

Cheap Skiing Guide™

Special Adventure Edition

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Lake Placid, NY lives in a corner of almost everyone's memory as the place where, in 1980, the US hockey team won Olympic gold, in what was later termed, the *Miracle on Ice*, after defeating the heavily favored Soviet players in the semi-finals and the Finland team to win, and where speed skater Eric Heiden won five gold metals and set four Olympic records. It is not as well remembered for hosting the 1932 Olympic games where Sonja Henie gained world fame and Lake Placid's own Shea family (the only three generational Olympic family in history) be-

Whiteface Trails All photos courtesy of ORDA



timed visit. Whiteface has ten lifts including an eight passenger gondola and there are expansion plans to add a new high-speed lift and open new terrain in 2009. With over 3400 feet of vertical drop, steeps are abundant and black diamond trails flow down a challenging natural contour. More than half of the terrain, however, is rated for beginner and intermediate skiing/riding. So there's something for everyone.

It's easy to imagine Whiteface a hidden treasure under a blanket of fresh snow. Unfortunately, its (and every other outdoor ski area's on the planet) surface conditions are dependent on weather, and we did not pick the best days to visit. But, unlike many other ski areas, if conditions aren't the greatest, there are a lot of other winter activities



Lake Placid Village

gan with gold medal winning speed skater, Jack Shea, or for where the 1980 alpine ski competition occurred—Whiteface Mountain.

Whiteface stands proudly tucked in the eastern Adirondacks less than ten miles north of Lake Placid center. Its peak is 4,867 feet above sea level (skiable terrain up to 4,650, lift served to 4,386) and boasts the greatest vertical drop in the east, at 3,430 feet. There are eighteen miles of ski terrain on 76 trails (228 acres) with 28½ acres of tree skiing. Our guide, Brendan Hayes (head snowboard instructor), pointed out several sylvan treasures but, alas, all were closed during our ill-



In the clouds



Awesome steeps

All photos courtesy ORDA

in Lake Placid.

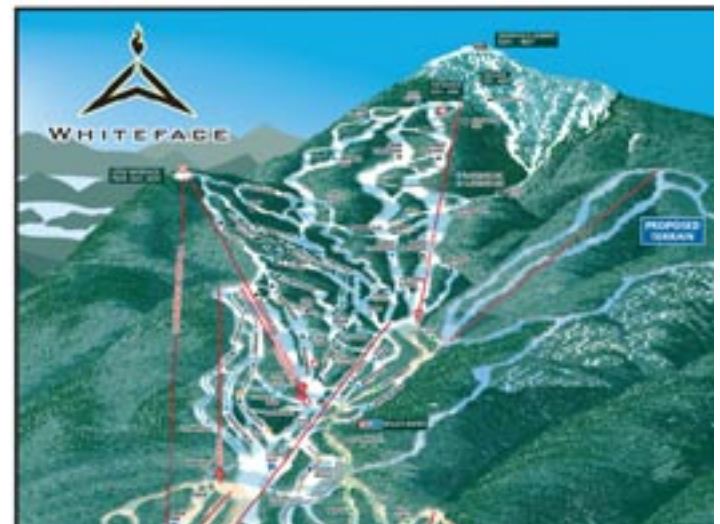
The Olympic Arena has four indoor rinks (the oldest of which hosted the 1932 Olympic skating competition and is being razed in preparation for a new convention center) that usually feature college hockey, competitive figure skating, or both. The outdoor, refrigerated, speed-skating oval is regularly re-surfaced and open for public use. The Olympic 90 and 120 meter ski jumps have elevators that can convey visitors up into the ski jump stadium where views are panoramic, and frightening when looking down the chute where jumpers launch themselves into the lower atmosphere and often soar more than the length of a football field before touching the earth again.

The iced track where Olympic bobsled, luge, and skeleton competitions once took place is operational and open to the public. There's even a virtual Olympic venue at the arena where one can experience what it looks and feels like to ski the down hill course at Whiteface, ride down the iced track on a bobsled, and launch from the 120 meter ski jumping ramp. And, there's a museum in the arena that's home to a rare collection of Olympic memorabilia and historical information.

All in all, Lake Placid offers more than just skiing and riding at Whiteface. But if you're there just after a snowstorm, you're in for a special adventure, indeed.

For more information about Lake Placid and Whiteface, visit the Olympic Regional Development Authority's web site, WWW.ORDA.ORG or call 518-523-1655.

-P. Sachs



Over 3400 feet of vertical