

The Avalanche

Photo of Jackson Hole by Tom Burt

FEBRUARY 2016

From the Summit



Well, this is pretty weird, isn't it? Apparently winter has been cancelled due to lack of interest. Or, perhaps the "oratory vortex" produced by the throngs of Presidential candidates has created such a huge, dense mass of hot air that winter can't fight its way through. Iowa does occupy a critical position in relation to the jet stream. Whatever the reason, things are a bit thin up north these days. I'm sure the resort operators are panicking by now - I see deals starting to appear on ski and stay packages, and lift tickets, so keep your eyes open for those.

The great thing about skiing, and particularly skiing with a ski club, is that you can still have a great time even though conditions are difficult. A case in point would be our trip to Stratton. Stratton has excellent snow-making and grooming, but has had very little natural snow and suffered an overnight rainfall a day earlier. Conditions were what I would call "Cannesque" and any of you who have tackled the blue ice at Cannon will know what I mean. It wasn't quite blue ice but there was darn little to grab on to. The upper mountain was fast and slippery with limited options for descent. It was noisy skiing as opposed to the quiet of fresh packed powder. Doesn't sound like much fun does it? But, that's the funny part. Most of the folks I talked to had a good time in spite of the conditions. We skied with friends and laughed and cursed the conditions and our ability (or inability?) to handle them. The lower mountain proved somewhat more forgiving and many smile-inducing runs followed. There is something exhilarating about getting all geared up for the cold and being out there. Having the company of friends who are sharing the experience with you makes it better. The increased challenge of handling tough conditions stimulates both intellectually and physically. Skiing is a sport that involves a never-ending quest to become a better skier and becoming a better skier will increase the frequency of "great days" that you experience. Being more confident with your turns allows you to spend more time skiing the edges of runs, where the good snow remains after the middle has been skied off. Becoming comfortable with increasing speeds allows you to straight-line it when confronted with ice or crud, digging your edges in on the other side to slow or turn. These tough days are great skill builders and sure make the beer taste better at the end of the day!

The new bus, by the way, worked out pretty well. A couple of pit stops weren't a big deal, the seats are comfortable, the heat works and, despite a problem with the speed governor on the way up, we got there in good order. However, it is hard to envision many more bodies aboard - we had 16 with all our gear. You might get twenty, so sign up early. Remember that this month's meeting is going to happen on Thursday Feb. 11 at 7pm at The Courtyard and will feature, among other things, the galactic premier of Mike Finegold's latest Bike and Barge film, already rumored to be "in the running" at Cannes. Hope to see you there!

Scott Northrop
President



15-16 Trip Schedule

Date	Location	Trip Leader	Price	Time
December 16	TBA, based on snow	TBA	\$85	TBA
January 6	Stratton, VT	Mimi Schlichter	\$85	5:00am
January 10-15	Sugarloaf, ME	Bud Shaw	\$410	Drive Yourself
January 27	Stratton, VT	Mimi Schlichter	\$85	4:45am
February 3-5	Mt. Washington Hotel, NH	Scott Northrop	\$270	Drive Yourself
February 21-28	Jackson Hole, WY	Bud Shaw	\$1575	Fly
March 2	Killington, VT	Roger Stokey	\$85	4:45am
March 16	Wildcat, NH	Camille Morgan	\$85	4:45am
March 30-April 1	Sunday River, ME	Scott Northrop	\$275	Drive Yourself
May 1-8	Bike/Barge Germany	Michael Finegold	\$1149	Fly

March 2

4:45am

\$85

Contact:

Roger Stokey
508-292-8370



Killington

Killington Resort's six peaks and 4,241' elevation offer 3,000' of vertical drop, exceptional views and ample opportunities for outdoor adventure with the longest on-snow season in the East. The Resort offers multiple terrain features for snowboarders and freeskiers in six terrain parks including Burton's The Stash, an all-natural inspired terrain park with more than 50 features as well as two pipes. If that doesn't interest you, don't fear! 61% of Killington is comprised by green and blue trails. Finally, you won't be able to use the old "it's too crowded excuse either;" with this trip on a Wednesday, we'll have the place to ourselves!

BIKE & BARGE

FOUR-COUNTRY TOUR



Bike and boat your way through four spectacular European countries—Germany, Austria, Slovakia, and Hungary—and three capitol cities! The ultimate in relaxation, you choose whether to ride or not, or simply enjoy the sights from the boat—a 105m, 87-cabin river barge!

Details:

- 7 nights' accommodations
- Daily cleaning of cabin
- Full meals
- Water at dinner and 1/2 liter packed for the day's ride
- 1x Gala Dinner with farewell cocktail
- Afternoon Coffee break
- Tour guide on board
- 7 or 21-speed unisex bicycle
- Information packet with route book

May 1–8, 2016
\$1149 pp
(no airfare)

Contact: Michael Finegold—774-392-2567





SUNDAY RIVER OVERNIGHT

MARCH 30–APRIL 1

Here's a terrific way to wrap up your ski season! Join us at Sunday River for two nights and three days of spring skiing. We'll be bunking in at the Grand Summit Hotel, at the base of White Cap Mt., in double occupancy rooms (2 queen beds) and enjoying terrific ski-in, ski-out accommodations, a pool, multiple dining options and night life and, of course, some of the best skiing in New England. This is a drive-yourself trip. Your three day ski pass will also get you on to Sugarloaf if you want to drive up there for the day. Pricing is as follows: \$275 per person member price, \$260 per person junior/senior price and, if you already have a Sunday River season pass or want to come along and not ski, only \$134. Sign up quickly, we have limited space available. Contact trip leader Scott Northrop with any questions. Sign up on the website, <http://www.uppercapeskiclub.com>.



Membership & Trip Special

- Are you a new member? -or-
- A prior member that has not joined in at least 3 years (10-11 season)?

\$99 gets you a one-year membership and a day trip of your choice!

Contact: Michael Finegold (774-392-2567) or Len Hills (508-563-3941)

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 11

Ascutney Rope Tow Opening Soon

Volunteers tested the lift recently.

Sunday, January 3, 2016, NewEnglandSkiIndustry.com

In a "Rope Tow Test Run" post to Ascutney Trails' Facebook page, the recently installed 1,000 foot rope tow appears just about ready to open to the public. According to the page, an opening day will be announced soon, presumably pending additional natural snowfall. The Inaugural Winter Fest & Rope Tow Dedication is scheduled for Saturday, February 6, 2016.

Background

Originally developed as a surface lift ski operation in the mid 1940s, the financially troubled Ascutney Mountain ski area last operated amidst foreclosure proceedings during the 2009-10 season. The high speed quad was removed in 2012 and the triple chairlifts in 2014. The remaining double chairlift is not currently functional. The Town of West Windsor approved the acquisition of the defunct ski area on October 14, 2014. On January 8, 2015, the main lodge was lost to a fire.



Ascutney Trails Facebook

Land Transfers

Some 460 to 470 acres containing the bulk of the ski terrain were purchased by Trust for Public Land in late 2015, then transferred to town with a conservation easement held by Upper Valley Land Trust.

A 3.38 acre tract at the base of the Screaming Eagle trail was purchased by the town and may not have as many use restrictions. The tract includes the maintenance building and original base lodge.

Snowdance LLC and MFW Associates are expected to retain the 2.19 acre burned main lodge tract and 38.5 acre "Mile Long Field" tract.

Since Federal funds were used, many restrictions are expected to be placed on the property, limiting potential future ski operations. Pursuant to the regulations around the Federal funding and local easement control, commercial ski operations will likely be banned. In addition, maintenance of the upper mountain ski trails may be prohibited. The town however can potentially have alpine skiing below 1,500 feet in elevation, roughly lining up with the former summit triple chairlift mid station.

Ski Area Organizers

A local non-profit group, Mount Ascutney Outdoors was established as a Vermont business entity on September 13, 2015. Art Keating of Brownsville is listed as its President, Linda Stillson of Windsor its Vice President, Brian Quirk of West Windsor its Secretary, and Linda Quirk of West Windsor its Agent. Laura Farrell, founder Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports and the Vermont 50 race, is the Executive Director. mountascutneyoutdoors.org was launched in December 2015.

Free skiing via the 1,000 foot rope tow is expected to be offered in hopes of drawing locals back to the area, which has not operated since 2010. According to a local property owners organization, some \$20,000 will need to be raised in order to open the rope tow operation this winter.

Three trails would be served by the lift this winter: Screaming Eagle, Dipsy Doodle, and Easy Rider. Grooming would be provided by volunteers using snowmobiles. No base lodge facilities would be offered, however a tent and fire pit would be in place.

(Ascutney, cont.)

In addition, backcountry skiing would be permitted on the upper mountain.

According to a local property owners organization, 2016-17 plans call for a chairlift to be installed, terminating just above the former summit triple mid station, serving trails below 1,500 feet in elevation. In addition, the roughly 700 vertical foot lift would serve mountain biking terrain. Snowmaking is also in the plans, as is a tubing facility.

Source: <http://www.newenglandskiindustry.com/>

For a full history of Ascutney Mountain, visit

<http://www.newenglandskihistory.com/Vermont/ascutney.php>

Newenglandskihistory.com includes histories on all New England resorts, active and inactive, as well as extensive other information.

Lessons Learned

FROM OUR NEW BUS ARRANGEMENT

1. There is NO restroom on board.
2. You are welcome to bring coolers with food/beverage (see #1 above).
3. Don't load up on morning coffee until closer to the mountain (see #1 above).
4. Don't drink too much apres-ski beer (see #1 above).
5. Because of #1 above, we will plan a pit-stop on the way up and the way back.
6. All gear is brought aboard the bus.
7. Skis need to be in bags (ask around if you don't have one—lots of us have extras).
8. The bus is very comfortable, but small—you need to sign up early.
9. We need to make decisions a little sooner than in prior years; again, sign up early.

~ Deposit/Refund policy ~

Deposits help ensure that a space is reserved for our members. These deposits apply to bus trips, weekend trips, week-long trips and more. Late cancellations are not entitled to a refund, nor is the club responsible for finding a replacement for you. You must find your own replacement, although we will endeavor to help you whenever possible. Deposits are further subject to the conditions imposed upon us by our suppliers, agents or other providers. We make every effort to refund as much money as possible but cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. Inquire of your trip leader for specific information regarding your particular trip. The club recommends that you consider trip insurance whenever possible.



How well



do you know New England Ski Areas?

Take a quiz, based on images from various New England resorts!

[Click this link](#), (or copy and paste the URL below), scroll down the page, hit "continue reading" then hit the Start Button.

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/sports/2016/02/05/how-well-you-know-new-england-ski-areas/wVhtwttoOkv1zEzQgvLqO/story.html>

Have an interesting idea for an article? Send it to thomas.burt@comcast.net.



WILDCAT MOUNTAIN

Don't miss our final day trip of the season! You never know what's going to happen to and from this classic New England Resort—nobody has ever accused Camille of running a dull trip. With some of the best views and best terrain around, it's sure to be an exciting day! Hop on the bus Gus, we're on our way to Wildcat!



4:45 **March 16** **\$85**



JACKSON HOLE®

There's no doubt about it. Jackson Hole is by far the greatest winter vacation spot in US! Okay, maybe not everyone would agree, but many would. Either way, it's pretty freakin' spectacular! Jackson combines a picturesque, western town with close proximity to some of the country's more beautiful national parks. Add in the most highly rated ski terrain in North America and you have one amazing vacation! As much as I love the skiing there, Jackson is one of the few resorts where I insist on an off-day, spending it either on a snowmobile tour through Yellowstone or a wildlife excursion (this is a place where deer walk through town and the Elk out-number the human residents). Even seen a big-horn sheep, a wild buffalo, or more moose than you care to? This is the place to see it all! If you're lucky, you might catch a wolf pack dashing across the plain. If there's one resort in the Western US to see, this would be it. Did I mention the skiing totally rocks?

What you get:

- 7 nights lodging at the Parkway Inn in downtown Jackson, WY
- 5-day lift ticket to Jackson Hole Mountain Resort
- Roundtrip airfare
- Transportation between Jackson airport and Parkway Inn

What you can add:

- 6th day of skiing
- Day trip to Grand Targhee Ski Resort
- Snowmobile trip to Yellowstone National Park
- Single Supplement
- Trip Insurance

What you pay:

- \$1575

Who you contact:

- Bud Shaw—508-477-3717 or budco1@comcast.net

Bud created,
Steamer approved!

Follow Us!

Click on either of the logos below to check our pages!



Contact Us?



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Chip Chandler

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Leonard Hills

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Rick Howe

Website:

Michael Finegold

Newsletter:

Tom Burt



Who we are...

The Upper Cape Ski & Sports Club is a group of outdoor enthusiasts that love to enjoy a variety of activities with friends. We're a casual and social group, never particularly serious about anything. Skiing and Snowboarding is our primary interest, although we do throw in other activities such as biking, kayaking, traveling, bowling, and more. Our goal is to provide fun and affordable activities that folks of all ages and abilities can enjoy. Families are always welcome, as are non-members.

<http://www.uppercapeskiclub.com>