

It's That Time of Year

Time to get out the skis and start thinking powder

Rain — it's a fact of life in Oregon. However, there's reason to relish each drop of rain, even if you forget the umbrella. The thing to remember if you're a ski buff is that when it's raining down here, it's probably snowing on the nearby slopes of the Cascades.

Snow is already accumulating in the mountains. Hoodoo Ski Bowl has 18 inches and there's 15 inches at Willamette Pass, while Mt. Bachelor Ski Resort is reporting 23 inches of snow on the ground.

"With all the improvements taking place in every area of the resort, we're anticipating a record breaking ski season at Mt. Bachelor," says Kiza Stratton, a spokesperson for Mt. Bachelor Inc. Ski and Summer Resort.

For anyone who has done any skiing at Mt. Bachelor lately, record breaking crowds are nothing new. Everyone who's been there has a story to tell about standing in line at the lifts or in the restrooms. There's no doubt Mt. Bachelor is the primo place for skiing in Oregon in many people's minds.

According to Stratton, the new Pine Marten Super Express Quad lift will be operating on Mt. Bachelor in addition to 10 other ski lifts. The Pine Marten

lift is part of a \$60 million expansion project which was announced last May.

Of course, skiing is an expensive sport. Lift tickets this year are running \$21 at Mt. Bachelor, \$15 at Willamette Pass and \$12.50 at Hoodoo. All three offer discounts, ranging from low-cost season passes to half day and twilight passes.

If you don't have your own equipment, there's another expense — rental. There are at least six places in Eugene to rent complete outfits — skis, boots and poles — for anywhere from \$3 to \$7.50 a day, depending on which type of skiing you do and the day you intend to rent the equipment.

Downhill equipment rentals are generally more expensive. The going rate for a downhill rental package is \$7.50 this year. Rates on the mountain are usually higher. For instance, the cost is \$11.50 for an all-day equipment rental at Mt. Bachelor.

There's more variance in the rates for cross-country ski rentals. The low is the Tuesday thru Friday rate of \$3 a day at Rivers West in Eugene. Their weekend rate is \$6 a day or \$10 for the weekend. Brother Jonathan's, and Mogul Mouse, which has two locations in Eugene-



Springfield, both charge \$5 a day, everyday. Brother Jonathan's also has the lowest weekend rate we could find — \$9 for an entire weekend.

Whether you ski downhill or cross-country, ask about special mid-week rates or student discounts. Likewise, group rates are offered by most of the rental outlets.

Another important consideration is how to get to the mountain. The easiest and most obvious answer is to ride with a friend. But if that isn't possible, there are still alternatives.

There's a bulletin board on the ground floor of the EMU with the names of people offering or looking for rides. Occasionally you can find someone who's going to the mountains on weekends or holidays. Better yet, there's also a bulletin board in the Outdoor Program office located in room 23 of the EMU. The Outdoor Program board has a wealth of information regarding everything from trips already planned to people selling equipment to people offering rides.

And, of course, there's always

the conventional way of taking Greyhound or Trailways, or one of the express bus services offered by the ski resorts. Most depart early in the morning and return that evening. An example is the Willamette Pass Express, which takes you to the Willamette Pass Ski Area 70 miles southeast of Eugene. The bus runs on weekends and holidays. It leaves the Berg's Ski Shop parking lot at 7:30 a.m. and arrives back in town at 6 p.m. The bus ride alone costs \$10, with the cost increasing for adding extras.

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in camouflage pants and a T-shirt with "I speed up to run over small animals" stenciled on it. His arms looked tailor made to slap around recalcitrant Buicks.

"Hello, I'm your roommate," I ventured.

Dirk's brow furrowed as he processed the incoming data and formulated a suitable response. After a few moments he strained his vocabulary to its utmost and replied, "Uh."

If brevity is indeed the soul of wit, my roommate was obviously a mental giant of truly unparalleled scope. Leaving such sparkling conversation for another time, I returned to finishing the decorations of my half of the shoebox the housing department so optimistically referred to as a room. I saw Dirk was doing the same. As I put up posters of my favorite game-show hostesses, Dirk hung posters of his favorite assault rifles.

I was equally impressed by his wardrobe. I had never seen camouflage socks and underwear before. Aside from those fashionable items, he had khaki for every occasion. He did not, however, sport any "muscle T-shirts" — he didn't have

to. I stowed my tennis shoes and topsiders in the closet as my leviathan roommate did the same with his combat boots.

We divided the bookshelf in half. My side was filled with textbooks and every "Far Side" collection I could beg, borrow, buy or purloin; his with back issues of "Soldier of Fortune" and "Mass Murder Monthly."

I soon learned that we both had the same late registration appointment.

"Aren't you worried about getting the classes you want?" I asked. "They'll all be full."

"I'll get in," he said in a rumble that issued from the depths of his massive chest. A voice from the abyss could have sounded no less impressive.

I told myself that he was probably right; "Stranglehold Techniques of the Thugees 103" would not be filling up with any great rapidity. However, when registration time did come around, I discovered exactly what he meant.

The "closed" board resembled the winning card in a game of blackout bingo when we were finally allowed to enter the arena. I resisted the temptation to moo as we filed in. Dirk strode purposefully to a desk and

demanding entrance to a class that had obviously been closed for some time. I stepped up to observe.

"I'm sorry, that class is closed," the person at the table said. Dirk reached forward and wrapped a hand the size of a sofa cushion around the man's head.

"Are you going to let me in," he said softly, "or am I going to have to squeeze your head like a pimple?"

"You know, we just might be able to squeeze you in," the man decided suddenly.

It was at that point I realized there could be advantages to having a roommate. We had no serious disagreements thereafter. Dirk would simply express his opinion on a subject, and I would smile and vigorously nod my head in assent.

In retrospect, my time in the dorms is probably no worse than an equivalent period of time spent in, say, any Alabama chain gang. Dirk's naturally cheery disposition and gentle nature kept my compound fractures to a minimum, though I did suffer a chronically sore neck from a surfeit of enthusiastic nodding.

— TOM JEFFRIES

Thursday, November 13, 1986



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