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SWISS WINTER SPORTS EVENTS

Swiss ski fans have been able to embark on a week-end in the snow one full month ahead of the official opening date of the winter season: Heavy snowfalls around November 15th blanketed the winter-sports areas in the Alps and the Jura mountains, resulting in a solid "foundation" upon which additional layers of snow are expected to settle. Several resorts reported snow of up to 20 inches.

A few selected events out of some one thousand listed in the Winter Programme of the Swiss National Tourist Office are: In December, up to the 15th or shortly before Christmas which will mark the initial phase of the "invasion" of the resort areas, refresher courses at Wengen, Grindelwald, Zermatt, Klosters and Stoos above Schwyz will attract the sports-minded advanced guards of skiers eager to acquire that dashing skill and fitness right from the beginning. Between Christmas and New Year visitors to St. Moritz may attend such functions as an International Figure Skating Competition and the opening of the world-famous Bob Run. Two traditional spectator-sport attractions in the Bernese Oberland are the 25th International Ladies' Ski Races at Grindelwald (8th-10th January) and the International Lauberhorn Ski Race at Wengen (12th-13th January). Unterwasser, the winter-sports centre of North-Eastern Switzerland, on 27th January, will be the site of the 7th International Ski-Jumping Contests. St. Moritz, on that same day, is to open the first series of its International Horse Races on Snow, and two days later — like Arosa on 31st January — to hold an International Ski-Jumping Competition. Leysin in the Vaudois Alps announces the beginning of the bob races for the Grand Prize of Switzerland on 2nd February. Other winter holiday sports in the French-speaking part of Switzerland such as Crans, Montana, Verbier, Château-d'Oex, Villars and St. Cergue, will offer, throughout January and February, a great variety of sports events from ice-hockey and curling championship games to the popular "She and He" ski races. Einsiedeln, the winter resort on the outskirts of Zurich, is busy constructing a new ski-jump for the 57th Swiss Nordic Ski Championships scheduled to take place here from 15th to 17th February. Among other important ski events are the International White Ribbon of St. Moritz with "Coppa Grischa" (20th-26th February), the 14th International Philips Race at Lenzerheide (21st February), the Parsenn Gold Cup at Davos (24th February), the 17th International Gornergrat Derby at Zermatt (15th-17th March) and the 14th International Three-Route Giant Slalom at Arosa 22nd-24th March).

75 Years ago in the Glacier Village

On 10th February 1963, Grindelwald, the Glacier Village in the Bernese Oberland, is to revive some of the strange figures and antique-looking implements that hibernated here for the first time 75 years ago. What at that time — in 1888 — was a crazy and almost deadly undertaking according to the pessimists, turned out to be a most felicitous venture. This becomes obvious from the great many contemporary photographs which can be inspected at the local Tourist Office and which should prove a source of inspiration to the organisers of the "Jubilee Parade": The handful of dare-devil British ladies and gentlemen that opened — and survived — Grindelwald's first winter season not only had the fun of their lifetime, marching along on snow-shoes and skis, going in for figure-skating and chair-pushing on the ice-rink and watching or participating in old-fashioned toboggan-races — they also emerged from it all sane and safe, in better spirits and health than they had enjoyed ever before. Ladies in 19th-

century wasp-waists and ankle-covering skirts, moustachioed gentlemen in bear-skins, and early-day skiers trotting along on skis twice their own length and featuring monumental pointed edges on both ends, will be seen in the anniversary parade which is being prepared by the communal authorities and the Grindelwald Tourist Office in co-operation with the mountain railways in the Jungfrau region and local winter-sports clubs. Some of the historical winter-sports utensils will later be incorporated in the exhibits of a village museum.

Of Guinea Pigs on Skis and Ski-ing Adepts

Switzerland's ski instructors, in an effort to maintain a unified method of teaching permitting students to attend or continue classes at any winter resort, each year meet for what is probably the world's biggest ski course. It will be held this year, in two sections from 2nd to 16th December, at Wengen, one of the most attractive winter-sports centres in the Bernese Oberland, at 4,300 feet above sea-level. The teachers are some 130 crack ski instructors, and the students are estimated to number around 2,000. "Guinea pigs" eager to undergo this concentrated one-week training will get the treatment side by side with the pros who take it as a refresher course. [S.N.T.O.]

SWISSAIR FORECAST RECORD CHRISTMAS AIR TRAFFIC

Thirty-one Christmas-Special jet flights, with a total of 2,310 seats, are to be operated by Swissair from London to Switzerland this year to cope with an expected record-breaking number of passengers. The flights will provide room for more than an extra 40 tons of freight, as well.

Swissair's 98-seater Convair 990 Coronado, which is normally used on routes to the East, to Africa and to South America, has been called in to help with the Christmas rush to Switzerland. The Coronado is the latest of the big passenger jets and can fly from London to Zurich in 1¼ hours. Twenty-eight extra flights will be made by the airline's 72-seater Caravelles from London to Zurich or Geneva between 19th and 29th December.

Swissair is one of the few inter-continental airlines that are private-enterprise and without government subsidy. Even last year, when many millions of pounds were lost by air carriers, it managed to make a profit.

SWISSAIR RESUME NIGHT FLIGHTS

Night economy flights between England and Switzerland are to be reintroduced on 20th December by Swissair, whose Caravelle jets will operate nightly between London and Zurich and twice a week between London and Geneva.

From 21st December Metropolitans will make week-end night flights between Manchester and Zurich and London and Basle. An additional London-Geneva link will be an extra Metropolitan service operated daily from 19th December until 14th January.

SWISSAIR'S "STUDENT SPECIALS"

Convair 990 Coronados, the advanced four-engined jets used by Swissair and Scandinavian Airlines System, will be flown on Swissair's long-distance "Christmas Specials" for students this year.

The 600-m.p.h. Coronados will carry students to and from the Far East, Middle East, South America and West Africa. In Switzerland, Caravelles provide connections with London and Continental cities.

The "Student Specials", operating between 16th and 21st December will link Zurich with Baghdad, Karachi, Bombay, Calcutta, Bangkok, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Santiago, Lagos and Accra.