

Montana Life

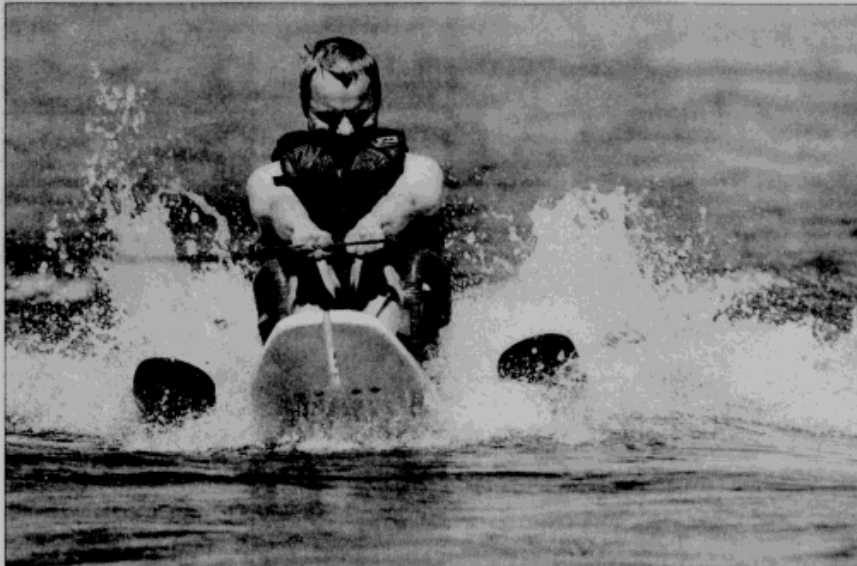
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THE DAILY INTER LAKE

SUNDAY, JULY 19, 2009



MICHAEL JONES enjoys the ride on the water sit-ski, a mono-ski that allows the rider to either hold onto the cable or attach it to the ski itself. He was part of a group water-skiing with DREAM (Disabled Recreation Environmental Access Movement) on Thursday at Echo Lake.

Lake access

DREAM takes its mission to the water

The Daily Inter Lake

For more than 20 years, local nonprofit DREAM has been almost solely devoted to winter sports. By providing adaptive skiing opportunities, Disabled Recreation Environmental Access Movement has allowed scores of people with disabilities to learn to ski on Big Mountain.

Last week, DREAM ventured into the world of water sports for the first time.

About 20 people — from children to people in their late 50s — water skied and kayaked at Echo Lake Wednesday and Thursday with DREAM.

"Helping people do things they never thought they could do is just incredible," volunteer Jerry Mahugh said.

The time at Echo Lake was a chance for DREAM "to sort of get our feet wet — no pun intended" — in expanding from a purely winter organization to providing summer recreation activities as well, Bruce Gibson said.

He said that moving to at least a two-season operation has been in the works at least since he took over as DREAM's program director five years ago. "We had several volunteers who did a lot of

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TAYLOR HALDEN smiles at Jack Kloustad (right) while volunteer Lynette Jarvis and DREAM Board President Jerry Mahugh help get her life vest on at Echo Lake on Thursday afternoon.



VOLUNTEER JEFF Carlson helps Michael Jones get his feet into a pair of water skis on the dock before getting into the water.



LEESA NERDIG smiles after coming up from dunking her head under the water after volunteer Jeff Carlson convinced her to try to hold her breath below the surface.



GEORGE YOUNG of Great Falls (front) waits in the water with David Obersit before Obersit helps him into a water sit-ski.

Photos by NATE CHUTE
The Daily Inter Lake