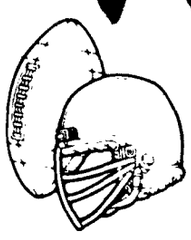
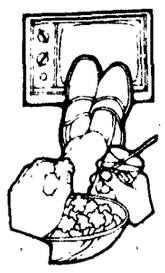
WEEKEND FUN AND GAMES





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141 Market St., Potsdam 265-8446

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9:30-1:30 a.m.

at

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[redacted]

Ski Trail Notes

BY JERRY C. LEEK

Towards the end of last week there developed what is known as the "January thaw." Last year I remember that we did not have a thaw because ther were 52 straight days that the temperature stayed below freezing during January and part of February.

In the normal year, there is always a January thaw. While the thaw many times destroys some very fine ski conditions, I have noticed over the years that the snow is frequently better after the January thaw. This improvement in the snow after the January thaw is caused by the fact that warm air from the Gulf of Mexico is finally pushing northward through the cold arctic air.

This usually means that there is more freeze-thaw weather after the January thaw, and there are normally those wet snowstorms that make such great base for skiing. This base holds up better. The snow which we had in December and thus far in January had very little water content. That is why it disappeared so fast. Wet snow, once it is frozen, holds up for a much longer period of time under the same weather conditions. So while the ski conditions eroded rapidly over the weekend, the "January thaw" is usually a sign that the best is yet to come including those big snow storms that have been missing in recent years.

Until it snows again, ski conditions will be more limited than before the thaw. Since it is obvious that weather conditions can change in a few hours, it is a good idea to keep some telephone numbers of where to call if you want to go skiing. Much of my information comes from these phones as well as from skiers, mail, radio and other sources.

The Vermont snow line is not toll free. The number is 802-229-0531. At last report from them, they reported that nearly all trails were still open, but it was still warm and raining at the time. Killington, for example, still had 96 out of 100 trails open on Sunday afternoon, Stowe had 44 out of 44 trails open, Jay Peak had 30 out of 32 trails open, Bolton Valley had all trails open, and Mad River still had all trails open. Bolton Valley was still reporting over 100 kilometers of cross country skiing but that it was melting.

There is supposed to be a toll free number for the State of New York. The number is 1-800-CALL-NYS. The trouble with the New York line is that it is always busy or no one answers to give information that you want. There is a similar problem with reaching a toll free number that is available in Quebec. That number is 1-800-363-3624. The trouble with radio and telephone reports is that the ski areas supply most of the information and they're quick to report a snowstorm but very slow to report any trail closings. One ski area, for example, reporting 36 trails open on Sunday, had closed three of them shortly after the lifts opened.

The Potsdam Langlauf is still scheduled for Feb. 1 or the Saturday after next. You should be able to get applications at most of the local sports stores. If you cannot find an entry blank, I would suggest that you call David Trither at 265-8117 or Richard Mooers, 265-2774. The cross country ski race is to be held at Clarkson Seven Springs. There are various categories for men and women according to age and the racer can choose the distance that he or she wants to run. It is always a nice event every year. The benefits from the race will go to the Heart Fund. If there is no snow, there is an alternate date.

The damage from the thaw was extensive. It is impossible to assess the damage at press time. I do know that the "Snowtown USA Celebration" in Watertown was really more appropriately labeled "Watertown" with all of the rain. The final parade was quite a wash out. If you ski this week, I suggest that you call ahead.

Fly Tying Classes Offered

The St. Lawrence Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited will offer a beginners fly tying class beginning Feb. 10 and running one night per week for seven weeks.

The cost will be minimal thanks to volunteer instructors from Trout Unlimited. Many materials will be donated by chapter members.

Any interested persons must register by Feb. 3. Contact Herb Colby, 265-4572, or Wes Mitchell, 265-5441, after 3:30 p.m. weekdays.

CINEMA 10

DIVA

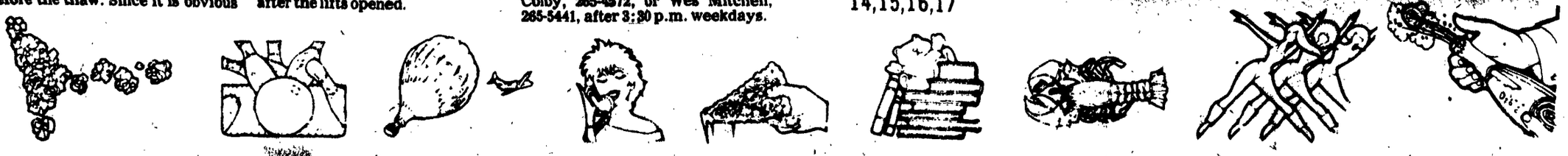
Diva (France 1981, 117 min.)

Directed by Jean-Jacques Beiniex; starring Frederic Andrei, Roland Bertin, Wilhelmenia Wiggins-Hernandez. A beautiful primadonna performing in Paris and a young mailman who worships her become innocent victims of international crime. This flashy thriller manages to be visually surreal while at the same time keeping us on the edge of our seats in the face of a very real, very malign evil.

Monday, 7:15 p.m.

[redacted]

Main St., Potsdam

Cinema 10 is a non-profit organization and is supported by the New York State Council of the Arts and Potsdam College Student Government Assn.

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