

SnowSports

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On skiing

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Runs for the money

These days my skiing pattern has changed, only in part because of the passage of time. Much has to do with the bargain that skiing has become.

There were those days long past when we might ski from 8:30-4, then, if we were at Stratton Woods or a Stowe, go back out for a few after-dinner runs under the lights.

Days like these were shaped by the children who couldn't get enough, and whose endless enthusiasm was infectious.

One of the longest ski days I remember began with an Easter sunrise service, in which the lifts began running about 5 a.m. I tried to ski all the way to closing time and did not fall far short.

Days like that, when your legs are so tired you can hardly keep the accelerator pressed, the ride home (real safe, eh?), you come away satisfied that you got your money's worth.

After all, quality time may be important, but at \$45 for a lift ticket, quantity is a real factor. And compared to those ancient times when skiers waited 40 minutes for the sin-



Ascutney gets important lift

By Tony Chamberlain
GLOBE STAFF

WINDSOR, Vt. — When New Hampshire's King Ridge closed a few years ago, Art Bobruff was left looking for a ski area that could replace it.

It had to be big enough, with enough trail variety to be interesting, but it also had to have that casual intimacy often implied by the

generic label "family ski area."

Bobruff, a psychiatrist from Newton, has become so enamored of skiing, in fact, that he has been looking for a way to cut back on his professional time while increasing his time on the slopes — and a place to do it.

There are plenty of skiing options in the south/central Vermont band between Interstate 91 and Route 7, including many of the best known mountains in New England. But in the Brownsville

region, Bobruff found what he was looking for: an area just stepping up to fulfill the promise many skiers have seen for many years — Ascutney Mountain.

Last Saturday at Ascutney, a ceremony was held to celebrate the opening of the new mile-long North Peak Express, a high-speed detachable quad that not only increases lift capacity but stretches the mountain to 1,800 vertical feet.

Six new trails cut from the North Peak summit range from the double-diamond Blind Faith to a looping blue cruiser, Gateway, that initiates a 2¾-mile top-to-bottom run.

"This is the final piece in a five-year master plan," said Steve Plausteiner, Ascutney's president, of the North Peak Express and the six trails and 1,200 feet in added trail length that go with it. "We just set out to bring the area up to par, and this lift gives us badly needed high-tech equipment and the new vertical."

And if Ascutney sells itself as a