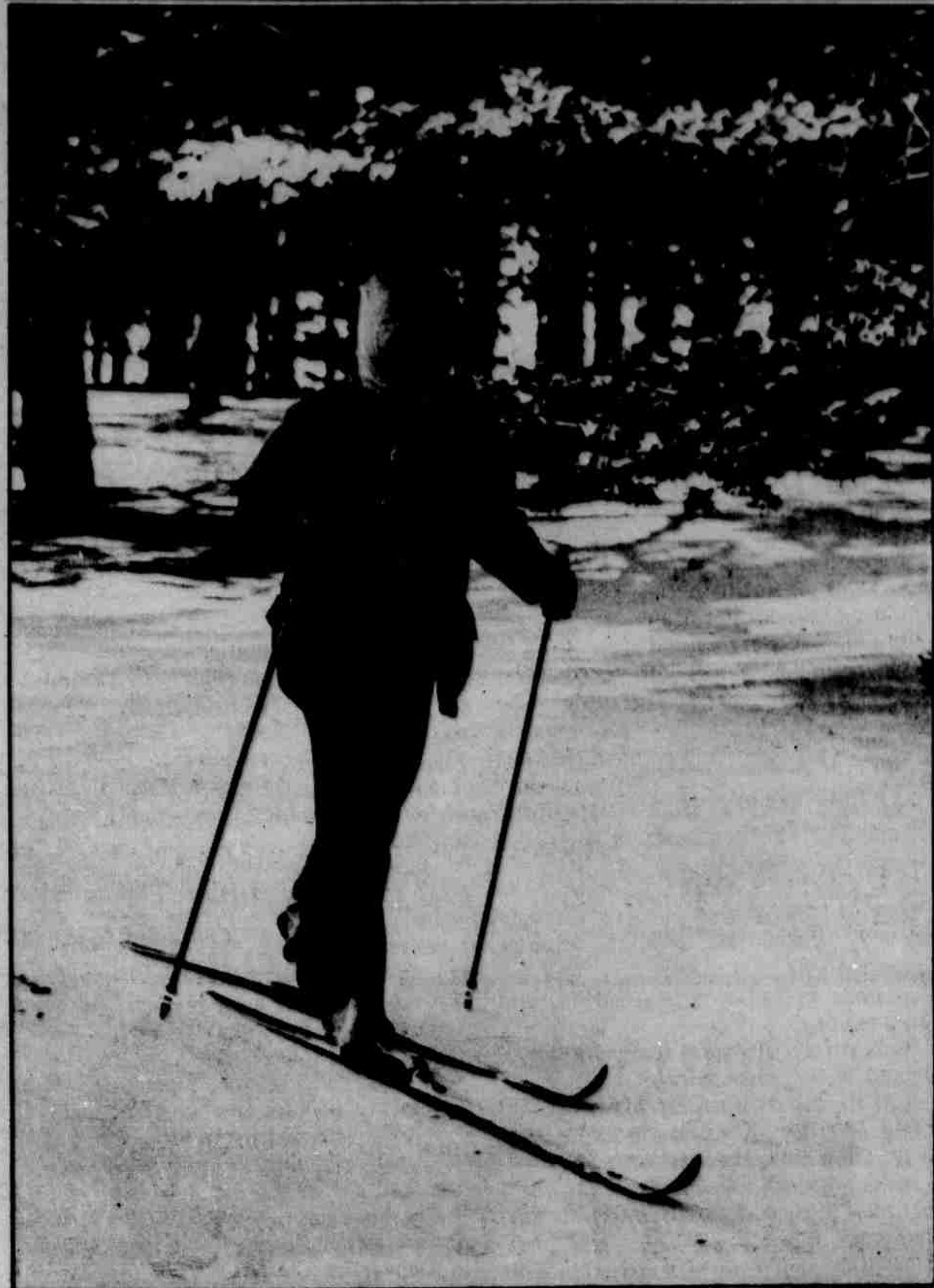


# skiing

# into the 80s



*Photo by Mike Sweeney*  
This skier may not have a steep, downhill course, but she finds plenty of room to cross-country ski on a sunny winter afternoon at Pioneer's Park.

## Winter Olympics torch ignites contests Tuesday

By Kim Hachiya

The lighting of the Olympic torch Tuesday night will mark the opening of the 13th Olympic Winter Games at Lake Placid, New York.

Although these games, like many others of recent years, have been plagued with uncerainties—among them financial worries of Lake Placid citizens and an unseasonable lack of snow—it could be a premiere year for American athletes.

All in all, 37 countries will be represented at the games, in sports ranging from figure skating to bobsledding. But probably nothing in the winter games compares with the fierce competition of Alpine skiing. Watching a skier glide downhill at speeds nearing 90 mph probably is as exhilarating for the spectator as it is for the participant.

Traditionally, Europeans have dominated Olympic and World Class skiing, but this year, the Americans stand a good chance of snatching a few medals from the European grasp.

### Greatest hope

The United States' greatest hope on the men's slopes this year is Phil Mahre, a 22-year-old from Washington state. Mahre was second in world cup competition last year, but a fall at Lake Placid resulted in a shattered ankle requiring surgery and several pins to hold it together. Even though he had to drop out of last year's competition, Mahre ended up third in the World Cup events.

Although basically a slalom and giant slalom specialist, Mahre has also developed into a good downhill skier. Mahre's twin brother, Steve, is equally talented, but

some critics say he lacks the determined motivation of Phil. In any event, they will anchor the U.S. men's team, which will be severely tested by Sweden's Ingemar Stenmark in the slalom and giant slalom.

Although Americans have won few medals for skiing in Olympic competition, most have been won by women, including a bronze in women's downhill at Innsbruck in 1976. That woman is Cindy Nelson and she is the best bet for medals on the U.S. women's team.

### Obsessed perfectionist

Described as an obsessed perfectionist, the 23-year-old Minnesotan has been skiing competitively for nearly 10 years. Her stiffest competition in the downhill is Austrian Annemarie Moser, current world champion, who was "in retirement" during the Innsbruck games. Last year, Moser lost only one downhill race on the world cup circuit. That loss was to Nelson. Moser is a technically superior skier, but critics say she handles extreme pressure badly because of her intense desire to win. In critical situations such as Olympic competition, Moser could falter.

Europeans, especially Germans, dominate in women's slalom and giant slalom, but the United States has good chances for darkhorse wins from Abbi Fisher despite her knee injuries, and Tamara McKinney, Christin Cooper and Heidi Preuss.

Olympic skiing competition begins Thursday with men's downhill. Women's competition begins Friday with a 5-kilometer cross country race. All skiing competition ends Feb. 23.

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## Spring Break Ski Trip

**March 29-April 4**

Our spring trip is to Crested Butte, Colorado, the undiscovered Aspen, which offers some of the world's best spring skiing.

We will stay in a fully-equipped condominium located 400 yards from the mountain base. A free shuttle is also provided, along with a covered pool, clubhouse, game room and sauna.

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This trip will sell out fast, so call Barry at 472-8268 and reserve a space!

### Things to do before SKI TRIP:

- 1 - Get the group together.
- 2 - Go to **CHEAP WHEELS.**
- 3 - Rent a van or car for \$9.95 and up.
- 4 - Head for the slopes!

