

# It's just the man and the mountain...



It's just the man and the mountain. Standing atop a snowy terrain, looking at the contender, one wonders, will the man win or will the mountain consume him in a mass of powder?

Many skiers see the sport as a challenge. More ski for the fun of it, and still more do not know why they pursue the cold weather pastime.

Skiing is hard. The victim needs a great sense of balance and coordination along with a good set of muscles. The pains of skiing must be taken with true grit or loud cries.

The frustrations of defeat show most often in the beginner. A typical first trip to the mountain goes something like this:

Nervously, the beginner slowly prepares the equipment needed for the trip: two pairs of pants, and uncountable number of socks, mittens, hat and coat. Also, if he can get away

with it, a bottle of brandy is advised to chase away the chill.

The beginner, of course, should be taking the trip with a friend who has close to mastered the sport. This friend will act as an instructor and medical assistant.

Once up to the mountain and into the lodge, the beginner becomes mesmerized by the various activities taking place. People huddle together after a long trip down the mountain, their faces red and voices full of excitement telling about their adventures.

A cot containing a badly shaken up skier is carried by, sending the beginner into a fit of panic. "I'm not going up there just to end up like that guy!" screams the beginner. He is soon calmed down by his friend who tells him that the guy was probably just "goofing off."

In the rental shop, the beginner gets a whole different view of skiing. It's expensive!!! It costs the beginner an average

of \$16 for poles, boots and skis for a three-hour period. It takes some people that long just to get up the hill.

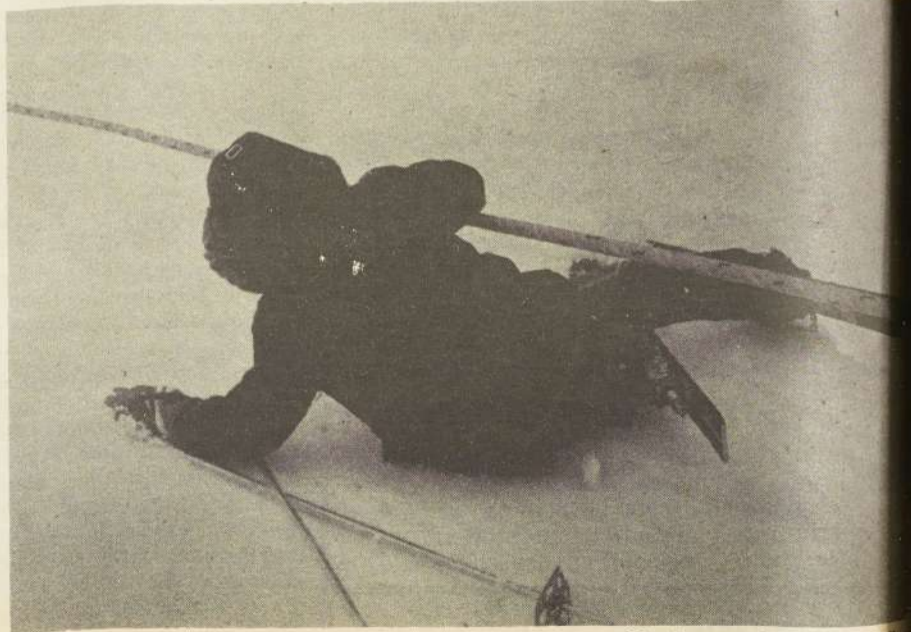
The trip up the hill is boring and tiring. And once up, there is nowhere to go but down, no matter how scary the descent is.

Standing on top of the mountain, the beginner feels as if he can do anything... except ski down. The sight is awesome, disturbed only by the blur of a six-year-old child gliding past like he was born with skis on his feet.

Debating whether to change his mind by skiing down or taking the chicken's way out by walking down, the beginner goes through a series of arguments with himself before deciding just exactly what he is going to do.

When he finally makes up his mind to attempt the flight down, he poises himself ready.

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