



Potential Skiing Center

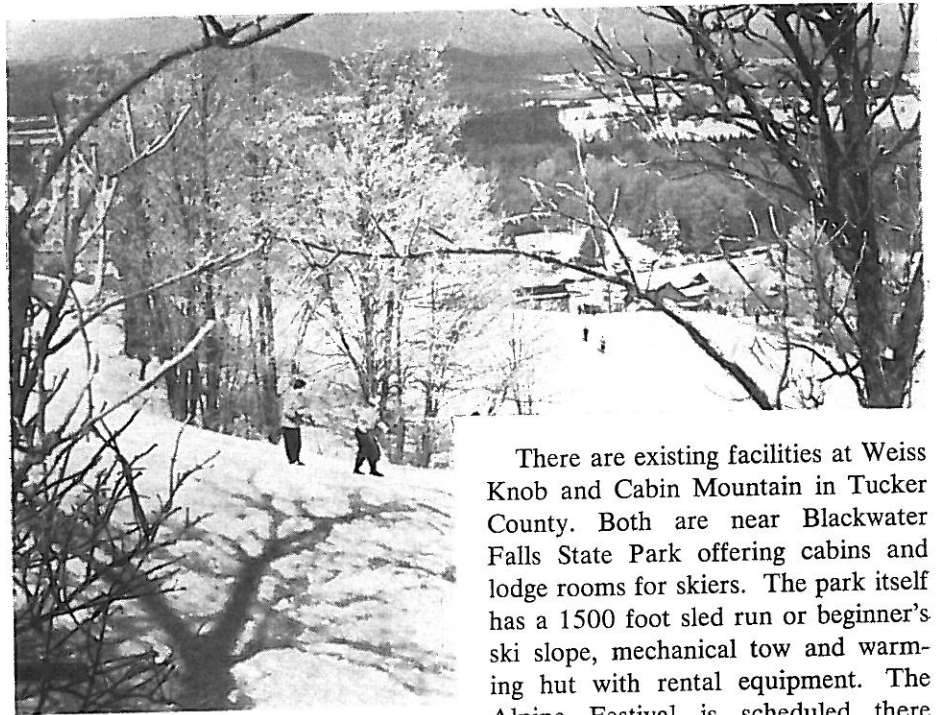
**With Proper Development,
Mountain State Could Be One Of
The Most Popular Wintertime
Recreation Centers In The East**

By Stan B. Cohen

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A UNIQUE opportunity to take advantage of one of the fastest growing sports in the country—skiing—presents itself in West Virginia.

The State has the highest average elevation (1500 ft.) of any state east of the Mississippi. Close to large population centers of the east, it is fast becoming one of the country's prime tourist areas. Studies have shown that, with proper development, West Virginia could be one of the centers for wintertime recreation in this part of the country.



UNDULATING hillsides of well-packed snow afford ideal skiing conditions at Cabin Mountain. Below, skiers take tow line back to top of slope.



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There are existing facilities at Weiss Knob and Cabin Mountain in Tucker County. Both are near Blackwater Falls State Park offering cabins and lodge rooms for skiers. The park itself has a 1500 foot sled run or beginner's ski slope, mechanical tow and warming hut with rental equipment. The Alpine Festival is scheduled there Feb. 2-5, 1967.

Further west, Chestnut Ridge in Preston County, adjoining Coopers Rock State Forest and Mont Chateau State Park and Lodge, offers skiing in season as does Oglebay Park at Wheeling in Ohio County. Southward, Bald Knob near Beckley in Raleigh County operates week ends during favorable snow conditions, weekdays for special groups of 20 or more.

Only the first three of these facilities are located in the eastern highland region, with vertical drops of 1000 ft. to 2000 ft. and an average snowfall sometimes in excess of 100 inches. This is the area that should receive first consideration for any major ski development.

WEST VIRGINIA CONSERVATION

SEVERAL factors have hindered growth of winter sports in the State. Inadequate transportation in the more mountainous region and inadequate tourist facilities once the people get there, along with the unreliability of snow conditions, have slowed development. With continued road building, motel construction, and the use of artificial snow machines, these problems are being solved.

Economically, skiing can be a big boost in the business life of an area. Along with ski-area development, there should be supporting facilities, such as living accommodations, gas stations and restaurants to mention a few. Many people would find employ-

ment who otherwise might not be working during winter months.

Newest and largest development in the State is Canaan Valley State Park, in Tucker County. The Department of Natural Resources is building, with federal loans and grants, a year-round recreation complex which will include five ski lifts, a base facility, a 30-room ski lodge and an ice skating rink. In addition, a 90-room lodge will be built in another part of the park. The new facility will use the existing Weiss Knob ski slopes and artificial snow will be made to insure a dependable supply during the winter season. Projected opening date is the winter of 1968. □

BEGINNERS take skiing lessons at special school, at Weiss Knob.
(Photos by Hal Dillon)



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