

# BOOKED for TRAVEL

## SCHUSS ONE OF THOSE THINGS

UP AT Tuckerman's Ravine old-timers were betting it would last until the Fourth of July. Soon the valley would be packing it in eighty feet deep. Pinkham Notch already had a fifty-inch base. All over the East, the teletype was crackling with reports of the heaviest snow in years. Ski trains were canceling their schedules for lack of business. The customers were hitting the trail in their own backyard.

The news failed to please street cleaners, Long Island R.R. commuters, and 23,000 New Yorkers who got stuck with \$15 tickets because their cars were stalled in drifts. But the skiers, at least, were ecstatic. You could hear them shouting "Track!" halfway to the Rockies.

Sixteen years ago a snowfall in midwinter wouldn't have raised any more noise than Hannes Schneider skimming over eight inches of fine white powder. Today an estimated three to five million Americans have taken to the boards. From zero in 1931, U. S. skiing soared to an \$800 million industry in 1947.

You can blame it on Hitler. The Anschluss pushed a whole crop of capable ski instructors right out of Austria. Hannes Schneider, the father of American skiing, was actually sprung from the Reich as recently as 1939 by Harvey Gibson, head of the Manufacturers Trust Co. As a young lad Schneider learned on barrel staves in the Austrian village of Steubenberg, and the basic snowplow method used all over the U. S. today is known as the Arlberg technique. The French, as you might suspect, do it differently. At Luchon and Font Romeu in the Pyrenees, Megeve and Chamonix in the Alps, French instructors teach the parallel ski technique whose proponent is Emile Allais.

All it takes to start a ski resort is a hill, intermittent snow, and a ski tow. All it takes for a ski tow is a second-hand Ford engine and a thousand feet of rope, but nowadays eligible communities are floating bond issues to finance such unheard-of contraptions as J-bars, Constamm T-bars, and chair lifts. North Conway, N. H., has installed the world's only skimobile that whisks you and the skis back up the hill in your own little car.

A skier's ski resort is hearty, healthy, and inexpensive. Rates start at \$5 a day for a room with a bunk, two hot meals, and a midday sandwich on the trail included. Some inns,

like the New England at Intervale, N. H., send out a hot meal on a chow wagon. A lot of small, new places have been opened by veterans. There is one high on an Alp in France run by an American who parachuted into a near-by town to organize the maquis, and to this day is known only by his underground name. Jack and Peg Kenney, old Navy people, man Tamarack Lodge at Franconia, N. H., and get \$39.50 a week, food included. An Air Force navigator named Ford and a blind artillery major named Hyde have a fine inn, also in New Hampshire, called Copper Cannon, although I should think they would have named it something else. Cost: \$6.50 a day.

The *dernier cri* in ski resorts is Sun Valley, Idaho, run by the Union Pacific R.R. more as an object lesson in good living than as a paying proposition. Sun Valley has eight ski tows, nobody-knows-how-many trails, an open-air, hot-water swimming pool, three skating rinks, and always a house full of celebrities. There is all manner of lodgment from a suite with private sundeck at \$46 per day, to a bunk in one of the chalets at \$2, \$2.50 if you want running water.

Almost any time this year you might have run adrift of people the likes of Ingrid Bergman, Walter Pidgeon,

or Hedy Lamarr, and Esther Williams is due any minute to make a picture on location. "For Whom the Bell Tolls" was written at S. V., and we have it on good authority that Hemingway calls the place "home." He's there now so deep in writing another novel he forgot to keep a skeet-shooting date with Gary Cooper.

No matter your Hooper or the rate you pay, anybody can dance in the Duchin Room, drink beer at The Ram, eat steaming stew at the Roundhouse, toss off hot spiced gluhwein, and munch an (Idaho) baked potato in the hot potato huts on the hills. Every Christmas Eve skiers go swooping down the neighboring slopes carrying lighted torches, a remarkable sight, they say. Things went awry this year when at torch time Sun Valley was still having a green Christmas. Up went an airplane to drop ice pellets. Still no snow. Six hours later it came.

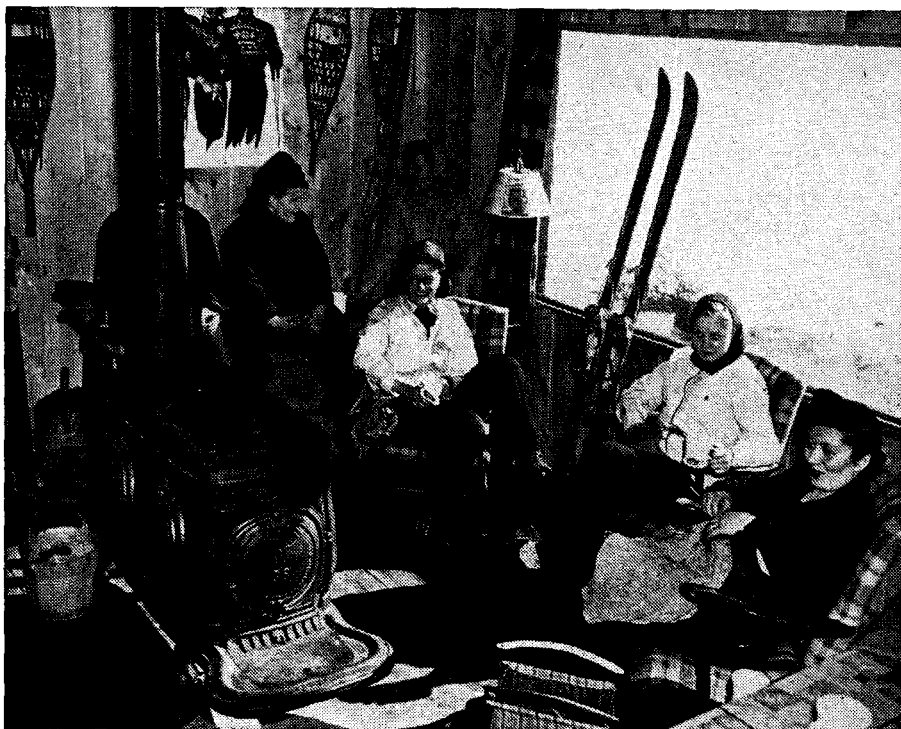
God and the ice pellets were a little late.  
HORACE SUTTON.

## Olympic Coach

SKI WITH SVERRE. By Sverre Engen and Montgomery Atwater. New York: New Directions. 1947. 143 pp. \$3.50.

Reviewed by FRANK HARPER

THE title is right. Reading this excellent little book, you are really skiing with Sverre, one of the three famous Engen brothers. Alf, coach of



—New Hampshire Information Service.

Skiers were crowding the warming hut at Intervale, N. H., but "the news failed to please street cleaners, Long Island R.R. commuters, and 23,000 New Yorkers. . . ."

## Report From Our Man In The Alps

ST. MORITZ.

WITH the Winter Olympic Games just starting here, this Swiss town is jammed with besweated athletes training for the events, and a fashionable crowd of all nationalities come partly to watch them, but mostly to look at each other.

This summer a new downhill trail was built especially for the Olympic ski race. There's a soft rolling "schuss" at the top, then terrifying, plunging "steilhangs," like a series of waterfalls, and a fast, bumpy track through forest to the finish in the valley bottom. Already there have been many injuries in training. Pierre Jalbert, Canada's best man, broke a leg, and two of the leading Swiss, Edi Rominger and Valaer, are in hospital. Our American losses have been severe among the jumpers, with Art Devlin and Walt Bietila both incapacitated. However, Gordon Wren is jumping better than he ever has in his life, and for a blond boy he has a good dark-horse chance to bear comparison with the great Scandinavians.

In downhill and slalom it is agreed among the experts that the battle will be fought out among France's formidable team, led by James Couttet; Switzerland's little champion, Karl Molitor of Wengen, a great new Austrian find; Edi Mall, nephew of Hannes Schneider; and Italy's magnificent veteran, Zeno Colo, who won an important warm-up race on the Lauberhorn at Wengen last week-end. In a second category, *spitzenklasse* but not *extraklasse*, as they say here, will be our American lads. Jack Reddish of Alta and Colin Stewart of Hanover, have shown the most power in trials, but they will have their hands full with the Norwegians, the Swedes, who have a fine slalomer in Olle Dalman; the rest of the Swiss, Italians, Austrians, and French, and the Czech star, Anton Sponar.

Everyone had thought that the girls' racing would be a walkaway for Georgette Miller-Thiolière, who is still running for France, although she acquired an American husband at Sun Valley last winter. In last week's pre-Olympic race at Grindewald she had her hands very full outpointing two girls who are big in power if small in stature, Celina Seghi of Italy and May Nilsen of Sweden. Our fifteen-year-old star, Andrea Mead of Pico Peak, Vt., did wonderfully, taking a fourth in giant slalom, while Becky Cremer, also a Vermonter, did well in downhill. One of the best European girls, Trude Beiser of Austria, did not get to the Grindewald race. Nor did the two strong Czech girls, whose Russian names I cannot possibly spell.

As a skier, I look down my nose at the other branches of winter sport, but their exponents are here—the elephantine bobsledders, eating desperately to get even heavier before they race; the pretty twinkletoes in pastel tights, each with a formidable mamma busy intimidating the judges; the speedskaters, in little wool hats like the devil in Faust, including a contingent from Korea; and, from the USA, two different hockey teams, each of which claims that the other is a bunch of ringers. Personally, I feel most sympathetic with the aged gentlemen in galoshes with brooms who spin their curling stones down the ice. They are very relaxed and philosophical, knowing well that all this competition is but the folly of hot youth

JAMES LAUGHLIN.

the Olympic cross-country and jumping teams now starting at St. Moritz, won every national title at least once, and Sverre is one of the finest instructors, teaching the white art of skiing at Alta, Utah.

"I have taken many people touring who couldn't even snowplow," Sverre writes, and that's one of the reasons why I like this book. He is not the man who keeps his pupils too long on easy training slopes; he doesn't like skiing in the beaten tracks nor using the snow tows all the time. Instead, he takes his pupils climbing into the mountains where the snow is deepest. He is one of

the few who really knows what skiing is. Contrary to his opinion, there are not so many instructors in this country who are both skilled and conscientious.

With Mr. Atwater's help, the book is clearly written, avoiding purposely confusing technicalities. You get Sverre's idea of skiing despite the simplification, and it is obvious the publisher has done a loving job on the book.

There is a special chapter on deep-snow skiing with which I agree—except that the telemark, the easiest swiftest, and most elegant turn in deep snow, isn't even mentioned.

Think it over, Sverre. But I cannot agree to the statement that the study of avalanches is not a science. Read Gerald Seligman and Wilhelm Paulcke, Sverre. What you have told in that chapter just isn't enough. The truth is that all slopes of more than twenty-two degrees steepness are dangerous during or shortly after a snowstorm, and most avalanche disasters have been caused by ignorance of this fact.

Nevertheless, "Ski with Sverre" is an enjoyable book that, together with the National Ski Association's "Manual of Ski Mountaineering," is a must for anyone who makes a pretense of having a ski library.

Author of "Night Climb" and "Skiing for the Millions," Frank Harper is currently at work on a novel.

## Ski Lore

SWING INTO SKIING. By Arnold Fawcus. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1947. 68 pp. \$3.50.

SKIING THE AMERICAS. By John Jay. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1947. 68 pp. \$3.50.

Reviewed by OTTO LANG

IN THIS book Arnold Fawcus makes an attempt to "short cut" the process of learning how to ski, which is the present-day trend of every progressive ski school in the United States. As the author himself states, his ideas represent a "modification" of the Arlberg technique as advocated by Hannes Schneider (its founder) and some of his disciples in this country. Therefore, it is nothing new or revolutionary, as it is merely a natural evolution that has taken place during the past few years. Whether it is called "drift technique" or "swing technique," or whatever the next best coined name will be, in essence it takes the emphasis away from the once predominantly wide snowplow stance, with an exaggerated shifting of the weight from one ski onto the other in order to turn. The modern trend stresses the "body swing" proper, instead.

The author makes it quite clear in his book that the two skis are to be regarded and operated as one unit, with the weight of the body distributed in equal portions between both skis whenever feasible, rather than to regard the skis as two separate pieces of wood with the weight unevenly distributed upon them.

The book follows very closely the regular and established curriculum of the Arlberg technique, taking the reader through the various steps of