

# A&M students ski without snow on Mount Aggie

by Eddie Elms  
Battalion Reporter

Aggieland in winter doesn't usually resemble the Colorado ski slopes, but with Mount Aggie, Texas A&M students still have the opportunity to learn how to ski.

Mount Aggie, a man-made, practice ski slope, has been used by University physical education classes since 1976 to teach students how to snow ski, even though snow rarely graces its slopes.

"We are quite unique in that area," Rick Beelby, coordinator of the ski program, said. The only other university with a man-made ski slope is Wichita State University in Wichita, Kan. "The tremendous benefit of this kind of thing is to allow the student to learn how to ski before he goes skiing," Beelby said. People can save a great amount of money by learning on Mount Aggie instead of at the ski slopes, he said.

Some students enrolled in the classes have no skiing experience; others take the course to improve their skills, Beelby said.

## Gas flow to plants frozen

United Press International  
DALLAS — Lone Star Gas Co. officials cut off gas to 150 industrial and electric generating plants over the weekend because of excessive demand brought on by cold weather.

Lone Star spokesman Breck Harris said the cuts affected an area bordered by the Red River on the north, Abilene on the west, Georgetown on the south and Greenville on the east. He said no residential customers were affected, and the company did not see any serious problems since most of the plants were closed-down for the weekend.

About 450 students were enrolled in the 16 sections of ski classes offered in the fall semester. Each section had fewer than 30 people, with beginning and experienced skiers combined in the classes.

This year, 15 sections of ski classes will be offered and each section will be limited to 30 students. Registration for physical education classes started Tuesday and all sections of the ski

classes are still open. Students in this class must pay a \$25 fee for ski rental.

Conditioning classes for experienced skiers started at Texas A&M in 1973. The only skiing done by the first class was on a class trip to Colorado during Christmas break because there was no skiing surface here.

Dr. George Jessup, former head of the ski program, said beginning classes were started

because students who didn't know how to ski were interested in the program.

The first beginners' classes were taught on the grassy slope near where Mount Aggie stands. Students learned to put on and adjust their skis and the different ski positions.

The third year a small slope was built with artificial snow and "instant went sky high," Jessup said.



## University considers moving Mount Aggie

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If Aggies can indeed move the mountains, Mount Aggie will have a new location by next year of the class.

Dr. Leonard Ponder, head of the health and physical education department, said he would like to see the artificial mountain moved because changes are being made on it for ski classes to be held at Texas A&M University and industry.

Mount Aggie, built in 1976, was intended for temporary use only. Now, after five years of use, it must be redone, moved and reconstructed or done away with completely, Ponder said.

The final decision to move Mount Aggie will be made by the Master Planning Committee chaired by Dr. Charles H. Sammons, vice president for planning.

One of the main considerations in moving Mount Aggie is cost. However, Ponder said the cost of the project will not be determined until plans have been drawn.

If the Department of Health and Physical Education cannot afford to finance the project

with its reserve fund, the money will come from the maintenance modification program, the president's office, the chancellor's office or the Texas A&M System Board of Regents.

If the slope is moved, it will be rebuilt as a permanent structure, Ponder said. The base of the new slope probably would be concrete poured over a mound of dirt. A building would be constructed at the new slope to store

ski equipment, he said.

Moving Mount Aggie to the grassy area north of the Penberthy Intramural Complex is one possibility, Ponder said. This move would put Mount Aggie in a lighted area, making night ski classes possible, he said.

If a new mountain is to be built, Ponder said, Mount Aggie will not be dismantled until the new one is finished.



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