

# Glen Eden: a skier's paradise

by Mark Holmes  
For those people who consider speeding down hills at breakneck speeds a dangerous if not insane pastime, there are at least 2,000 people a day visiting Glen Eden Ski area who may be a little crazy.

Glen Eden, located just off Highway 25 near Milton, is the region's foremost skiing area and, crazy or not there are over 14,000 people signed up for skiing lessons this season.

Last year, when the majority of North America enjoyed a mild, almost temperate winter, the skiing enthusiasts suffered through a short season with poor conditions. The weather was to blame for many ski operators losing their shirts and many skiers were stuck with several hundred dollars worth of equipment they couldn't use. However, at Glen Eden, despite operating only 65 out of a possible 90 days in a season with less than favourable conditions, they observed a 10 per cent increase in attendance.

This year it looks like those numbers will swell again by another 10 per cent and according to the director of the Glen Eden Ski School, Doug Leeming, that increase would make the resort operators very happy.

Carol Patterson, the assistant program director at the resort, compared a normal day's business this season, with some of the busiest Sunday's in previous years.

With a minimal cost of \$320 for equipment and lessons, plus a \$15 per day lift ticket, skiing isn't exactly one of the cheapest sports to get into, but with over 2,000 people visiting Glen Eden each day a person would think there must be some pretty good reasons to take up the sport.

So, with a case of stomach butterflies and visions of tangled arms, legs and skis tumbling down awesome hills, this reporter decided to find out first hand why so many people are attracted to ski slopes all over the world.

A tractor, hauling a wagon, transports the skiers and their equipment from the parking lot to the Chalet and during the ride newcomers to the resort can watch skiers hurtle down hills call Twister, Boomerang and . . . Suicide.

Closer to the chalet there is a beginners' slope and toboggan run that looked a lot safer to persons, like me, who have a healthy fear of the forces of gravity.

Once in the chalet I was directed to the ski school office where I was introduced to my instructor, Rick Greaves, who promptly asked my shoe size, height and weight.

After returning with several pieces of equipment, Greaves explained that beginning skiers like myself had to have short skis for better manoeuvrability. The boots have to fit perfectly so the skier's heel is immobile, continued Greaves, and most important are the bindings. Greaves said, "Depending on a skier's weight, the tension in the bindings is set so that in the event of a fall the bindings will release the skier's boots from the skis and thus avoid broken bones."

The first lesson seemed rather easy. Just shuffle around four pylons and get used to the equipment, said Greaves. Within minutes I was zipping around the pylons and I found my initial awkwardness was fastly disappearing, with plenty of encouragement from my instructor.

Lesson two was how to stop and turn and after a few demonstrations from my teacher I was ready to try it for myself.

My first few attempts were rather feeble, but practice makes perfect and 25 minutes into my lesson I was ready to tackle my first hill.

At the top of the hill I began to have my doubts whether or not I would make it to the bottom on one piece but instructor Greaves, sensing my apprehension remarked, "You've nothing to worry about, the ski school's motto is we're here to have fun, not fall on our bum."

Feeling a little foolish and watching little five and six-year-olds zip down the hill, I figured it was now or never and began my first descent.

Remembering what Greaves had taught me, I did my best to control my speed and direction by placing my skis in a wedge shape with the tips of the skis pointed toward each other. "With pressure from your feet increased on one side or the other, the skis turn easily and the crouching stance helps absorb the shocks from the uneven terrain," said Greaves.

After several runs down the toboggan run, my instructor took me to the beginners' slope saying I was ready to ski.

I had relaxed a little, and with a push over the lip of the hill I was feeling like a pro. I suddenly knew why people spent so much time and effort getting to ski slopes. It's an almost magical feeling of excitement in the bracing winter air as you slip down a hill on a cushion of snow.

Back at the chalet (Unfortunately I'd run out of time) Greaves asked if I'd had a good time. I replied that it was probably too good. I was most likely hooked on the sport.

"Yes, it's a great sport, but you have to remember to dress warmly, take proper instructions, use safe equipment and use your head," cautioned Greaves.

People can ski for most of their lives and never get hurt, continued Greaves, "If they follow the safety standards. The people that do get hurt are the ones who take on hills beyond their capabilities."

Some people may think, even after reading this article, that skiing is still a dangerous pastime, but I know one former critic who'll be back to Glen Eden in the near future to take on the hills.



After 25 minutes of instruction it was on to the beginner's hill at the Glen Eden Ski resort for Free Press sports reporter Mark Holmes.

## Town offers variety of recreation programs

Town of Halton Hills is making sure its residents are kept busy this winter with a wide variety of recreation programs.

Knox Presbyterian Church is the location of the Pre-School playhop, a half day activity centre for children aged 2½-5 years. An emphasis is placed on fun, learning and especially social interaction. There will be arts and crafts, games, singing, story time and more. A juice and cookie break, and a nap, are also on the agenda.

Children 2½-3 years will be going Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9.15 to 11.45 a.m. and 3½ to five years olds will be Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1 to 3.30 p.m. The program began yesterday (Tuesday) and will run 10 weeks.

Power skating, open to those seven years of age and up will be held at the Acton arena Wednesdays from 4 to 4.45 p.m. Qualified instruction stressing an understanding of the principles of balance and economics of movement guarantee an enjoyable learning experience. Participants must have mastered skating forwards, backwards and stopping before enrolling in the programs.

There will be three fitness programs in Acton and one in Limehouse. All exercise classes are eight weeks and begin the

week of January 16.

Aqua Fitness will be at the indoor pool. Mondays and Wednesdays, from 9.30 to 10.30 p.m. Fitness, Swim and Sauna at McKenzie-Smith Middle School runs Tuesdays from 7.30 to 9 p.m. and Adult Fitness at M.Z. Bennett School is on Wednesdays from 7.30 to 9.30 p.m.

Limehouse School will be the scene of the 60 Minute Workout.

There will be a skating rink made at McKenzie-Smith school this winter. The Recreation department will be operating and maintaining it for shinny Hockey, broomball and pleasure skating. Groups will be charged for lights use for evening bookings only. The starting dates and quality of the ice surface will depend on the weather and snow removal will be provided if a considerable amount accumulates.

Adult swim lessons are available at the Acton pool on Wednesdays from 7.45 to 8.30 and began January 4. This is for all levels. Also available in Acton is synchro swimming, diving and a swim team. Bronze Cross will be Saturdays from 12.30 to 2.30 p.m.

The pool is available seven days a week for recreational swims. A full schedule can be found in the Fall/Winter Recreation brochure.



Rick Greaves, the assistant director at the Glen Eden Ski School, had his hands full teaching a novice skier how to slip down the hills without wiping out.

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**TERRY CIANFARANI**  
Terry Cianfarani is a grade 13 student at Acton High and he is playing an important role on the Redmen-Seniors quest for a basketball championship.

The 5 foot, 10 inch, 190 pound guard said he has just turned 19 and has totalled 50 points so far this year.


Cianfarani says his home town is Acton and sports and cars are his favorite hobbies.

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**BRENT MEEKE**  
Brent Meeke has all the experience he should need to help him be a team leader with the Georgetown Chrysler Raiders in their bid for an Allan Cup.

Meeke spent seven seasons as an NHL'er toiling between the California Golden Seals and the Salt Lake City Golden Eagles in the Central League.

Meeke, married with two children, currently lives in Mississauga where he is an insurance salesman.

A graduate of the Niagara Falls Flyers Brent travelled from 1978 to 1981 playing in Mannheim West Germany before returning to the United States where he was head coach of Brigham Young's hockey squad.

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**BRAD McMEEKIN**  
Brad McMeekin is a new face on the Sabres' force this season but he isn't a stranger to the area. McMeekin, 21, is in his last year with Junior B hockey and has spent the last three years with the Georgetown Gemini.

The six foot, one inch, 165 pound defenceman shoots right and says his hobbies include hockey and golf.

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