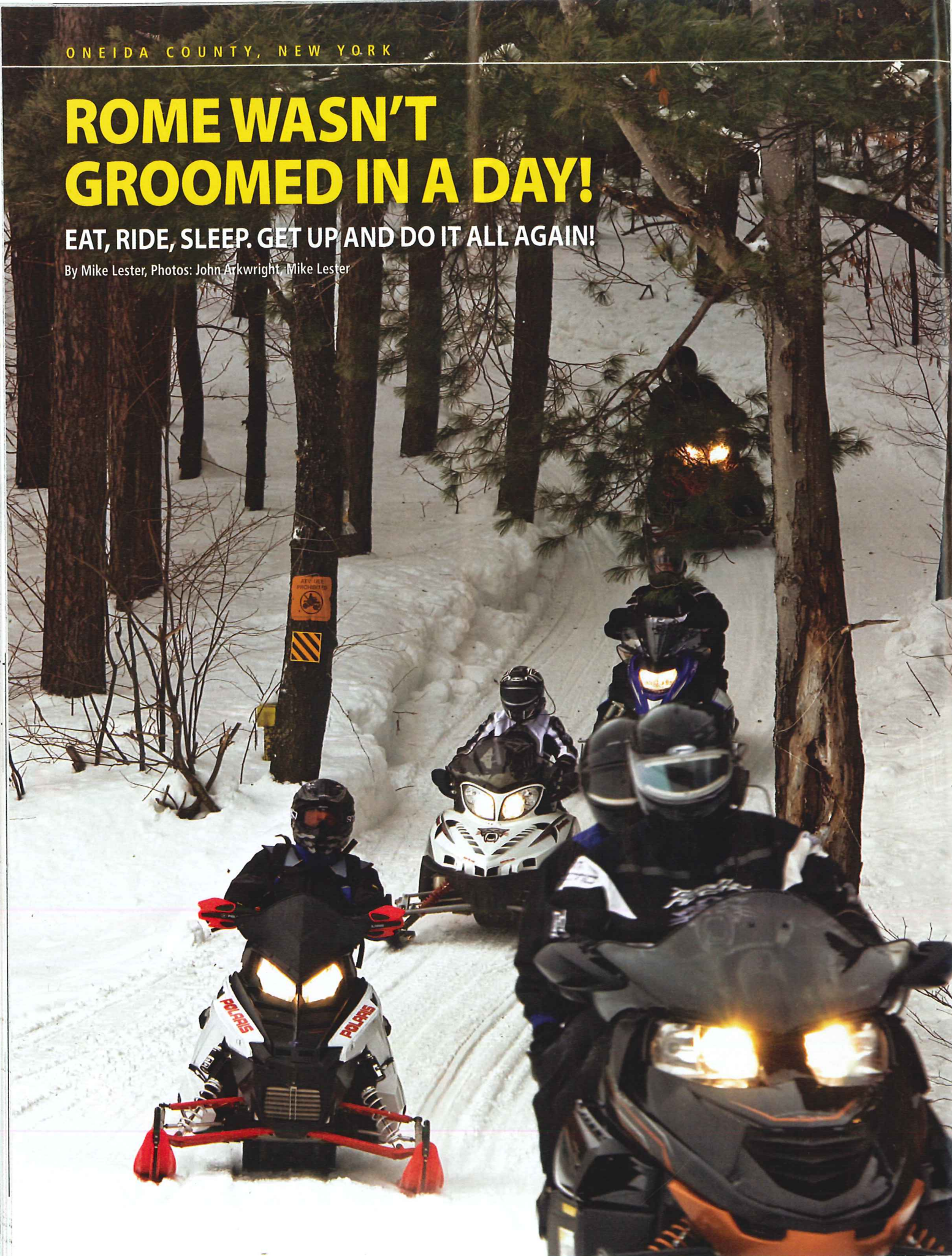


# ROME WASN'T GROOMED IN A DAY!

## EAT, RIDE, SLEEP. GET UP AND DO IT ALL AGAIN!

By Mike Lester, Photos: John Arkwright, Mike Lester



Last season, Supertrax entered into an agreement with the New York State Snowmobile Association (NYSSA) to publish and distribute a new regional publication, New York Snowmobiler, to New York State association members. Along with each New York Snowmobiler Magazine comes a copy of Supertrax. On the heels of this announcement, Kelly Blazosky, President of Oneida County Tourism, invited Supertrax staffers John Arkwright, Richard Hiley and myself to Rome, New York to ride the beautiful trails in the Oneida County area.

Rome is less than an hour away from Syracuse, New York, a mere 5-hour drive from Toronto and just three-and-a-half hours from Ottawa, Ontario or Buffalo, NY. Once on the I-90, crank up the tunes and set your cruise control for a pin-straight drive right into Rome's welcoming arms.

We pulled into the parking lot of The Beeches Inn, which would be our home for a few nights. This popular hotel in Rome is a hot spot for snowmobilers with ample parking available for trailers and, best of all, a direct link to the trails. The comfortable, spacious rooms of the Beeches were as hospitable as the warm and friendly staff that made our stay so enjoyable. We stayed two nights and got to enjoy two amazing classic American breakfasts in The Beeches dining lounge. No joke, we had to pull ourselves away from the table each morning or else our gear wasn't going to fit anymore. Word is out around town that this is the place to start your day. I think just about every local in Rome stopped in here, including the mayor!

Following breakfast, we met with our guides for the day, Jim Rolf, NYSSA Trails Coordinator and Bill Hajdasz, President of the Oneida County Area Snowmobile Association. These guys not only know snowmobiling, they know just about everyone in the area with a sled. We pulled out of The Beeches parking lot and immediately joined up onto Trail C7F. We blasted down wide and winding beautifully groomed trails, across well-marked fields, passing by club volunteers out making absolute magic happen. These people most definitely deserve a nod of thanks and it reminded us of how great club volunteers are. Without them this sport couldn't survive.

### Home, Sweet, Home

We soon discovered the NY trails are a lot like the trails in Minnesota, Wisconsin and back home in Ontario. There's a combination of farm meadows, groomed forest trails, rapid changes in elevation, lakes and a winding ribbon of wide, smooth snow roads across the scenic countryside. One thing we liked was the fact you can ride big distances here without being far from gasoline, food and service for your sled. We heard there are over one hundred snowmobile dealers in the state and that's a



reassuring fact if you ever need repairs while you're visiting here.

We finally reached the town of Boonville, nicknamed "The Snow Capital of the East". Boonville is also home to the annual Boonville Snow Festival II Vintage Oval Races held at the Boonville Fairgrounds. This town is another example of the passion that runs deep in New York State for snowmobiling. Lunch would be at the Boonville Hotel, a place just about as welcoming to snowmobilers as you can find anywhere. Oh, and when you stop here, be sure to get the soup! Incredible!

After a hearty lunch and some good laughs, Bill had a great scenic location he wanted to take us to, so we took to the trails for some amazing riding up Trail C7. The trails were impeccably maintained with only a few patches of stutters that were easily soaked up by my 4-TEC Renegade's SC-5 suspension.

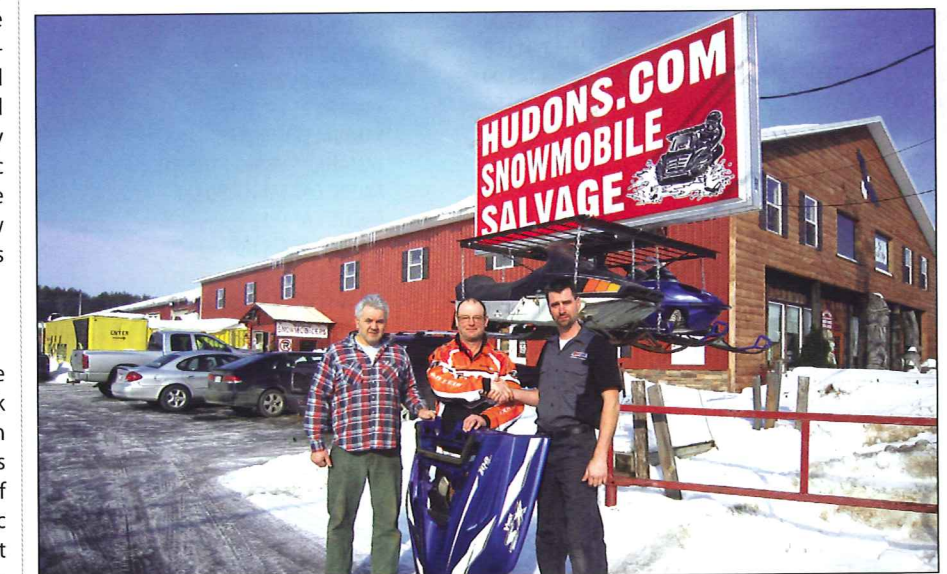
We reached the Starr Hill Lookout just before the sun began to set so we were able to catch a glimpse of the scenery. Starr Hill overlooks

Lake Delta, the City of Rome and on a really clear day, Oneida Lake can be seen way off in the distance. This was a highlight of the ride and if you ever get the chance to stop here make sure you have your camera with you.

### Food's Great, Too!

Following our ride that evening, Jim Rolf took us to The Savoy, a well-known Italian restaurant in Rome and a source of local pride. If you get a chance to dine here, order the Chicken Riggies. It's one of the most popular dishes on the menu for a reason - it's exceptional!

We felt immediately welcomed by the people of Rome and by all indications snowmobilers here are as happy as we are about the new relationship between Supertrax and the NYSSA. We are already making plans to visit Oneida County again this season and do as much riding in New York State, as winter will allow us. We're definitely going to take in some vintage oval racing at the Snow Festival while we're at it. ▲



Hudons snowmobile Salvage is only twenty minutes from The Beeches Inn. Hudons is the ultimate snowmobile used parts warehouse. This place is so big it can't be completely experienced in one day and is definitely worth putting on your itinerary. If you need it, Hudons probably has it.