

Businessmen See *Sports Skiing Colorado* \$-Signs on Slopes

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What does a businessman see when he looks at a ski slope?

Neither sitzmarks nor parallel tracks. From the businessman's point of view Colorado's ski slopes carry a pattern of a long \$-sign shaped slalom course. And the \$-signs are getting bigger all the time.

In its 1964 survey of the skiing industry, the Colorado National Bank said, "Skiing may well be of more importance to Colorado economic well being than any single commercial or industrial complex yet envisioned."

There never has been a fully comprehensive study of the dollar impact of skiing. A special committee, headed by Leigh Norgren, and appointed by Gov. Love is now raising \$60,000 to finance such a study.

When completed, the study is to be used as a tool for future development so the state can make the most of its booming

natural resources of deep snow and high mountains.

Big Business

Even so, careful, conservative estimates of what skiing means to the state in terms of business show:

● An estimated \$65.8 million was spent on skiing in Colorado during the 1964-65 season, when 1,121,000 skiers paid for lift tickets on Colorado ski slopes.

● Those figures represent a good year, up 37 percent from the previous year, but also up 448 percent over the past 10 years.

● Total investment by Colorado ski areas through the end of last season amounted to \$29,092,975.

● This past summer an additional \$3,080,000 has been spent or committed to new development. That figure covers only ski lifts, new trails, machinery and so on. It does not include new motels, hotels, restaurants, condominiums or such facilities.

● New construction this summer at just four ski areas where lodges and such facilities are going up approximate \$17 million.

● When the slopes are covered this winter, the state will have 69 ski lifts operational.

● Last season, Hertz' "skierized" car rentals jumped 650 percent.

● United Air Lines reported general ski travel up 108 percent.

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last year, and ski charter flights on that line were up 190 percent for the year.

● Continental Trailways reported ski travel up 100 percent last year, and the Burlington Railroad reported its ski business was up 15 percent in terms of people coming to Colorado to ski.

● Among retailers, one ski specialty shop reports a one-year business hike of 63 percent. Another points to an 8-year increase of 600 percent in sales of ski wear and equipment.

Norgren, at a recent meeting of businessmen, pointed out the ski business is unique in that it imports the customer instead of exporting the product.

Norgren prefers to call the customer a winter tourist, and

adds, "He is the counterpart of the summer visitor, but more so."

"He spends two and one-half to three times as much as his summer cousin for each day he is in Colorado, according to the latest tourist surveys. Further, he is neither a camper nor is he a two day transient on the way to Utah.

Generally affluent, the skiing visitor shows that affluence in his choice of lodging, recreation, meals and general purchases.

A recent profile of his expenditures shows the ski visitor's spending reached from the ski slopes to the air lanes; from the night spot to the factory.

His most frequent expenditures involve lift tickets, film, gifts, plane tickets, gasoline, liquor, car rentals, entertainment in movies and night spots, food and lodging.

Furthermore, he goes home and influences people, and frequently comes back for another go at Colorado's ski slopes.

The slope operators are ready for him. Included are \$3,080,000 worth of improvements built this summer.