

'tis the season

December snowstorms stimulate schussing boom

When you find yourself all alone on the weekends check the weather forecast. If snow is falling in the mountains, your friends are probably schussing down the slopes and there's no reason you shouldn't be with them.

If you have never skied before and want to start, area ski shop personnel recommend renting skis. Equipment can be rented item by item or in packages, including skis, bindings, boots and poles. According to Don Carter, of the Mogul Mouse Ski Shops, the beginner should "rent until he or she determines they like to ski." Renting can enable the beginner to experience the sport as in time and money permits.

The beginning skier should start out with short skis because they are easiest to learn on. Robert Howells, of Berg's West Sport Shop, says "the beginner can start out renting a shorter ski, and as he gets better, rent longer ones."

If a skier chooses not to rent, but can't afford new equipment, buying second hand equipment is an option. But Rich Temple, of Ullr's Sport Shop warns

he's "seen too many people come in with damaged equipment that they just bought second-hand." He recommends that skiers interested in buying used equipment should talk to ski shop personnel so they "know what to look for in quality used equipment."

Once the skier has the necessary equipment, he or she also must have appropriate clothing. Dan DeWees, of Anderson's Sporting Goods, says ski clothes don't have to be expensive. He says skiers can "tailor clothes to match their budgets," but should be concerned primarily with warmth and comfort. Jeans over long underwear, a warm jacket and gloves are acceptable for the beginning downhill skier, but he says an investment in warm clothes could be the deciding factor whether a beginner enjoys skiing.

Skiing can be fun if you have the right equipment and clothes, but it's also necessary to get your body in shape. The best way to get in shape is to jog and do stretching exercises. "The percentage of broken legs has decreased and now most injuries are dislocations from being out of shape," says Temple. He says one can get hurt simply by being too tight. Advice from Howells is "be in good shape before you go skiing and you'll enjoy it twice as much."

Several Eugene shops offer downhill equipment for both rental and purchase. Packages rent from \$7.50 to \$10 per day and \$10 to \$14 per weekend. Would-be equipment purchasers should be aware that ski prices range from \$35 to \$250, boots from \$30 to \$250 and bindings will run \$20 to \$120.

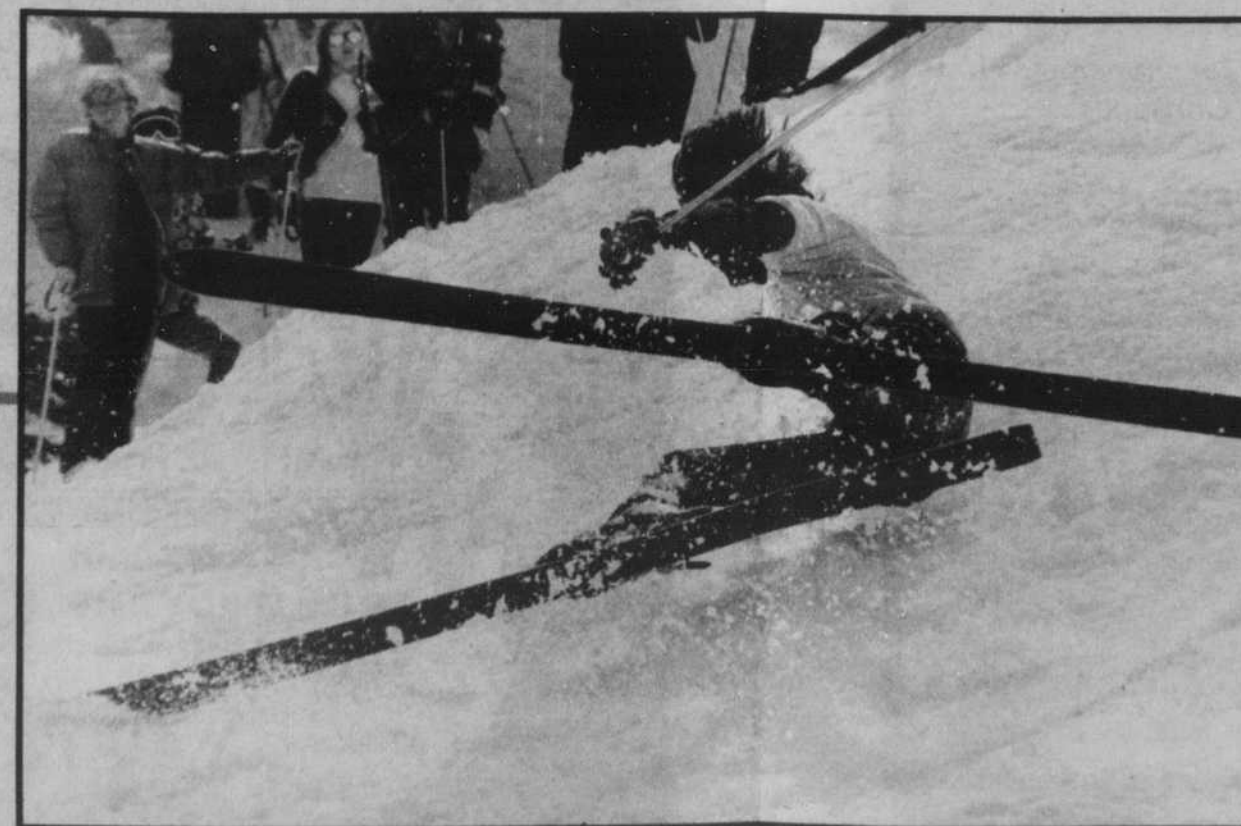
Anderson's Sporting Goods, 199 W. 8th St., rents and sells all types of skis and related equipment.

Berg's West Sport Shop, 367 W. 13th St., specializes in downhill skis and equipment and keeps a rental file so the skier can rent proper equipment each time.

Mogul Mouse Ski Shop, 2504 Willamette and 615 Main, Springfield, sells and rents and leases individual pieces and packages of ski equipment.

Ullr Sport Shop, 1508 Coburg Rd., carries downhill ski equipment along with many other lines of sporting gear.

Stories by Darcy Hall. Photos from Emerald files



Powdery solitude beckons cross country enthusiasts

If you enjoy scenic trails and solitude, downhill skiing might not be the sport for you, but there is an alternative — cross country skiing.

In the last five or six years, cross country skiing has grown in popularity. Many people see it as a less expensive alternative to downhill skiing. Others are attracted by its sense of freedom and "back to nature" quality. Whatever the reason, most X-country ski shops in the Eugene area can help you find the equipment you need to get started.

According to area shops, the beginning cross country skier should ski on waxless skis. Waxless skis come in a variety of bases including mohair, fish scale and step. Waxless bases provide the skier with good performance while avoiding the problems of waxing.

As a skier becomes more advanced, he or she might want to switch to skis which require waxing, depending on the type of skiing done. Oregon snow varies depending on the time of day, sunlight and temperature and is sometimes difficult to wax for, according to Dale Moon of Berg's East Sport Shop.

Proper dress is essential to enjoying the sport and for the skier's safety. Paul Hawkins of Hawkeyes, says skiers should dress with many layers of wool clothing, which allows the skier to adjust body temperature by taking on or putting off layers of clothing.

Getting in good physical shape is important.

Jogging or any exercise that develops the cardiovascular system is the best way to get in shape.

The skier also needs to be aware of the weather and how it can change rapidly. Moon says skiers should carry a day pack with emergency equipment, water, food and a map and compass.

Several Eugene ski shops carry cross country skis and related equipment:

Anderson's Sporting Goods, 199 W. 8th St., carries both wax and no wax base skis, boots and poles for sale and for rent. The shop also carries downhill ski equipment.

Berg's East Sport Shop, 410 E. 11th St., carries racing, touring and mountaineering skis in both the wax and no wax bases, boots, poles and bindings. The shop has a rental program and will offer clinics throughout the season.

Hawkeye's, 1290 Oak St., specializes in rentals of racing, touring and mountaineering skis

in both the wax and no-wax bases. The shop keeps a file of previous rentals, so renters can reserve equipment up to four months in advance. The shop sells all types of skis and related equipment.

Mattox Outdoor Outfitters, 57 W. Broadway and 768 E. 13th St., rents and sells cross country ski packages and offers a discount to purchasers of complete ski packages.

Mogul Mouse Ski Shop, 2504 Willamette and 615 Main St., Springfield, rents, sells and leases individual pieces and complete packages of equipment. The shops carry racing, touring and mountaineering skis, boots, poles and bindings.

Oregon Outdoor Wilderness Supply, EMU basement, rents and sells both wax and no-wax skis, boots, bindings and poles. The shop will also offer ski waxing workshops during the ski season.

Sugar Pine Ridge, 877 E. 13th St., specializes primarily in rental and over-the-counter sales of cross country ski equipment. The shop offers technique clinics and fun races each month.

Ullr Sport Shop, 1508 Coburg Rd., carries some cross country equipment for both rental and purchase.

Packages rent from \$6 to \$7.50 per day and from \$9 to \$10 per weekend. Skis cost anywhere from \$30 to \$200 and boots \$35 to \$75.

