

**Cooper spur undergoes major facelift**

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By Dave Leder

PARKDALE — Cooper Spur Mountain Resort had to wait a little longer than expected to show off its many improvements this year.

But, now that the hills are covered in white stuff, this cozy backyard ski resort can finally strut its stuff for the ski and snowboard public.

"We've gotten about two feet of snow in the past week, which has helped us make up for lost time," said Cooper Spur and Mt. Hood Meadows general manager Dave Riley, who helped facilitate \$750,000 in improvements since last year.

"People are curious about the improvements, and the number of visitors has already gone up compared to last year."

The most notable improvement at Cooper Spur this year is the 1,350-foot long Riblet chairlift, which replaces the less efficient T-bar. It reaches 350 vertical feet and can transport up to 1,200 people per hour, providing guests with a welcome change.

"We love it," said Portland resident Doug Stringer, who owns a cabin in Parkdale and has been taking his three children to Cooper Spur for years. "My kids learned to ski on the rope tow here, and they were ready for something new. The lift seemed to come at the perfect time."

Mertie Williams of Skamania, Wash., agrees.

"It's nice because you don't have to wait in line as much as before," said the mother of two. "We have already used the new lift a bunch of times, and I'm sure we'll be back throughout the season."

Williams and Stringer both said that they like how Cooper Spur has maintained its familiar, "family" atmosphere despite the recent upgrades.

And that is music to Riley's ears.

"Our goal with the improvements was not to change the tradition of Cooper Spur," he said. "We want to attract the same guests and keep prices affordable for families. And so far, we've heard nothing but positive feedback."

Also new to Cooper Spur this season are two innertubing tows, a kids' rope tow (called a "Pony Lift"), a 2,000 square foot deck, a new rental shop and ticket office, and an upgraded cross-country trail system.

Cooper Spur employees also spent much of the past summer refinishing the lodge, both inside and out.

"It's interesting to note that all the construction was done locally," Riley said. "The chairlift was manufactured in Spokane, Wash., and installed by a company out of Ashland (Outback Construction). Wells Construction handled most of the lodge work, and the rest was done in house."

Riley and his employees are understandably excited about the improvements, but the biggest beneficiaries are the guests. Three-quarters of a million dollars was spent and not one cent was added to the previous rates.

Cost for a day of fun at Cooper Spur remains at \$15, while a season pass costs \$99 and an unlimited family pass is just \$250.

People can also purchase an "all-access" pass for \$25 (\$20 for kids), which allows use of the chairlift, the innertubing tows, the cross-country trails and rental equipment.

If you would like more information on Cooper Spur, visit their website at [www.cooperspur.com](http://www.cooperspur.com).