Royal Chocolate Cake   (from Hershey's *Chocolate Treasury*)

1/4 cup butter, melted

1/2 cup sugar

6 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa

3/4 cup butter, softened

3/4 cup sugar

6 eggs at room temperature, separated

1 1/2 cups blanched almonds, finely chopped (one 6 ounce bag, ground in a coffee grinder - 3 coffee grinds worth)

1/8 teaspoon salt

Royal Glaze (see below)

Butter a 9-inch springform pan; dust lightly with flour (or sprinkle with sliced almonds).   Set aside.   In a small mixer bowl, combine 1/4 cup melted butter, 1/2 cup sugar and cocoa until smooth; set aside.   Cream 3/4 cup butter and 3/4 sugar in a large mixing bowl until light and fluffy.   Add egg yolks, one at a time, beating well after each addition.   Add cocoa mixture on low speed until just blended.   Stir in almonds until just mixed.   In a small bowl, whip egg whites and salt until soft peaks form.   Gradually fold about a fourth of the egg whites at a time into chocolate mixture.

Pour into prepared pan.   Bake at 375 degrees for 20 minutes; without opening oven door, decrease temperature to 350 degrees and continue to bake for 40 to 45 minutes or until cake has a soft, moist spot only in the center.   Let cake cool completely before removing from pan.

To prepared Royal Glaze : combine 8 ounces semi- or bittersweet baking chocolate and 1/2 cup half and half and, stirring constantly, melt in the top of a double boiler until mixture is smooth.   Remove from heat and let cool for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.   Pour over cake, allowing glaze to run down side.   With narrow metal spatula, spread glaze evenly over top and around side.   Allow to harden.   Serve with sweetened whipped cream and/or fresh fruit, or whatever.