grassing and grading and clearing and construction of tows, there will be room for a good dozen slopes. For the present, the Vernon Slope brings good skiing today, not in New England or in the far West, but right on our own doorstep.

For those who may ask, we have summarized below several facts concerning the Vernon Ski Tow:

Location: Vernon Township, Sussex County, New Jersey.
Off route 23, Northeast of Hamburg, N. J.

Elevation: 770 ft. to 1200 ft.

Exposure: Northeast, overlooking Vernon Valley.

Terrain: Gentle to steep open slopes. Maximum run including connecting trails 1500 ft.

Tow: 900 ft. length.

Weather: Snow fall average 12 inches per year more than that of Metropolitan New Jersey (Per Government reports). Temperature averages 10 degrees colder than that of Metropolitan New Jersey.

Snow conditions: Graded and sodded slopes require only a few inches for coverage. Steepest slopes not yet graded require, of course, more.

Hotels: Hotel facilities may be found at Sussex, Stockholm, Newton and other nearby communities.

Press Release (Dated January 1948)

NEW JERSEY SKIING
THE VERNON SKI TOW

VERNON TOWNSHIP
SUSSEX COUNTY
NEW JERSEY

Local New Jersey skiing comparable to that of many New England spots is now available within easy reach of the New Jersey or New York City skier. The Vernon Ski Tow, just 90 minutes from the George Washington Bridge or Newark, offers 22 acres of varied open slopes complete with a ski tow. A pleasant wooded ski trail tops the hill and the view from the slopes or the trail is hard to beat.

The varied open slopes may be described for the most part as suitable for the beginner or intermediate skier with some areas for the expert only. The wooded trail on the hill top which commands a view of Highpoint to the north west and the Kittitiny Range to the east is of novice or touring steepness, and when the snow is new and the sun is shining, takes the skier into a veritable winter wonderland.

An adequately powered tow nearly 1000 feet in length is centrally located and provides a ride to the top of the hill for 1000 skiers per hour.

Hot dogs and hot coffee are available on the slope and for recuperation after a good days' skiing many Sussex County Inns are within easy driving distance.

The story of the development of such excellent skiing facilities in this nearby area is interesting. The developers were both skiers, who, like many, felt the time and cost necessary to reach New England skiing was unnecessary. A check of U.S. Weather Bureau records for an eighty year period showed that in some New Jersey areas the average snowfall was adequate for skiing if the proper slopes were available. During the Summer of 1945, a search for the best slope was made by air, automobile and foot. 1600 square miles of northern New Jersey high country was closely surveyed.

To make a good ski slope the terrain must fulfill many qualifications. A northerly or easterly exposure is necessary to insure a minimum of thawing from exposure

to the sun and protection from the prevailing wind is necessary to prevent drifting as well as discomfort while skiing. The terrain must be varied to provide a grade to the liking of each individual and the surface must be free of rocks and stumps to permit skiing on the minimum of snow. The Vernon slopes were selected because they fulfilled all of the qualifications except the latter, and by virtue of clearing, grading and seeding, were made to fulfill the latter. The installation of a tow and a lean-to warming shelter completed the essentials to good skiing within easy driving from Metropolitan area points.

Proof of the theory that good skiing may be had in Sussex County, New Jersey was had in the large turn-out of skiers during the 1946-1947 season. The slopes were open to the public week-ends and legal holidays only, and skiers found good skiing at The Vernon Ski Tow for six week-ends during the 1946-1947 season. On several of these week-ends good skiing prevailed at Vernon when the snow had disappeared from the Metropolitan area thus proving that location and exposure of slopes are important considerations.

With a good starting snow fall this winter and prospects of more to come, the outlook for New Jersey skiing is most cheerful.

The Vernon Ski Tow
 Vernon Township
 Sussex County
 New Jersey

January, 1948

WHERE TO SKI

SKI GUIDE

to the U.S. and Canada

by Joan and David Landman

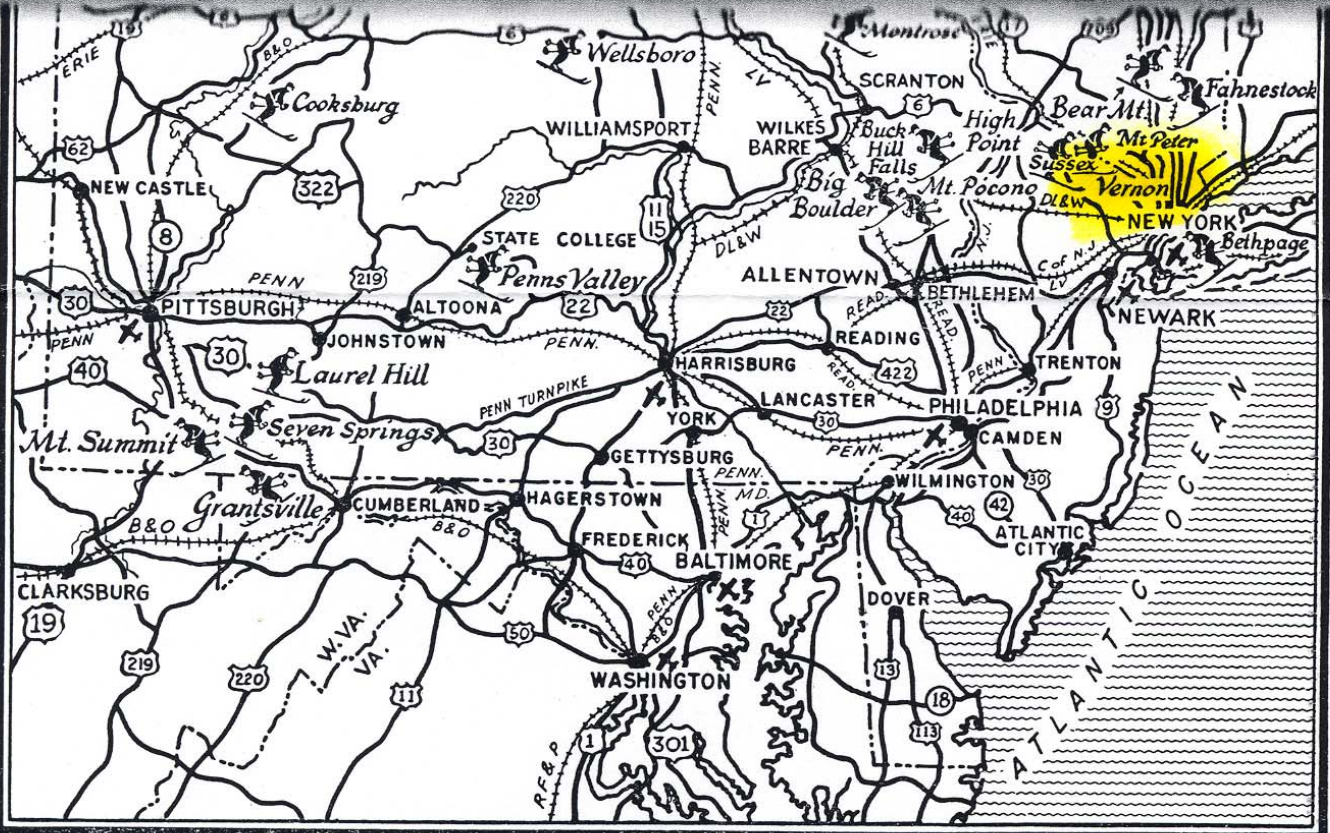
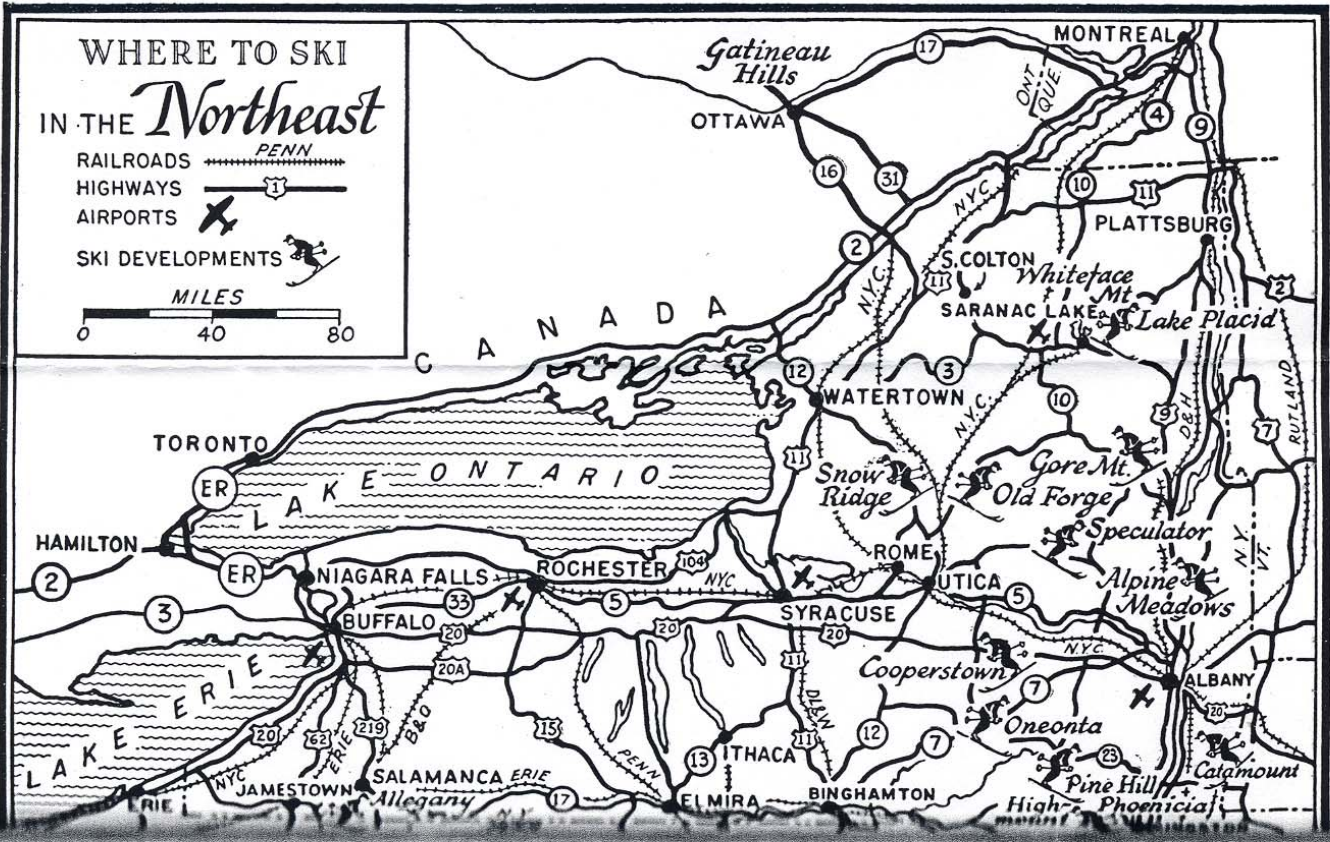
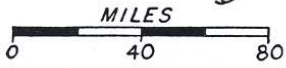
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY • BOSTON

The Riverside Press, Cambridge

1949

WHERE TO SKI IN THE Northeast

- RAILROADS 
- HIGHWAYS 
- AIRPORTS 
- SKI DEVELOPMENTS 



NEW JERSEY

WHERE TO SKI

VERNON SKI TOW, off Route 23, 4 miles from Vernon, New Jersey, 47 miles from New York City. Season: December 20 to March 10; altitude 700' to 1100'; exposure northeast.

TANDEM ROPE TOW 1000' serves one intermediate trail 1200', one novice trail 2300', and two open slopes, 1000' each.

TOW RATE \$2 per day.

Canteen serving hot coffee, sandwiches at slope. Area run Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

SUSSEX SKI TOW, 3 miles from the town of Sussex, N. J., 53 miles from New York City. Ski season: Christmas to March; exposure north.

TWO ROPE TOWS 1250' and 300' long serve 1300' open slope with 220' vertical drop. Rate \$2 per day. Canteen.

NEWTON SKI TOW, also in Sussex County, 59 miles from New York City, has floodlighted slope, canteen, operates Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

HIGHPOINT STATE PARK, 8 miles from Sussex and 58 miles from New York City, offers skiing on three cross-country trails within the park, in the extreme northwest corner of New Jersey, at 1800' elevation. You can tour from Highpoint to Stokes State Forest. These two parks have a combined area of 25 miles.

APPALACHIAN TRAIL (towless) 15 miles skiable.

WORLD *SKI* BOOK

EDITED BY

FRANK ELKINS FRANK HARPER

1949

LONGMANS, GREEN & COMPANY, INC.

NEW YORK

LONDON

TORONTO

NEW JERSEY

Fran and Charley's House, * E 6 beds. Meals available.
Jackson's, * E 14 beds. Meals available.
Kentner's Lodge, * E 10 beds. Meals.
McGee's Home, * E 22 beds. Meals.
Paczkowski's, * E 8 beds. Meals.
Phillips, * E 8 beds. Meals.
Pioneer Lodge, * E 26 beds. Meals.
Radley Homestead, * E 9 beds. Breakfast served.
Rondale Farm, * E 16 beds. Meals.
Spruce Cottage, * E 10 beds. Dormitory accommodations.

HOTELS IN CONSTABLEVILLE

Chafty's Tourist Home, ** E 13 beds. Breakfast.
Parquet, ** E 15 beds. Restaurant.
Clover's, * E 5 beds.
Regetz', * E 8 beds. Meals.

HOTELS IN LYONS FALLS

Barnum's, * E 6 beds. Breakfast.
Boshart's Tourist Home, * E 6 beds.
Carl's Guest House, * E 8 beds.

HOTEL IN GLENWOOD

Timber Lodge, ** E 20 beds. Restaurant.

HOTEL IN LOWVILLE

Henry's Hotel, ** E 20 beds. Restaurant.

WARRENSBURG

Hickory Hill
Adirondacks Region
New York

D & H RR. Colonial Airlines to Glens Falls, 15 mi southeast. Adirondack Trailways Bus. By car, on US 9; 65 mi north of Albany.

Intended for the use of local residents rather than as an attraction for weekend skiers, Hickory Hill has nevertheless become a very popular area, situated as it is just halfway between Alpine Meadows (25 mi south on NY 9K) and North Creek (21 mi northwest on NY 28). It offers an excellent practice slope and a small network of trails, all serviced by three rope tows. A warming hut at the foot of the slope serves sandwiches and coffee. Ice-skating rink floodlighted for night use as is a 300-ft toboggan slide.

HOTELS

Colonial, ** E 40 rooms.
Warren, ** E 20 rooms.

WILMINGTON 1020 ft/311 m

Whiteface Mountain Ski Center
Adirondacks Region
New York

NYC RR to Lake Placid. Colonial Airlines to Saranac Lake, or D & H RR, to Westport, then taxi or bus. Adirondack Trailways Bus. Greyhound buses will operate regularly from Lake Placid direct to Ski Center. By car, on NY 86; 12 mi northeast of Lake Placid.

Whiteface Mountain Ski Center, state-owned, is fashioned out of the most northerly of New York's major Adirondack high peaks. It includes ½-mi access road swinging off from Whiteface Mountain Highway, an extensive parking area, a ski lodge with bunkhouses and dining room and ski shop, rope tows, an alpine lift, and an extensive system of slopes, downhill and touring trails. The only hitches in the vast development are transportation and downhill and open-slope skiing above the 2700-ft mark. A chair lift is needed to transport skiers to the upper levels of Whiteface Mountain (4872 ft/1485 m), where the snows last longer and come more often than where the project is now carved out. From the summit of Whiteface, almost 1 mi above sea level, a sweeping panorama is to be seen: Lake Champlain appears to be near at hand, and on clear days one can see as



WHITEFACE PROJECT

far away as Mt. Washington in New Hampshire and as the St. Lawrence River between Canada and the U. S. Nestled near its base are the picturesque communities of the Au Sable Valley and mountain villages like Lake Placid, Bloomingdale, and Saranac Lake.

Three rope tows, two of them 1000 ft long, service the practice slopes near the Lodge and the Ski School, which are located between Trail 1 and the Slalom slope. The short one hauls skiers from the lift terminal to the Lodge. The lift rises 889 ft over a distance of 3226 ft and serves the four main trails on Marble Mountain; each is a dandy for the intermediate and expert. Slalom slope starts at the top of Marble Mountain and ends near the summit shelter; a bit rough and tough. There are excellent touring trails at the 4100-ft level; also short slopes and tows.

The Snocat transports skiers from the Whiteface Highway to the upper mountain. The Lodge, a two-story building, has a ski shop and first-aid room, a cafeteria and lounges. Close to the Lodge are two former CCC barracks converted into bunkhouses, one for men and the other for women; the charge is seventy-five cents a night for skiers bringing sleeping bag or blankets. Excellent ski school.

HOTELS

Quaker Mountain Lodge, *** A 12 beds. Excellent view of Whiteface. Fine food.
Interbrook Lodge, ** E 14 beds. Breakfast included.
Kamp Romang, ** E 16 beds.
Sportsman's Inn, ** A 30 beds.
Whiteface Mt. House, ** E-A 50 beds.
Wilmington Inn, ** A 50 beds. Bunks at lower rates.
Bonnie View Lodge, * E 40 beds.
Brookside Farm, * E-A 16 beds.
Courtney's Maple Wood Inn, * E 24 beds.
Lila's Restaurant, * E-A 16 beds.
Locust Inn, * A 14 beds.
Mountain View, * E-A 20 beds.
Mountain View Farm, * A 12 beds.
Overlook Lodge, * E 20 beds.

See also Hotels under Lake Placid and Saranac Lake.

NEW JERSEY

The topography of New Jersey, as a whole, does not lend itself to skiing as well as that of some of the other Eastern states, but even the comparative flatness of the state has nurtured a group of skiers whose enthusiasm is as high as it is in any others. Most of the Garden State skiing is confined to public areas where open fields and woodlands

UNITED STATES

provide a limited amount of recreation, especially for the rank and file. There are a number of private projects and, again, their facilities are strictly for the "local" type of skier who doesn't want to go to more distant points or just doesn't have the time. "To play around" would be the proper way of describing most of these points although to skiers "half a crust" is better than no snow at all so that an opportunity to ride your boards is welcomed at all times. In general, the southern part of New Jersey is flat, particularly that section which adjoins Pennsylvania but there are hills and even mountains in the central and northern portions.

High Point Park is one of the better-known state centers at the extreme northern tip, eighty-three miles from New York City; it has about twenty miles of cross-country trails, principally touring, although fun can be had skiing down the roads leading from the Monument. The Point (1800 ft/549 m) is favored with snows while other parts of the state have none. Elizabeth is the headquarters of the Union County Park system, which includes the Watchung Reservation and its cross-country terrain and open slopes popularized through the Watchung Ski Club. Moderate slopes are offered by Morristown at its Jockey Hollow National Park. The Galloping Hill Golf Club course, managed by the Union County Park Commission, is lighted for night skiing. There is a slalom here, too.

Sussex County Slope at McCoy's Corners in Lewisburg has a 1200-foot tow on a northern slope with a 40-degree decline. Other outstanding private developments are to be found at Vernon where twenty-two acres of slopes, ranging from steep to gentle with a maximum run of 1500 feet at an elevation ranging from 770 to 1200 feet, are served by a modern tow; at Peapack, on NJ 31, where a 700-foot tow makes runs for novices, intermediates, and experts possible; at Rocco's Villa Sunset at Lake Susquehanna, Blairstown, with tow, slopes, and trails; at Craigmear in Newfoundland, where Hugo Meury has meticulously cultivated his slopes and trails to be skiable on two to three inches of snow; and at the Succasunna Golf Club in Succasunna, where tows, slopes, trails, and a ski jump are available. The above areas are within one-half hour to ninety minutes of driving from the George Washington Bridge.

PENNSYLVANIA

BOALSBURG

Penns Valley Ski Center
Pennsylvania

Greyhound and Boalsburg Bus Lines. Some trains at Lewistown are met by the Boalsburg bus. By car, on US 322; 4 mi east of State College; 26 mi northwest of Lewistown.

The skiing area is on Mount Bald Knob, ½ mi from Boalsburg. There are slalom and practice runs, a small practice jump and an 800-ft rope tow. The Class "C" racing trail is the only one in the state. Two main downhill runs drop from 2300 ft to 1400 ft. Good skiing if snow is right, but don't expect a ski resort.

HOTELS NEARBY

Nittany Lion Inn, State College, *** E 77 rooms. Good restaurant.

State College Hotel, State College, ** E 65 rooms. Restaurant, coffee shop.

BRADFORD

Bradford Recreation Park
Pennsylvania

Erie RR, B & O RR. Edwards Lakes-To-Sea system; Greyhound buses, West Ridge system. By car, at junction of US 219, Pa 46, and Pa 346.

Bradford is nestled in the rugged foothills of the upper Alleghenies, almost on the Pennsylvania-New York line, where the skiing should be good. But it is the completion of the Zippo Ski Slope that really puts the town on the skier's map. The slope, 1000 ft long with an average width of 275 ft and an average pitch of 27 degrees, is served for its entire length by an electric rope tow and is floodlighted for night skiing. The slope's lower end was constructed with the problems of the novice in mind and the upper length will be found interesting enough to satisfy the expert.

Adjoining is Bradford's Recreation Park offering slalom and practice runs, a ski tow and many open slopes and trails. A 2-mi downhill trail with a drop of 900 ft has been added.

With this impetus, all Bradford has become interested in the sport of skiing, and businessmen and youngsters alike use the slopes and trails.

HOTELS

Emery, ** E 130 rooms. Skiers' Lounge.

Holley, ** E 100 rooms. Coffee shop.

BUCK HILL FALLS

Pennsylvania

Lackawanna RR to Cresco station. Greyhound Bus to Mt. Pocono or Swiftwater station; Martz Bus to Mt. Pocono station. By car, via Pa 90 from Stroudsburg, to Mountainhome, then Pa 390; Buck Hill Falls is on a road running north off Pa 390, about 1 mi northeast of Mountainhome.

Located in the beautiful waterfalls resort area of the Poconos, Buck Hill Falls has plenty of practice runs and slaloms as well as two ski runs with tows, one of 1000 ft, the other 1800 ft. Open slopes and trails abound for skiers who want cross-country sport. Instructors are available at most of the hotels in the area and ski equipment may be rented. Organized sledding parties are a feature here. Cutters and horse-drawn sleighs are available.

HOTELS NEARBY

The Inn at Buck Hill Falls, ** A 500 beds. A 4000-acre estate of great scenic beauty.

Pine Knob Inn, Canadensis, * A 100 beds.

The Woodside, Cresco.

Onawa Lodge, Mountainhome, * A 300 beds.

Pocono Manor, Pocono Manor.

Skytop Lodge. See Skytop.

Twin Pine Ranch, Snydersville, ** A.

BUSHKILL

Pennsylvania

D, L & W RR. Greyhound and Martz bus lines. By car, on US 209; less than 100 mi from NY City and Philadelphia.

Located in the scenic Bushkill Falls section of the Appalachian Trail country, Bushkill is one of Pennsylvania's newly-developed winter-sports areas. It offers practice runs, one 1300-ft run, a ski tow, and several open slopes and trails. Instructors are on hand and equipment may be rented. There is ice skating on the lake and facilities for ice-hockey games and tobogganing.

HOTEL

Pocmot Lodge, ** A. Very comfortable lodge in beautiful surroundings; some rooms with running water or private shower; rates include breakfast and dinner.

CANADENSIS

Pennsylvania

D, L & W RR to Cresco station. Martz and Greyhound bus lines to Mt. Pocono station. By car, on Pa 290, just off Pa 390, about 2 mi northeast of Mountainhome.