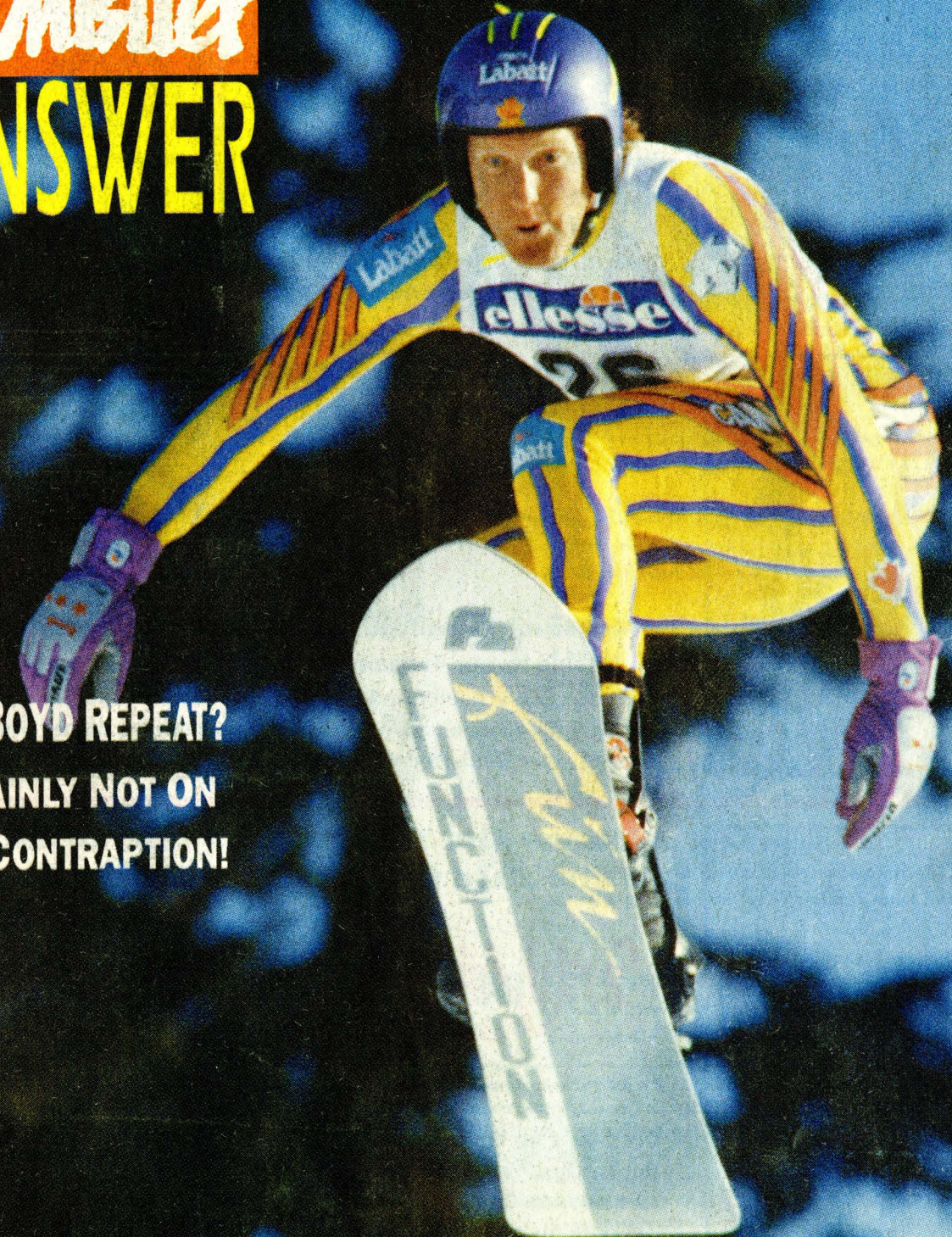


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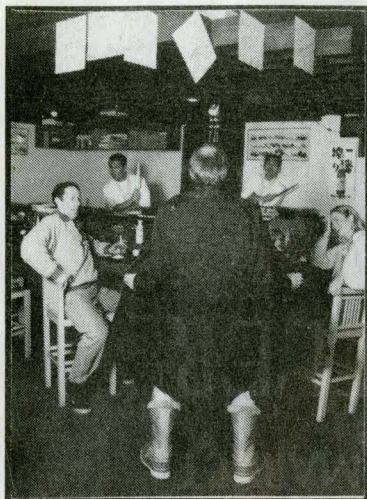
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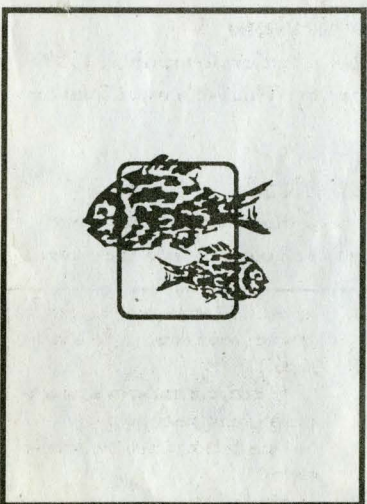
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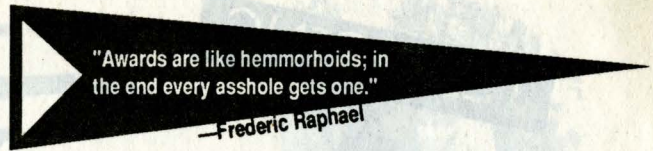
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ommended. All written submissions must be typewritten, double spaced, just like in the big leagues.

All contributors must adhere to our rigorous new attire and grooming policy.

Where the heck is Picabo Street when we need her?

Printed in Canada

*"Skiers are the best lovers because they are willing to take a risk and they are moving their bodies."*

—Dr. Ruth Westheimer

Unfortunately the good doctor did not elaborate on how she came to discover this wonderful theory. Was it a result of anecdotal evidence, extensive laboratory research or from peeking in my bedroom window?

An altitudinally challenged "sex therapist" and ski bunny, Dr. Ruth no doubt got her doctorate from the Sally Struthers Academy of Home Study, or from a Cracker Jacks box.

Nonetheless, even idiots can be right on occasion.

Perhaps skiers are better lovers because skiing is so much like sex, only cheaper.

The similarities are profound. Sometimes, while having a choice run in three feet of powder, the only word I can come up with to describe the feeling is "orgasmic." And more than once, in bed, I have been known to shout "on your left!"

Dr. Ruth is right, there is a certain amount of movement involved in both

activities. But I think the only place I would like to have an instructor teach the finer points of weighting and unweighting (yelling "up/down") is on the mountain.

Now I'm not saying that skiing and sex are so similar that you should wax

boarding? Perhaps is just a different version of sex, like perhaps, homosexuality? No, that would be telemarking.

Skiing is a very expensive sport, but then so is sex. Particularly if you have to do the dinner thing, with wine and roses and all the condiments. It's

not like the good old days when you could sneak up the lifts. Maybe a seasons pass is just the ticket. (I spent a winter with a women once; I got in 120 days. I have no idea how much vertical was involved, but it was well into the metres.)

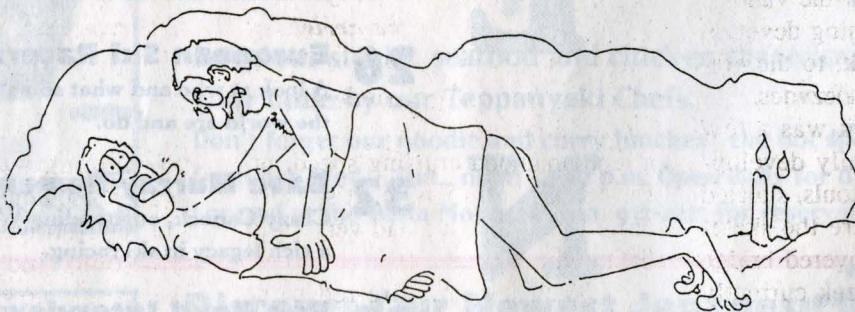
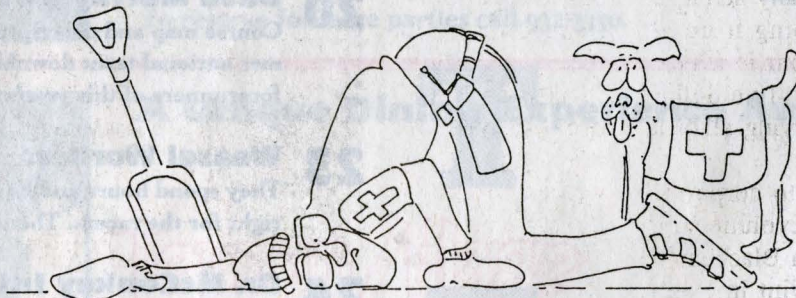
If skiers make better lovers, as Dr. Ruth attests, then what does that

make our downhill friends here in Whistler? Perhaps they should make a porno movie after the race, and show everybody their 223's. (Myself, I've been offered a small part in the movie.)

But if skiers make better lovers, where does that leave the non-skiing world? Well, I reckon they either have to masturbate while watching Warren Miller movies, or seek counselling from Dr. Ruth.

But one thing is for sure, you won't find this cowboy skiing with Dr. Ruth, or the other thing either.

Ron McLeod



yourself before hopping under you Gortex sheets, but it may not be unreasonable to give potential lovers the wind tunnel test.

I know that it's quite popular among some local skids to claim that they've had sex in the old Whistler gondola. (It doesn't count in the new Express, unless, of course, it's group sex.) But that's kids stuff, folks, for true sexual skiers will accept the challenge of making love on the T-bar.

But if skiing and sex have such an affinity, where does that leave snow-

# Munster's Monster



By Charlie Doyle

There is currently a trend for those slightly disaffected with the ski resort phenomenon to take up that scourge of northern Ontario, the skidoo. Most of them justify this turn to internal combustion as a means to get up into the alpine easily and quickly. Once there of course, they would don their ski gear and ski. This holds true for the first season or so until they finally admit to themselves that ripping it up at sixty-plus miles per hour is reason enough to forego forty-five dollar lift lines. Besides, carrying all that ski gear is so clumsy.

This alternative to corporate skiing is not all that revolutionary. Back in the days when Blackcomb Mountain was but a glint in Hugh Smythe's eye, a narrow logging road switched up from the valley's most progressive housing development, Diversion Creek, to the present day site of the Rendezvous.

Diversion Creek was a low density extended family development of maybe thirty souls, situated roughly between where the skateboard park and the covered bridge over Fitzsimmons Creek currently sit. This rather advanced concept featured single and multi-family dwellings, provision for employee housing and even a health spa. There were, however, a few serious downsides to their choice of location. They were all squatting on Crown land, they had chosen the future site of some very expensive real estate and their closest neighbours were Al and Nancy Raine who didn't really appreciate competing for parking space with assorted VW vans, old 4x4's and a rather large and sinister looking 1955

Tucker Steel Track Sno-Cat.

The unofficial mayor of Diversion Creek and owner of the Tucker was Andy Munster who had taken advantage of the demise of the Rainbow Ski Resort and purchased what amounted to their entire grooming fleet for \$1500. Now this was no namby-pamby, air-cooled, rubber-tracked, bring it to Valley Chainsaw when it breaks, type of machine. This was the real enchilada! Powered by a 235 hp Chrysler hemi and weighing in at around 7500 lbs this baby could carry 16 people uncomfortably at

a recommended cruising speed, on flat terrain, of 15 mph. It's really unfortunate that we had very little flat terrain.

With its new fire red paint and flat black engine cover the Tucker cut a handsome swath through an untracked meadow but it could not be argued that it had much practical application in the Whistler of 1979. While it's true the nearest RCMP detachment was in Squamish, there existed an overall law abiding atmosphere that limited the Tucker's in-valley escapades to extricating less snow worthy vehicles from snowbanks close to home and the occasional evening of draught and billiards at the Boot. It was on just such an evening during

an unusually large multi-day snow storm that an abandoned '79 Fiat very nearly met its maker. Andy was about to back into a tight spot between two tall 4x4's when his skier's eye caught what he thought was a bit of contour in the snow just behind the rear tracks. Being as we were on our way into the bar and still sober we got out to have a look.

It was on the long alpine expeditions that the Tucker truly shone and seats for these events were hotly contested.



CHARLIE DOYLE PHOTO

*Skiing on Blackcomb before the arrival of the lifts required ingenuity and one of these cumbersome vehicles.*

Provisioning was begun much in advance (the liquor store was a two hour return drive away) and departure would find the excited crew making sure no essentials were left at home. And usually nothing was! We could have survived quite comfortably for a week on the goods we crammed in and on the machine for a one or two day venture. As well as the requisite ski gear and the all important tool box, the roof rack would occasionally sport such exotica as a prototype snow windsurfing rig. After last minute jostling for the coveted co-pilot seat we were off.

The first obstacle of the day would usually coincide with the completion of the journey's bon voyage joint, but I draw no causal

line here. You see the Tucker, while a handsome beast was no Prinoth T4. It didn't spin 360's on it's inside track. It's four large and separate steel tracks were designed for rolling over gentle tundra, not for steep and deep Coast Range switchbacks. Breakdowns were routine and hands on was the order of the day. Black Diamond was in-Bogner was out! Each journey would routinely shear off a dozen grease nipples, easing the maintenance schedule but decreasing the track's life expectancy dramatically. On one descent from the meadows above Gear Jammer the screaming of metal on metal from the right rear track became too much to bear. We couldn't hear the stereo! After some head scratching we figured the best move was to remove the track and fix it when we got home. An hour

and a half and several skinned knuckles later the track was lashed to the roof rack and we began our descent. Things were going smoother than expected until Andy spotted a short cut. One of the switchbacks had a cut off that while steeper was not as sharp a corner. To avoid the inevitable shunting back and forth that would be required to get the 20 ft monster around the corner, Andy opted for the steep. To make a long story short, these vehicles just don't perform with only 3/4 of their tracks on the snow. We came to rest lodged firmly between two medium size firs. But luck was with us. Hugh Smythe and a small crew were flagging future runs, had a chainsaw and another sno-cat. We were home free.

However this luck was not to hold. No, the Tucker was not des-

tined to live a long and happy life. In fact its remains can be viewed just off one of the first switchbacks as you near the micro wave tower at Black Tusk. It was the steel tracks again, but this time fatal. A transplant was considered but a suitable donor could not be found. Indeed, several important organs live on in an identical Tucker owned by Bob Eakins who runs ski tours in Wells Grey Park.

I know for a fact that Munster's Monster is pushing alpine daisies but there are those who swear to this day that in the cold blue light of a January full moon night you can still spot that hunched machine running without headlights, kicking up four wild snow plumes as it carves mad GS turns down Black Tusk Meadows.



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## Public Input Needed In Skier Control Laws

The development of democratic institutions in our province appears to be faltering once again. It is time for the government to note the very high levels of public participation which have characterized various recreation development planning exercises which have occurred or are ongoing in B.C.

Whistler itself has a history of unending (some would say interminable) public involvement, which has shown itself to be durable and adaptable to growth and changing times. The voice of the community is something which will continue speaking, with increasing insistence, rather than being placated and muted, as time goes on.

B.C. Parks and B.C. Lands have developed planning processes which have proved able to draw out opinion from the electorate for fair consideration in policy making by bureaucrats and leaders. The proposed legislation governing the relationship of the ski industry with its customers is, in essence, land use regulation, because it will govern the ways in which the lands leased by the various corporations may be controlled.

The proposed skier control laws are going to affect and enormous

number of individual British Columbians, and their use of a common resource; therefore no new laws can be passed without consulting the public as to their concerns or this action can only be seen as serving the interests of industry ahead of community.

Decisions made by lawyers for lawyers can be predicted to benefit lawyers and their best clients. Who will be there to guard the interests of the individuals who loves their sport?

Public involvement is the only clear way to satisfy the requirements of our ever fragile democracy and involvement of the public which has been promised by every candidate from Sooke to Lower Post.

Let the light into the legislative process, and invite the Public and C.O.R.E., if necessary, to make this action fair and open. This magazine will happily publish the text of the proposed legislation. Over to you Minister.

*Over to  
you  
Minister...*



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## A Very Bad Sign

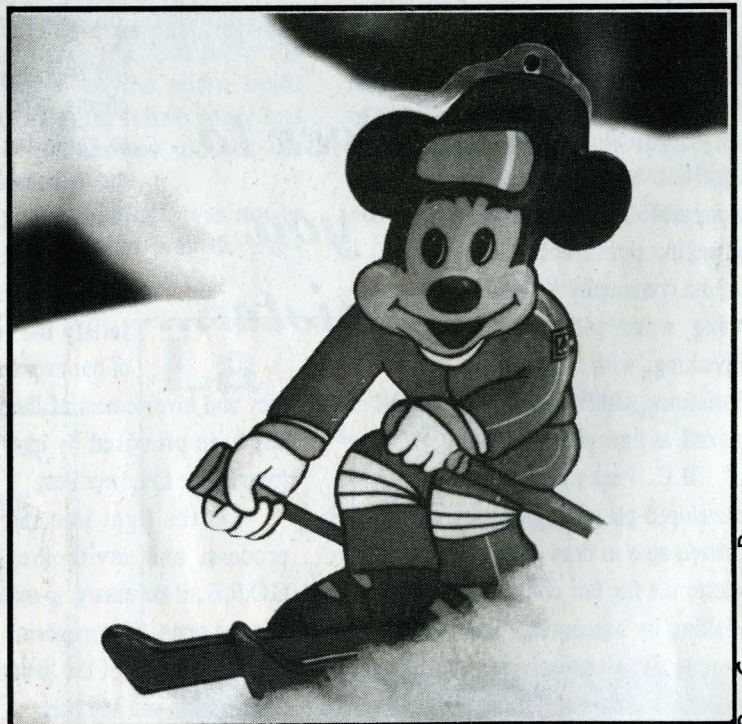
# Beware Of The Ski Police

Many of you will have noticed the recent announcement by the ski lift operators new signage systems on the mountains. This new system is intended to "make things better," according to a spokesman. "Things Better," in this case, seems to be to make the skiing experience closer to a consistent, manufactured product than to a natural environment encounter for the customer.

We were first introduce to an authoritarian signage regime when Blackcomb Glacier was included in the ski area operation permit. Blackcomb promised to revoke passes for disregarding the signs. Not to be outdone, Whistler too installed these same signs after having one of Whistler's more notorious characters execute a dramatic body bombing exhibition on "Don't Miss" during one of the Celebrity Weekends. No doubt the Corporate Culture had not integrated that type of bizarre behavior into the set lines learned by the Celeb minders.

Whistler Mountain (the company) at that time seemed less than certain that they really meant it when they installed the threatening signs here and there —

congeniality was the theme, and a wink from a patroller you knew meant that conditions were hot. Locals knew that what the real problem was that the Ski Patrol hated evacuating failed extremists with shattered femurs from "Friday 13th." Fair enough, but how do they square their



BOB COLEBROOK PHOTO

*"Our  
mountains  
are not  
Disneyland..."*

reluctance with the "Harmony Owl 10:00 AM" Billboard, which shows an airborne Powder Pig soaring all around Vancouver? Hey, the image works for me, I'll be there!

So now we have new classes of closure to study. This is getting really silly. What are they really trying to achieve? The murmurs are sounding like "enforceable rules." Does this mean Statutes? Are we going to be treated to LAWS of SKI-

ING? Would that mean no left turns after the next election? How will legislation supported sign lines make skiing better? Will the Ski Patrol be deputized? Is this a ploy to have the RCMP become the new Ski Patrol as the only solution to the inevitable lawlessness, and thereby saving the mountain operators BIG BUCKS?

Our first view of the implementation of the new signage system on our mountains confirms that

the lack of workers or the casual attitude of some has established or left closed signs in place where no

*For some people, just showing up is a dangerous condition, and no amount of signage can protect them.*

justification exist for them to be. It is fairly clear that the signs are intended to go up to inform visitors of unusually dangerous conditions. For some people, just showing up is a dangerous condition, and no

amount of signage can protect them. For others, steep ice bumps with rock points are just a way to concentrate the mind. Our mountains are not Disneyland, and the phony smiles of the chair operators will never change the simple reality that nature

is our master in the mountains, and we will have a greater experience by knowing and loving the power of the environment, than by reading a sign, telling us where to go.



*Jillia Mary*  
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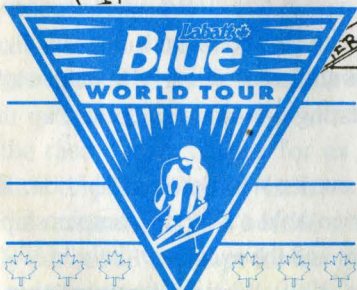
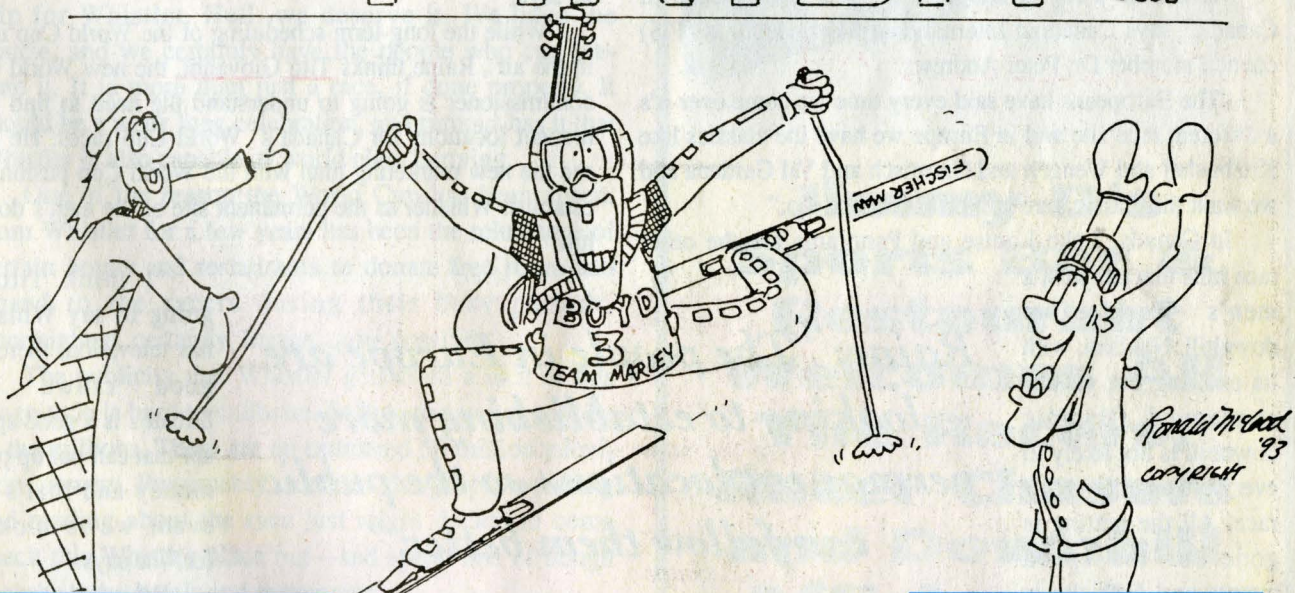
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WHISTLER  
MOUNTAIN  
SKI CLASSIC



# Whistler Could Be Permanent Site Of World Cup Downhill

By John Colebourn

Okay, ski racing aficionados, you know Whistler Mountain is hosting the men's World Cup downhill for the next five years. But what happens after the five-year contract is up?

Where will Franz, Hans and the rest of the gods of gliding head to in Canada for the season-ending races?

Right now it's anybody's guess.

One possibility is to keep the race permanently at Whistler and turn it into a classic race event like Kitzbuehel, Wengen, Garmisch and Val Gardena.

A strong lobby in Canadian ski racing circles is working behind the scenes to establish Whistler as the permanent site of the men's World Cup downhill.

"It makes a lot of sense to have a classic race in Canada," says Canadian International Ski Federation (FIS) council member Dr. Peter Andrews.

"The Europeans have said every time we come over it's a different race site and in Europe we have the classics like Kitzbuehel and Wengen and Garmisch and Val Gardena and we want the classic here in North America too."

In Canada, Lake Louise and Panorama are the other race hills that can host a men's World Cup downhill. Nakiska, with its exciting but weather-plagued Olympic downhill is not likely to ever hold another men's race. All the netting is gone for the speed events and Nakiska is now a training site for the national and provincial teams prior to the start of the season.

In the United States, Aspen hosts the mens downhill.

According to Andrews, Whistler can keep the men's downhill if it wants to after the five-year deal is up. Lake Louise, he points out does not want the race late in the season. The World Cup tour needs a large allotment of freebie accommodation when it goes to an area. One big reason Lake Louise is reluctant to hold late-season races is because the spring business is important to the area's revenue. A

race at the end of the season as well, does not have the marketing punch of a race early in the winter.

And despite the World Cup committee talking about revamping the schedule to meet the changing needs of the sport in the '90s, Andrews says the tour won't come across the Atlantic at the start of the season. "There will never be a men's downhill in December in Canada," points out Andrews.

Whistler's Al Raine, who last fall took over as Canada's World Cup Committee member, says it makes sense from a marketing perspective to have one permanent site. "The people in Europe are looking at establishing more permanent locations so the public can follow them better," he says.

While the long-term scheduling of the World Cup is up in the air, Raine thinks Tito Giovanni, the new World Cup commissioner is going to understand the need to find permanent locations for Canada's World Cup races. He also see the new marketing man with the World Cup pushing to establish Whistler as the permanent site of the men's downhill.

*Raine: "The people in Europe are looking to establishing more permanent locations so the public can follow them better."*

"I think Tito is going to say Whistler has television, there's a good crowd and Labatt's is a good sponsor that can put up prize money and that's the event we're looking for," he says.

Whistler's course is one the Europeans like.

Next year the men's downhill runs in early March, while the mountain is also hosting a women's World Cup the week before.

Andrews sees other events Whistler could bid on. He thinks the resort could even hold a World Championships. Spain has the 1995 Worlds and the event is in Italy in 1997. If Whistler bid for the 1999 World Championships, Andrews says the resort would have a good shot at becoming the host.

"Whistler would be a beautiful place for the World

# OPINION Whistler Back On World Cup Map

By Bob Colebrook

Being rated as the number one ski resort by some Yankee mag is nice, but hosting a World Cup race, particularly a downhill, is the true indicator of a world class ski area.

For one week Whistler will be the focus of the world skiing community, and the benefits this valley will accrue are enormous. These World Cup races are the big leagues, and it is only small minds who don't understand that fact.

Hosting a World Cup downhill is more than an ego trip for Whistler. Hell, we deserve it. We have the course, and we certainly have the people who can prepare it. It is more than just a race, if done properly. It should be a week long celebration, and rumour has it that Whistler is also capable of world class partying.

One of the reason the World Cup has been absent from Whistler for a few years has been the reluctance of certain hotels and restaurants to donate free room and board to the racers during their busy periods. Shortsighted, certainly. Insane, quite possibly.

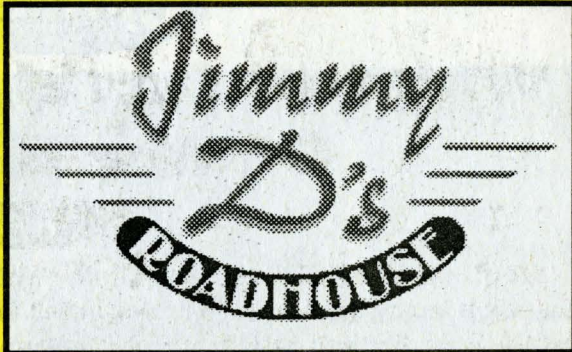
The publicity that Whistler gets from a race of this magnitude is hard to calibrate. Suffice to say it would be in the millions. There are an estimated 50 million television viewers. Presumably, some of the people watching and reading about the race just might decide to come check this Whistler place out—and spend lots of dough in those same hotels and restaurants.

In fact, the race itself, as outlined in a BCIT study, generates \$3.5 million directly into the economy.

Former mayor Drew Meredith knows the value of the race. "It's a chance for us to show the world what kind of place Whistler is. It's a time when everybody—the restaurateurs, the hoteliers, the mountain staff—really put out all the stops for our guests."

The race is perfect. It brings in money, generates prestige and is a hell of a lot of fun.

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# CANUCK PROFILE

## Back In The Saddle

**John Mealey**

*Born: Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario*

*Birth Date: 16/03/68*

*Residence: Sault Ste. Marie*

*Club: Sault Ski*

*Runners*

*Height: 174 cm, 5'7"*

*Weight: 76 kg, 168 lbs.*

*On team since: 1988-90, 1992*

Mealey is a reclamation project. Frequently injured and considered a discipline problem by the



MALCOLM CARMICHAEL PHOTO

**JOHN MEALEY**

Canadian coaching staff, he was dropped from the national team in the summer of 1990.

Few expected him back, least of all the

coaches. But Mealey had other ideas.

"I figured I had something to prove," he explains. "So I swallowed my pride, and decided to

go back to the Ontario team and see if I could work my way back up the national squad."

Mealey reached down within himself and came up with a dedication and determination few thought him capable of. On the Europa Cup circuit last year Mealey had good results, including a second in a downhill at Innsbruck. He had earned the necessary points needed for a return invitation to the national team, and his hard work paid off.

Mealey is the current Canadian downhill champion, winning this year's race at Lake Louise.

"I've never really won a big race... ever. This is a

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# CANUCK PROFILE

miracle," he said at the time. This will change my whole career."

Of the victory, teammate Roman Torn sums it up succinctly: "He worked hard for this, and he deserves it."

## His Skiing Is Very Gymnastic

### Cary Mullen

**Born:** Calgary, Alberta

**Birth Date:** 12/10/69

**Residence:** Banff, Alberta

**Club:** Banff Mtn.

**Academy**

**Height:** 181 cm, 5'9"

**Weight:** 82 kg, 181 lbs,

**On team since:** 1990

You may want to pay attention to Mullen, who finished the last race before the World Championships, in 11th spot. He finished less than a second behind tour leader and winner of the race at Veysonnaz, Franz Heinzer.

"There's no mistaking

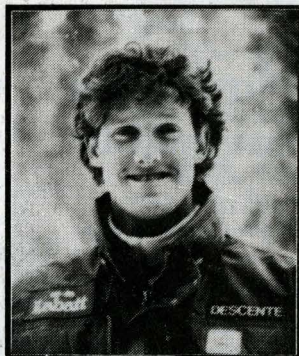
that talent," says coach Barrette. "He's a real locomotive—there's never enough work for Mullen. And he's not afraid of a little speed."

Mullen learned discipline from gymnastics, a sport he excelled at. In his early teens he dropped out of skiing to concentrate on gymnastics.

"For two years I had a Japanese coach who was very strict," he says about his gymnastic endeavors. "That's where I learned all about discipline."

Suffering a chronic back problem at fifteen, Mullen stopped gymnastics and surveyed the landscape. It had snow on it.

"I always dreamed of being a World Cup skier,"



**ROB BOYD**

See Page 35 For Boyd.



MALCOLM CARMICHAEL PHOTO

**CARY MULLEN**

he says. "I just figured I'd give gymnastics a try first. I knew I'd be able to transfer those skills to skiing, anyway..."

While Mullen sees himself primarily as a

downhill, his quick reflexes and powerful stature have helped his slalom skiing considerably, resulting in a 10th place finish in combined at the 1991 World



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# CANUCK PROFILE



**ROB CROSSAN**

Championships in Saalbach, Austria.

Unhappy with his performance last year, Mullen's chronic back problem has begun to affect his skiing.

"I'm always conscious of it," he says. "But I still have some goals I want to accomplish in ski

racing."

## From Crib To Chairlift

*Rob Crossan*

*Born: Barrie, Ontario*

*Birth Date: 13/03/68*

*Residence: Barrie, Ontario*

*Club: Toronto*

*Height: 182 cm, 5'10"*

*Weight: 85 kg, 188 lbs.*

*On team since: 1987*

Crossan first began to attract attention in 1987 when he finished among the top 25 in a World Cup race in Furano, Japan. But it his performance in the

technical events that are beginning to dominate now.

Swimming against the stream of specialization, Crossan likes to do it all.

"And down the road," he says, I really believe it will give me an edge."

Crossan posted Canada's best ever Super G result in the World Championships is Saalbach, Austria in 1991: 17th. He was also Canadian slalom champion in 1990 and 1992, and vice-champion in 1989.

Crossan comes from a true ski background. His parents met while they were both ski patrollers at Blue Mountain in Ontario.

"I went straight from the crib to the ski hill," he says.



**EDI PODIVINSKI**

invincible."

Podivinsky's first taste of World Cup success was in 1991 at Lake Louise, where he finished eleventh.

"It wasn't a stellar result or anything, but for me it was a big mental barrier to overcome. I've always had trouble picturing myself doing well at this level. Now I've realized it's not that big a deal."

His reaction to his first season on the World Cup circuit is perhaps typical.

"It was such a big deal for me. I'd always been sort of intimidated by the big European downhill—places like Kitzbuehel and Wengen. But then when I got there and skied them, I

## No Longer Invincible

*Edi Podivinsky*

*Born: Edmonton, Alberta*

*Birth Date: 03/08/70*

*Residence: Edmonton, Alberta*

*Club: Snow Valley*

*Height: 183 cm, 5'10"*

*Weight: 84 kg, 185 lb.*

*On team since: 1989*

Podivinsky was out for the season last year with a knee ligament injury during a training run on the Olympic course at Val d'Isere.

"It was the first really serious injury in my career," he says. "Up to that point I thought I was



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felt really comfortable.”

For the past three years Podivinsky has been spending time with both the technical and downhill teams. It has meant extra travel and training, but Podivinsky seems more than able to cope.

“Edi is not only a good downhiller,” says coach Barrette, “he has the potential of becoming a great combined skier too. And the nice thing is that he’s not afraid of hard work.”

Podivinsky appears to be recovering well from his injury, and with a 21st place at Veysonnaz in January, his confidence is returning.

## A Miracle Recovery

### *Brian Stemmlé*

**Born:** Toronto, Ontario  
**Birth Date:** 12/10/66  
**Residence:** Aurora, Ontario  
**Club:** Georgian Peaks  
**Height:** 177 cm, 5'8"  
**Weight:** 85 kg, 187 lbs.  
**On team since:** 1985

While Stemmlé didn't race in the last World Cup downhill at Whistler, in 1989, the race was for him. As soon as Rob Boyd was confirmed as the victor, Boyd informed the world that “this one's for you, Stemmlé.”

Stemmlé was still recovering from very serious injuries suffered on the deadly Kitzbuehel course the previous January. He caught a ski in the safety netting, and nearly pulled himself apart, suffering massive internal injuries. The prognosis wasn't good, doctors being unsure if Stemmlé would even walk again.

Stemmlé, however, had a different notion about his future. A year later, after two more operations and hundreds of hours of physiotherapy, he was back, ready to race.



### BRIAN STEMMLÉ

It is not even a slight exaggeration to declare his recovery one of the biggest comebacks in sport—any sport.

“I've never worked so hard in my life as I did during my rehab,” he says. “But then I never doubted my return to ski racing either.”

In the first downhill after his recovery, Stemmlé did nothing but win gold at the Pan American Winter Games in Bariloche, Argentina.

Four months later, in his to World Cup racing in Val d'Isere, Stemmlé placed a remarkable tenth. He followed that with a fifteenth in Val Gardena.

The European sports press began to stand up and take notice.

“Sure, it surprised me a little bit,” he admits. “But I did my best not to let it affect me too much. I knew how long the season was.”

Stemmlé has continued his remarkable comeback, finish fourth last year in Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

“My goal right now,” says Stemmlé, “is to learn to ski better technically—and get even stronger. I figure if I take care of those two things, the rest will take care of

itself.”

Who knows, maybe at Whistler in 1993, Stemmlé can tell the CBC crew in the finish area: “This one's for you, Robbie.”

## Gaining Lost Ground

### *Ralf Socher*

**Born:** Fernie, B.C.  
**Birth Date:** 06/04/67  
**Residence:** Fernie, B.C.  
**Club:** Elk Valley Ski Racers  
**Height:** 184 cm, 6'0"  
**Weight:** 84 kg, 185 lbs.  
**On team since:** 1987

One of the few positive results in a rather dismal season for the Canadians was Socher's run in St. Anton in January. Starting last (67th), Socher charged down a chopped up course to finish 23rd.

Socher is now starting to demonstrate some of the potential that has been thwarted by frequent injuries.

Socher started to show promise

# CANUCK PROFILE

in 1989, finishing 21st at Kitzbuehel. However, the following week at Wengen he shredded his knee.

"There I was," he remembers, "lying on the snow on a mountain in Switzerland with a very sore knee, listening to the announcer on the loudspeaker telling the crowd that I was sixth on the upper section of the course."

This crash took Socher out of action for nearly two years. He got tendonitis in the knee, and to get rid of it he had to build up the muscle, but to do so it irritated the joint. Consequently, his downhill ranking plummeted from 63rd to 117th.

"It was the delay factor that really hurt me. But then it also made me realize how badly I wanted to succeed at ski racing."

Socher's comeback was halted abruptly by another beater, this time at Val Gardena in 1991. Surgery was necessary yet again.

"I was just starting to put all the pieces back together," he says. "I spent most of the year fighting my way back up to where I'd left off."

With results like St. Anton, Socher is finally back where he left off, and seems to be poised to improve even further.

## The Local Angle

Despite being a hometown boy, Willy Raine won't be entering the Super G or downhill. The technical specialist has not been running the speed events this winter as he is concentrating on improving his ranking in slalom and giant slalom.

Whistler's other men's team member Rob Boyd doesn't have to look very far to remind him of his win on the Dave Murray Downhill in 1989. The soapstone carving he was given for first is on his mantelpiece.

National team therapist Terry "Toulouse" Spence has been up working the start since the World Cup first began coming to Whistler. Toulouse, who runs a bed and breakfast in Whistler, won't be at the start this time around. He's now with the women's team in Europe.

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## Back Up From The Minors

### Darren Thorburn

*Born: New Glasgow, Nova Scotia*

*Birth Date: 26/06/70*

*Residence: Calgary, Ontario*

*Club: Mt. Norquay*

*Height: 178 cm, 5'8"*

*Weight: 73 kg, 162 lbs.*

*On team since: 1990*

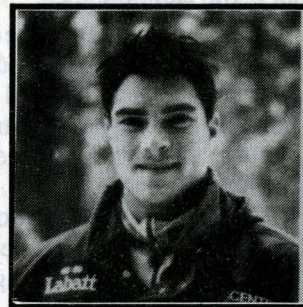
As a young racer at Sunshine Village, Thorburn got bored with racing slalom and GS. At his first downhill at Lake Louise, Thorburn saw the light.

"Being on the edge like that, doing anything on the course to be the fastest down the hill—I knew that was for me," he says.

"I like to go full out—not hold back anything. And that's exactly the way downhill is."

Thorburn's jump in 1990 to the World Cup circuit turned out to be premature.

"It was a big step," he acknowledges. "I went into it thinking I could handle the pressure. What I didn't realize



**DARREN THORBURN**

was how tough the competition was."

In January 1991, a frustrated Thorburn asked to be transferred down to the Europa Cup circuit. The coaches obliged, and his good results on that circuit help boost his confidence. In five downhills he never finished worse than twelfth, with a third place finish at Badgastein.

Returning to the World Cup circuit last year, Thorburn's results were less than spectacular, only he did manage a 30th place finish at Garmisch.

"There's a lot to learn at this level," he says. "Even small mistakes are costly. But I'm getting stronger—and more mature in my preparation. I'm really feeling good about this season."

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# CANUCK PROFILE

## Bad Luck In The Past

### Roman Torn

**Born:** Usti nad Labem, Czechoslovakia  
**Birth Date:** 17/04/67  
**Residence:** Burnaby, B.C.  
**Club:** Grouse Mountain Tyee  
**Height:** 177 cm, 5'8"  
**Weight:** 77 kg, 170 lbs.  
**On team since:** 1988

When Willie Dixon wrote "if it weren't for bad luck, I wouldn't have no luck at all," he just might've been writing Roman Torn's life story. Torn deserved to have the blues, big time.

Chosen for the Canadian team at twenty, Torn was soon dropped. His skiing started to improve, only to have the progress nullified by injury. Posting good results in training, Torn would often push it too hard on race day, resulting in falls and injuries.

Off the slopes, things weren't a whole lot better. While playing soccer during dry-land training in Europe in 1989, he pierced his foot on a wooden stake stuck in the ground. Infection set in, and almost progressed to the point where amputation would've been necessary.

In the summer of 1990 Torn barely escaped from a house fire here in Whistler, and while he got out with his life, he lost his entire summer wages in the inferno.

"Yeah, I really started to wonder if somebody had put a spell on me," he says with a sheepish grin. "I didn't know where to turn."

Whoever was sticking pins into the Roman Torn voodoo doll has given it a rest. With two healthy—if unspectacular—World Cup seasons under his belt, and the Canadian title last year to boost his morale, Torn seems poised to score a top-fifteen result.

"He's even smiling these days," laughs head coach Germain Barrette. "And for Torn, that's a big step."



MALCOLM CARMICHAEL PHOTO

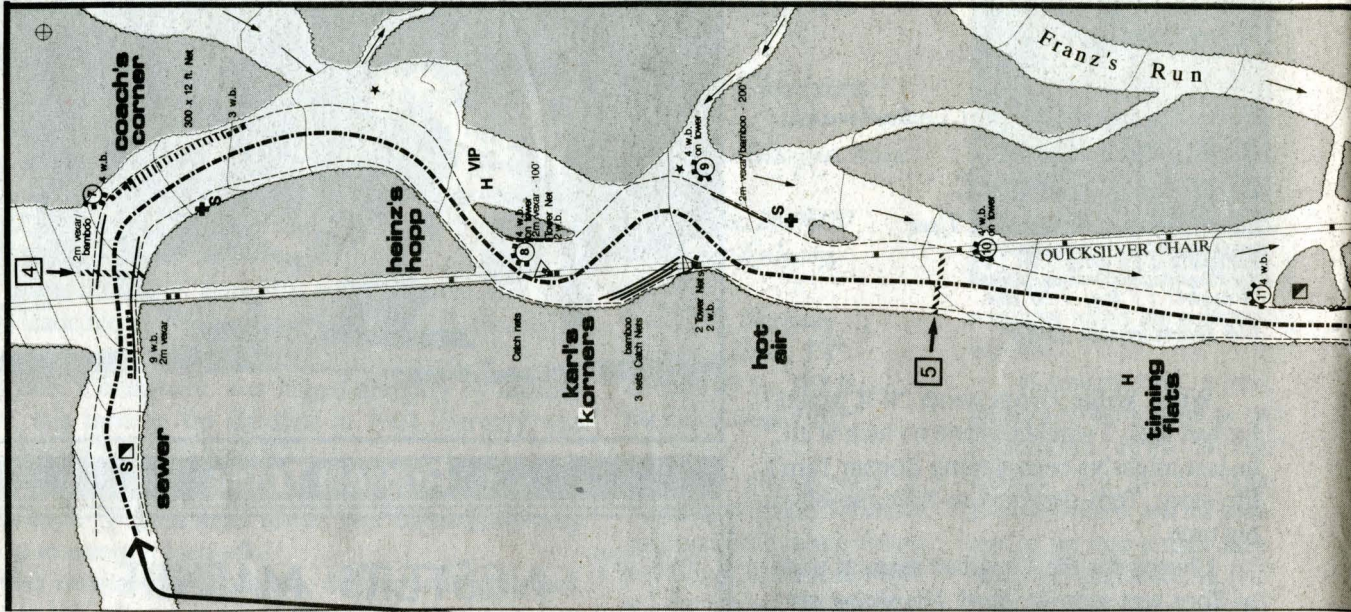
ROMAN TORN

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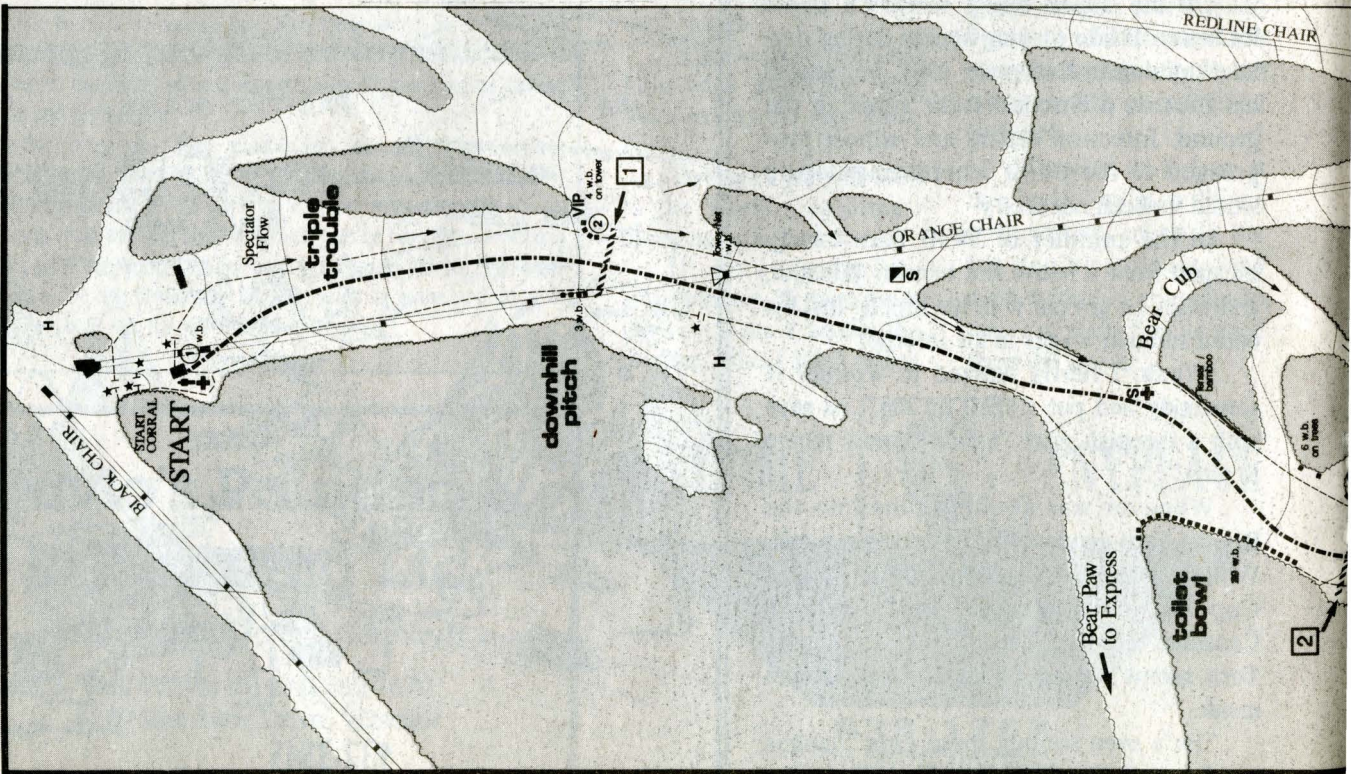
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# DAVE MURRAY

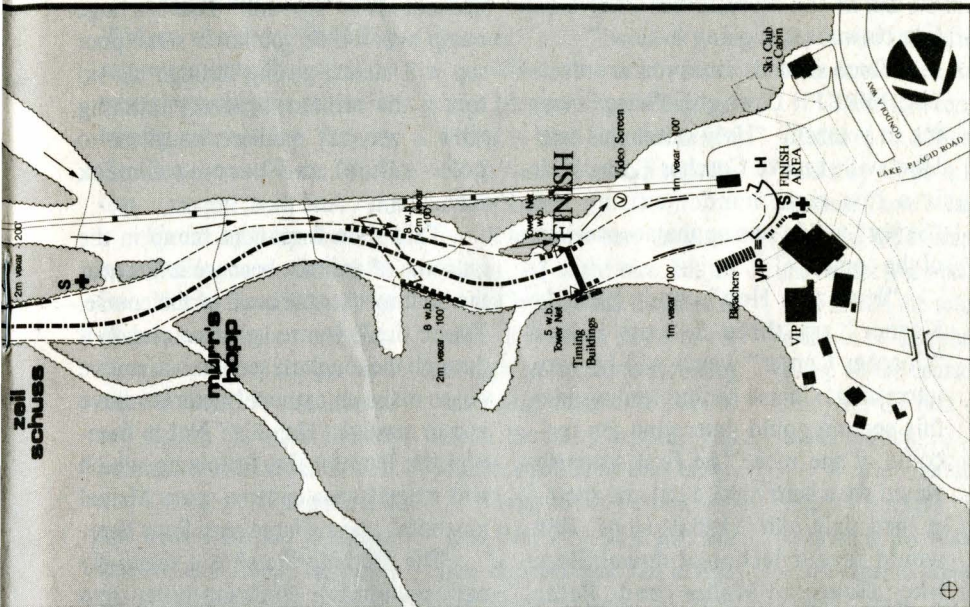


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# DOWNHILL



## Whistler ANSWER

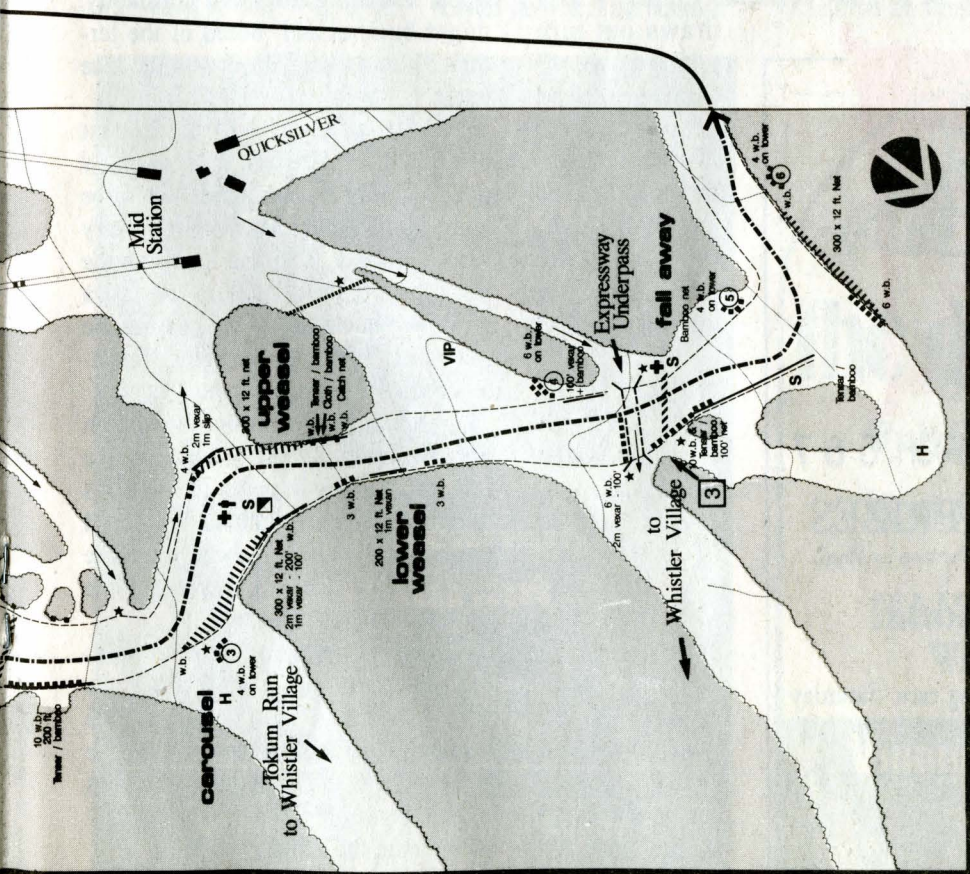
### A Racer's Perspective

By Chris Kent

As the racers stand in the start shack of the "Dave Murray Downhill" at the "Labatt Blue Whistler Mountain Ski Classic" there will be a slightly altered track sounding through their brains. Whistler's course has always been amongst the most challenging courses in the world. It is one which most racers consider the ultimate test of the late season races. One over which Canadians salivate in anticipation.

It is the site of Canada's most exciting downhill victory when, in 1989, Rob Boyd nipped out the Euro challengers on his back yard course. It is a downhillers downhill, a masterpiece.

From the start racers quickly accelerate to about 110 KM/H into 3 bumps called "Triple Trouble" pressed and landed in succession. Following is a minor lull on a flat allowing for adrenal



build up as the course's tempo increases into the meat of it.

"Toilet Bowl" follows the flat on which your speed abruptly reaches 120 KMH. Quickened footwork is required to stay on line through the left in "Carousel" and then right into "Weasel". Within "Weasel" you're thrown down a steep double walled pitch with two direction changes and two bumps. This leads to a compression with knee pounding speed and head rattling terrain. Fooled into slight submission on the flat you barrel glide your skis before more action with a quick left, right and right and big left over "Fall Away". This is where Boyd risked himself in 1989 taking a straight line after getting late and flew with foot at ear height but landing cat-like brilliantly recovering and carrying speed onto the flat. Felix Belczyk erred here in that race and it hurled his helpless body into the net below. Hanging in the

net like a salmon he must have thought "I should have had quicker feet!"

A painfully slow, short flat follows on which the racer thinks "My God I've blown it, I'm going so slow!"

Three seconds later you're traveling 130 KPH down the "Sewer" saying to yourself, "Holy shit is this fast! How will I make Coaches Corner?" It is a fast right hander exiting the "Sewer" which sets up the new section of the course.

"Heinz's Hop" and "Karl's Korner" are three S turns below "Coaches Corner" which will be very interesting. Course setting leading into this section could determine the outcome of the race. The first scenario would see a hard right, a left and another hard right into "Heinz's Hop." This would favour technical downhillers like Gunther Mader and Peter Runggaldier. The second option would be to make "Coaches Corner" a long

drawn out turn which would favour speed demons like Daniel Mahrer, Patrick Ortlieb and Rob Boyd. Who will the course setter like this week?

Through "Heinz's Hop," Boyd and Stemmler will hear in their subconscious ear an irritating Austrian accented voice chanting "keep going boys, keep going." Heinz Stohl's favourite coaching line, and ex-Canadian team coach for whom the section is named.

A quick left right through "Karl's Korner" and there it is.

Ominous, looming, seemingly upshoot-ish is "Hot Air." This is a huge bump over which you know some poor sap will launch gazing through his ski tips at the brilliant blue sky thinking "this is why my mother wanted me to go to school and become a meek accountant." And then, impact.

This is an important bump in the outcome of the race because it lies near the bottom after the meat of the course. You're tired, you're glad you made it through the toughest section but you've got to make an extremely precise move just to survive "Hot Air." Not to mention the lengthy flat following which will magnify any airtime error. Mental toughness plays a large part down here.

The "Timing Flats" is a relatively easy section but don't get lulled into submission. You must work every little ripple searching for speed constantly, thighs burning and bored of the terrain. This is where Boyd won the race in 89.

"Murr's Hopp" will be the last obstacle after the flats. It is an easily negotiated bump but, again, not to be taken lightly. Peter Mueller won every section time in 1986 and lost it on the last bump. If the conditions are fast a move will be needed to get back on the snow fast. With burning thighs screaming it's not as easy as it looks.

After tucking through the finish line the job is not yet done. This is a fast finish and when you're tired this stopping is no cake walk on this sloped finish area. Before you check your time come to a full stop. We've seen some substantial falls at this finish.

Whew, what a race course. Mothers, take your eyes off the race when your son is on course. We wouldn't want to scare you now. We're going to have a great time at "Labatt's Blue Whistler Mountain Ski Classic." Be there for the action!



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# Wonderful & Wacky Weasel Workers

Their prowess on a race course is legendary.

They're Whistler's Weasel Workers, who every World Cup race work tirelessly behind the scenes preparing the course for training and race day. They are the silent heroes of the World Cup.

It's no easy task as it is often back-breaking work. Getting the Dave Murray Downhill ready for the best racers in the world takes months of preparation and requires about 350 volunteers to buff and net the course to meet international race standards.

Having a well-prepared and safe track is the key to a good race, and each World Cup stop in Whistler the Weasel Workers have put their magic to the hill from dawn to dusk. They'll do

everything they can to see the race go off. The weather, unfortunately has on occasion been their nemesis.

Whistler's course workers have become so good they get invited to other big races around North America to help with the course work.

It has never been the glamorous part of the race, but the Weasel Workers take their task in stride. If it snows, they'll be out all night on the course shovelling and doing whatever it takes to make the race happen. The weather won't defeat them easily.

Many of the workers, who come from all walks of life, take time off from their jobs to help with the course work. "As far as downhill work goes they're considered the best in the business,"

says Peter Young, Whistler Mountains's director of racing.

"In fact a number of them get farmed out each year to big races across North America."

There is a certain mindset needed to be a Weasel Worker. And they all do it for different reasons. There's the camaraderie in putting the finishing touches to the course. And when the event is over there's the satisfaction and pride in putting their personal stamp on the course so that it's ready for the best downhillers money can buy.

A good number of this year's workers have been involved in the World Cup since it first came to Whistler in 1975. Owen Carney, Rod MacLeod, Bill McNeney and Sonny O'Sullivan are familiar faces at

each World Cup. There are many other volunteers who work endlessly at the job they are assigned.

"It's an amazing thing," says Carney, the chief of course. "Each year we get more applications for course crew than we can handle. We've got 350 volunteers signed up this year and we had to turn nearly 250 away."

Oh, and how did they get the Weasel Worker monicker? It comes from the early days of the World Cup when they had to spend endless hours bootpacking and preparing the Weasel.

And how do you spot a Weasel Worker? They're the ones on race day who look like they could use a good sleep.

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*Dr. J.P. McConkey: A Smooth Operator*

# National Ski Team's Orthopedic Surgeon Is A Busy Man

*By Doctor Jake Onrot*

*World Cup and another deadline loom, so let's talk "ski medicine". Who better to discuss this than Dr. J.P. (Pat) McConkey, a man who knows my knee inside-out? Pat is an orthopedic surgeon at the University of British Columbia Health Sciences Centre and the Allan McGavin Sports Medicine Clinic, and the Western consultant for the Canadian National Alpine Ski Team. He has written extensively on knee injuries and operated on many of our local heroes (and weekend warriors). We both share a passion for skiing and for Whistler living and had a chat earlier this week.*

**Jake:** You sport a pretty famous Whistler ski name. When did you first start skiing?

**Pat:** Even though I'm a Westerner, I didn't really start until my mid-20's as an intern in Montreal. I didn't start skiing a lot until the early 80's. I got involved with the ski team after operating on Ken Read in 1981. My first year, 1982, I went to

Kitzbuehel. I had these old 200 Pre's, slalom skis, and I got on the Hahnenkahn and I couldn't turn. I was at the top and they said, "If anyone gets hurt you've got to ski down and help them out." It was a

time with Irwin and Murray and John Ritchie. Murray kept saying, "Don't ski anywhere near me, you'll ruin my form, I can't watch you." I had to get better in a big hurry.

**Jake:** So, I guess it helps to be an avid skier. Could a non-skier do your job with the team?

**Pat:** I think it's important that somebody understands what ski racers do, their psyche. Obviously, anyone who does a lot of knee ligament work can do the technical aspects, but it helps to be involved, to know the coaches, to know the training program, the obligations of the sport. You can't tell about the life of a

downhill ski racer and the pressures that are on them unless you're involved.

**Jake:** Have you ever told anyone they'd never return to competitive skiing and been proven wrong?

**Pat:** Well, sort of... I did once and was essentially right. You don't take that approach, however. If someone ever has a bad injury

so key at 140 km/hr, the things that give guys the edge, they must lose something.

**Jake:** Yet skiers can come back and even be dominant, like a Heinzer.

**Pat:** Well, look at Kerrin Lee-Gartner. She had both knees done.

**Jake:** Chris Kent, in these pages, has been critical of ski team officials for rushing skiers

*What's up Doc? Dr. J.P. McConkey is the ski team's orthopedic surgeon and has repaired the knees of all the country's top skiers, including the Answer's medical correspondent, Doc Jake (in shorts!).*



you say, "this is a bad injury and maybe you ought to consider not racing." But your goals and the patient's goals are to get them as good as they can be and to get them back into some element of the skiing industry. I try not to be negative. The worst knee injury I've seen was a dislocated knee. I told the patient he shouldn't ski competitively... and he is skiing now. He tried to go back to racing. You have to be positive. I know that no skier's knee will ever be as good as it was before they got hurt. If you measure their strength, their proprioception, all those things that are

back into action too quickly. Do you agree that this is a problem?

**Pat:** Well, it's not the officials who rush them back, it's the racers themselves.

**Jake:** Do you let skiers talk you out of a more conservative approach even if you're against them going back?

**Pat:** I haven't been faced with it. I have the confidence of the guys and they listen. It depends on the nature of the problem. I deal with the guys from the west so I can't comment on the eastern skiers. But I do take some personal interest and take it as my job

to do the best I can. I try to bring them through a safe retraining program and inform them as best I can about the nature of the injury and the level of expectations and then move them through a graduated program. Then they will understand that their body will tell them when they are ready.

It's not just operation, rehabilitation and muscle-strengthening, it has to do with on-skis, making gradually-increasing difficult maneuvers until they prove to themselves that they can handle different situations. So, that takes months; it's not me telling them, it's them and me working through all of the steps to the final step, the heat of battle, the two minute run. But, they've been all the way to that point with proof that they can do it.

The time frame goes out the window. I accelerate the time frame because I know their potential for retraining, recovery, and muscle strength as well as the nature of the sport.

**Jake:** Just like my accelerated recovery program?

**Pat:** (Laughs).

**Jake:** What is the most important determinant of recovery? Is it the extent of the injury, the operation or the athlete?

**Pat:** Obviously, it's the athlete. You're dealing with unbelievably dedicated athletes who have huge special skills and incredible inner strength. I know I'll get maximum rehabilitation with minimum hassle. I have to make sure I hold them back and inform them of the risks and be very specific. To be honest, you're going to be successful because they're an easy bunch to work with. It's a pretty standard technical thing that I do and you're working with the best material.

**Jake:** Have you ever been on the wrong end of the orthopedic surgeon's knife?

**Pat:** No, but I'm not afraid as far as my knees are concerned. Everybody talks about the danger, but I don't have that fear. I know I'll be skiing again within a year. But from a surgeon's standpoint, I'd worry about a head injury or a bad injury to my arm or a bad collision with abdominal trauma or a fractured hip. A guy my age breaks his hip and that's the end of skiing.

**Jake:** How about the hometown boy's

prospects in Whistler?

**Pat:** Robbie Boyd is going about things the right way. He's getting his feel for the snow, his feel for the competition, making his moves. It's a retraining process. He's pushing harder, pushing harder each time, getting the feel for the different snow conditions.

**Jake:** How about the team as a whole?

**Pat:** Well, they had a terrible injury year last year. Stemmle was just coming back and Podivinsky, Bosinger, Socher, and Boyd all had knee surgery. So, they're going well now, all things considered.

**Jake:** Who is the Canadian to watch?

**Pat:** Well, I think Robbie is the guy. He's skiing his home course. You've gotta be positive.

**Jake:** What equipment do you ski on?

**Pat:** I'm on Rossi's and Raichles, just like Kerrin Lee-Gartner in the old days. She's on Volkls now.

**Jake:** So, does Max know anything about this?

**Pat:** (Chuckles). I know her very well. Kerrin Lee-Gartner is a fine athlete. She

would have pulled all of this stuff off four years ago if she hadn't injured

both knees. Dryland training, indoor soccer, golf, or volleyball, she can do all of those things; she's very strong. Some of the girls are great skiers but don't excel at other things.

**Jake:** So, I assume you operated on her knees?

**Pat:** Yes.

**Jake:** How did it feel when she won the gold medal in Albertville?

**Pat:** That had to be the best. It's the first time.... the first time anybody I'd operated on had won a race afterward. I operated on many who came awful close. Ken Read came back in 1982 after his knee ligament operation, at mid-season he was running second in World Cup points. At St. Anton, he had the first start number, he was trying so hard, he was just flying and then he missed a gate. He wanted it so badly. So Kerrin Lee-Gartner was the first. So you can say, "That's great" or "why the hell didn't it happen before now?"

**Jake:** It's the athlete not the surgeon, just like you said.

“

*Robbie Boyd is going about things the right way. He's getting his feel for the snow, his feel for the competition, making his*

*moves.*

”



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## RACER PROFILE

### Franz Heinzer: *A Real Safe Bet*

If the Las Vegas odds makers dabbled in anything as important as downhill skiing, they would have to make Switzerland's Franz Heinzer the odds-on favourite for the Whistler Mountain Ski Classic.

With this year's overall downhill title already tucked away in his fanny pack, Heinzer, after nearly ten years of spotty results, emerged in 1991 as the World Cup downhill champion, a feat he duplicated in 1992.

The late blooming Heinzer finally emerged from teammate Pirmin Zurbriggen's shadow to win races on the world's best tracks, including Kitzbuehel, Wengen, St. Anton, Val Gardena, Saalback, Lake Louise and Aspen.

During the 1980s, the native of

Rickenbach, Switzerland scored periodic single downhill victories, but it wasn't until the 90s that he began to dominate.

As far back as 1981 Heinzer was regarded as the future of the Swiss team.

"He had it all," says former Olympic downhill champion Bernhard Russi. "Everyone thought he would become the great Swiss downhiller of the 80's."

It was not to be. But the intense, serious and quiet Heinzer persevered to become a true champion.

"For me he is the all-time best downhiller," notes Russi. "No skier before him has ever mastered so many elements of the sport. I'm really impressed by the way he glides, jumps, turns, fights."

High praise indeed, and if you should run into one of those Las Vegas bookmakers, you might think about wagering a sawbuck or two.

### Franz Heinzer

Born: Rickenbach, Switzerland

Birthdate: 11/04/62

Height: 1.82 m

Weight: 82 kg

Years on World Cup circuit: 12

World Cup downhill champion: 1991, 1992

World Cup Super-G champion: 1991

World Championship gold medal: 1991

#### World Cup Career Highlights (1st place finishes)

12/91 — Val Gardena

01/92 — Kitzbuehel

01/92 — Kitzbuehel

01/92 — Wengen

01/90 — Val Gardena

01/91 — Kitzbuehel

02/91 — Saalback

02/91 — Lake Louise

03/91 — Aspen

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## RACER PROFILE

# Marc Girardelli: Father Knows Best?

In the age of specialization, Girardelli has done what no one else has been able to do: win World Cup victories in all disciplines. Girardelli's expertise in both technical and speed events have garnered him numerous World Cup titles. He was World Cup giant slalom champion in 1985; World Cup downhill champion in 1989; World Cup slalom champion in 1985, 1986, 1989 and 1991; and World Cup Overall champion in 1985, 1986, 1989 and 1991. On the way to all these titles he has won more World Cup races than any other skier on the circuit: 39.

Depending on your perspective, Girardelli's extraordinary success has been a result, or despite of, his unique relationship with his father/coach. You've heard of stage mothers, but how about piste fathers?

As a junior racing for his native Austria, Girardelli showed exceeding promise. His father, Helmut, locked horns with the Austrian Ski Federation over training methods. The elder Girardelli thought he could do a better job training his son.

"They didn't realize the kind of talent they were dealing with," says Helmut Girardelli. "A good coach must adapt his training techniques to the racer and not the other way around. But they did not agree with this."

At an impasse, the Girardelli's decided to learn a new national anthem, approaching Luxembourg for a racing license for the then fourteen year old prodigy.

Girardelli has dominated World Cup skiing despite this unique set of circumstances and many injuries. Girardelli has been under the knife thirteen times in the last ten years, mainly on his knees and shoulders.

In hindsight, it appears Girardelli regrets the convoluted route he has taken to the top of the World Cup world.

"If I were a teenager again and I had to start all over," he says, "I would join a team and train with a group of athletes. It is extremely hard to succeed on your own."

About his twenty year skiing relationship with his father, Girardelli says: "We have a good system working.

First we do it his way. And when it doesn't work, we finally do it my way."

Whatever way he's doing it, you can't knock success, and Girardelli has an insurmountable lead for his fifth World Cup Overall title.

### Marc Girardelli

Born: Lustenau, Austria

Birthdate: 19/7/63

Height: 178 cm

Weight: 85 kg

Races For: Luxembourg

Years on World Cup circuit: 13

World Cup downhill champion: 1989

World Cup slalom champion: 1985, 1986, 1989, 1991

World Cup Overall champion: 1985, 1986, 1989, 1991

World Cup GS champion: 1985

Olympics: 1992 silver in Super G and GS

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booze and it should be a wild blowout.

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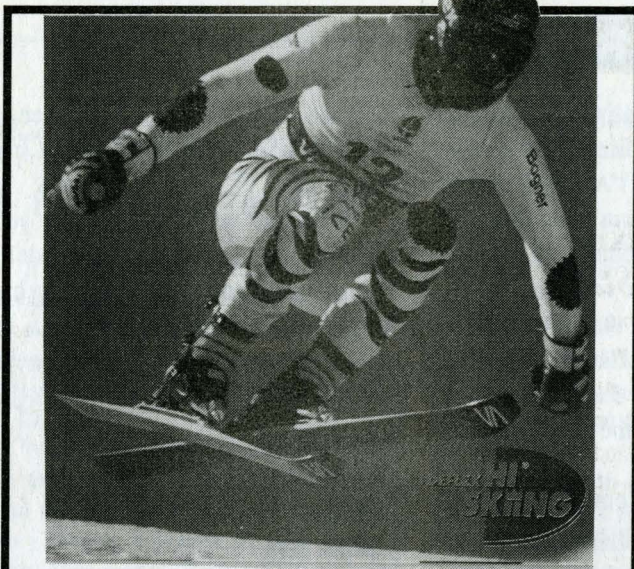
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## RACER PROFILE

### Gunther Mader

#### *Austria*

The best technical skier on the circuit, Mader is a renegade who has decided to train on his own, and has opted out of the Austrian team program.

Mader has won World Cup victories in slalom, giant slalom and super G, but a downhill victory has so far eluded him. However, he came within a pubic hair of a downhill victory last year at Panorama, where he lost the downhill gold to Switzerland's William Besse by .01 of a second.

However, Mader did win the Panorama super G, and should be considered a real threat in Whistler's super G.

Soap opera fans may be interested to know that Mader dated Canadian women's team member Karen Percy before she met N.Y. Ranger and part owner of Whistler's Boston Pizza, Kevin Lowe. Percy then dropped Mader like a hot potato.

### Kjettl Andre Aamodt

#### *Norway*

A shining example of the strong developmental program now in effect in Norway, Aamodt won the Olympic gold medal in Super G last year at the age of twenty. Aamodt is a long shot in the Whistler downhill, but it is a different story in the Super G, as he has been consistently climbing the podium.

Aamodt's goal is to surpass Alberto Tomba and Marc Girardelli and take the World Cup overall title.

"I'm in no hurry," says Aamodt. "I know I can still improve a lot in my skiing, but the main thing for me is that I'm still having fun ski racing."

### Daniel Mahrer

#### *Switzerland*

North America has been very, very good for Daniel Mahrer. Last year at Panorama's two downhills he finished first and second. He then followed that with a first at Aspen.

"I like racing in North America," he says. "There is not so much pressure as in Europe. It's more relaxed. It's fun again."

Consistent is the best way to describe Mahrer. Since 1989 he hasn't finished worse than fourth in the overall World Cup downhill standings. (Last year he was second.)

But toiling in the shadows of teammate superstars like Pirmin Zurbriggen, Peter Mueller and more recently, Franz Heinzer, has not been easy.

"Yes, it's frustrating at times," he says. "But I race downhill because I love it. Not because I want attention."

Mahrer looked like he was losing it at the start of this season. He finished ninth at Val Gardena, followed by a disgusting 25th at Garmisch in early January. But twenty-four hours later, in a make-up race for the cancelled Val d'Isere race, Mahrer

## RACER PROFILE

bolted down the Kandahar course to record the best time of the day.

Mahrer was back. The question remaining is, can he keep his North American streak alive?

### William Besse Switzerland

At last year's Olympics, Besse fell victim to the numbers game and was dropped from the Swiss Olympic team. This disappointment must've acted as a real kick in the butt for Besse, for after the Olympic break he came back to win gold in Panorama and silver in Aspen. As a result, Besse climbed to seventh overall in last year's downhill standings.

Besse carried this success over to this year, winning gold in Val Gardena in the first race, silver in the second. He then followed that with a bronze at Veysonnaz.

All this success has taken Besse by surprise. "All this is so new to me," he

says, "that I'm not sure I've fully realized what is happening."

### A.J. Kitt United States

If Kitt were on your team you'd call him "intense." If he were an opponent you'd probably call him "arrogant." Perhaps this perception problem is merely the inability to understand the great tradition of rugged individualism so cherished in the U.S.A.

"Don't be fooled by the earring and the close-cropped, punky hair," says U.S. head coach, Ueli Luthi. "The guy is all business on the ski hill. And he works his tail off."

Kitt emerged from obscurity in 1980, when his world downhill ranking jumped from 79 to 8.

"That was a big season for me," says Kitt. "That's when I started to believe I could really do it on this circuit."

Last year Kitt finished third overall in downhill standings, with season highlights being a first at Val d'Isere, a second in the Hahnenkamm in Kitzbuehel, and a third here in Canada at Panorama.

Kitt suffered a serious ankle sprain only weeks before the start of this season, and was robbed of a victory in the season opener at Val d'Isere when the race was cancelled because of bad weather. Kitt was in the lead after the first seed had all completed the course. Kitt finished third the following week at Val Gardena.

"I want my Super G to be as good as my downhill," he says, "and I want to win on steep icy downhill courses."

We apologize, for at press time we don't know what the initials A.J. stand for. However, we have sent a team of fourteen investigative journalists on a mission to find out.

He is not related, however, to A.J. Foyt or the blond guy on Simon & Simon.

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**Markus Wasmeier  
Germany**

The speculation is that this is Wasmeier's last season on the World Cup circuit. Placing fourth in the Olympic downhill last year, Wasmeier's expectations were higher, like maybe three places. He was noticeably deflated with the result, particularly in light of the good results he was getting just prior to the Olympics.

"I thought I was ready for the Olympics this time," he said. "And I believe I skied well there. Unfortunately, there were others who skied better than I did."

A consistent performer, Wasmeier regrouped, and finished the season seventh overall and sixth in the downhill.

Canadian snow has traditionally been good to Wasmeier. Last year at Panorama he finished fourth in both the Super G and downhill races. He has also won Super G's at Lake Louise and Whistler.

**Atle Skaardal  
Norway**

Canada had the Crazy Canucks, now Norway has the Young Vikings. In the speed events they emerged in the late 1980s, led by Atle Skaardal. In January

of 1990 he won in Kitzbuehel to record his first World Cup victory. While that race can be dismissed as Mickey Mouse due to the fact that lack of snow forced organizers to shorten the course and hold two runs, Skaardal went on to silence his detractors.

A month after the Kitzbuehel race, Skaardal went on the post a victory in downhill at Are, Sweden. He finished the season second in the downhill standings, a feat he repeated in 1991.

Regarded as an Olympic gold medal threat last year, Skaardal crashed in Garmisch a month before, forcing a two month layoff and crushing his Olympic hopes.

Skaardal has produced consistent top ten results this year on both downhill and Super G, and is a serious contender for both Whistler races.

**Patrick Ortlieb  
Austria**

Racing on a course he detested, Ortlieb nonetheless came away from Albertville last year with the downhill gold, Austria's only medal.

"I hope this is not the future of downhill. It is much more exciting to watch this downhill than to

race it. It is my hope that we never have to race here again." Ortlieb said of the course. Ortlieb should find the Dave Murray Downhill course more to his liking.

Ortlieb picked an opportune time to attain his potential. Prior to the Olympics he finished second in Garmisch and third in Kitzbuehel.

A consistent racer, Ortlieb finished fourth in the overall downhill standings last year, finishing in the top ten in all but one World Cup downhill. (Panorama, where he placed eleventh.)

Ortlieb has carried his success over to this year, placing third in Val Gardena and finishing .01 behind Heinzer for a secondplace finish at Veysonnaz on January 24.

**Leonard Stock  
Austria**

Stock's been around the World Cup circuit for longer than anyone can remember.

Stock first came to prominence in 1979, finishing second overall on the World Cup circuit. In 1980, injuries resulted in Stock being taken by the Austrians to the Olympics at Lake Placid as a spare. His results in training, however, had him elevated to the team. Naturally, he won the gold medal.

## RACER PROFILE

While Stock piled up many seconds, thirds and fourth place finishes during the 1980s, it would be nearly ten years before he climbed onto the top spot on the podium. His victory almost three years ago at Laax, Switzerland dispelled any retirement rumours.

Stock stunned the racing world this past December in Val Gardena, winning the race by nearly half a second and becoming the oldest racer to every win a World Cup race (He'll be 35 in March.)

"I thought I'd lost it in the Camel Bumps when I committed a trademark Stock mistake," he said later that day. Stock mistimed the difficult jump and completely opened up, losing valuable time.

"I was really angry with myself and attacked the bottom half. To my great surprise, my time was the fastest of the day."

Stock has a good chance in the Whistler downhill, for he is no stranger to our podium, finished third at the 1986 race.

Sadly, this is the last chance to see Stock perform. He's finally retiring, after a distinguished career that was as good as it was long.

## Jan Einer Thorsen

### Norway

Thorsen is an equal threat in both the downhill and Super G. Last year's Olympic bronze medalist, Thorsen currently leads the Super G standings. His second place finish in the downhill at Val Gardena is proof of his proficiency in the downhill. (Thorsen got a second last year at the Panorama downhill.)

A product of the very successful Norwegian program, Thorsen displays awesome technical skiing skills.

"There is no other country that is producing such well disciplined and technically proficient racers," says a long-time coach on the World Cup circuit. "They must have an outrageously good junior development program."

Thorsen is a few years older than some of his more visible teammates, which is why his recent success has been so satisfying to him.

"With all the Norwegians doing so well," says Thorsen, "the expectations for me were quite high. I am not the youngest on the team, but now what I've gone through is worth it."



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# DAVE MURRAY'S SPIRIT LIVES ON

*By John Colebourn*

No race hill was too tough, party too long or challenge too great.

On and off the mountain Dave Murray was ski racing in Whistler.

It was a fitting tribute to the charter member of the Crazy Canucks when Whistler Mountain named its world-class downhill in his honour.

In 1989 cancer cut short his life at the age of 37, but Murray's commitment and enthusiasm for ski racing lives on today in Whistler at all levels of the sport.

After ten years on the national ski team, Murray turned his attention to teaching others the sport he loved when he retired in 1982. He was a driving force behind the Canadian Masters Alpine Series and the Dave Murray Foundation has been set up to financially help promising young racers.

With his big grin, dry wit and go-for-broke downhill style, Murray loved racing Whistler's World Cup downhill. To him the White Circus stop in Whistler had everything: a very challenging course and a hell of a party to boot.

For Murray, there was only one way to race and it was always full bore. When asked why the Canadian racers were doing so well in Europe, Murray summed up life in the fast lane. "Europeans thought there was really no way Canadians could be doing this well unless they were bad-ass crazy," he said.

On a race course Murray knew only one

way to get down the mountain. "There's no way I can go less than flat out in a race," he said. "Every race, I try my hardest. I pretend it's my last race because it could be."

After retiring from the national ski team in 1982, Murray moved to Whistler and became director of skiing at Whistler Mountain. He was instrumental in the the running of the World Cups in '84, M'86 and '89. Watching hometown boy Rob Boyd win the downhill at Whistler was especially rewarding for Murray. It was the first time a Canadian man won a World Cup downhill on home turf and he loved it.

Throughout his racing career Murray came close to a win but a victory remained elusive. He finished second behind Ken Read by mere hundredths of a second on two occasions at World Cup downhills in France and Austria. In 1979 he was ranked third in the world in downhill.

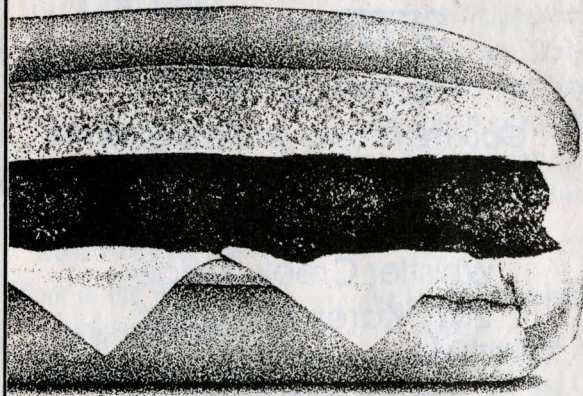
The talent on a race hill earned Murray recognition around the world. He was named B.C. Athlete of the Year in 1979 and was inducted into the B.C. Sports Hall of Fame in 1985. In 1990, posthumously, Murray's name was added to the Canadian Ski Museum's Honour Roll of Skiing.

Murray's prowess on a race course was only part of what made him so special. He had time for everyone and loved being on a ski hill, helping those far less talented learn how to ski gates.

It was fun running gates with Murray offering endless amounts of encouragement and pointers. He felt teaching adults to race was important in getting ski racing a higher profile

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*Dave Murray, right, with fellow Crazy Canuck Steve Podborski at the cancelled 1979 World Cup Downhill at Whistler.*

around Canada. More exposure would help the national team in its fundraising efforts as well, he felt.

"When I retired from racing I started looking around for some way to be part of Whistler and noticed how few older skiers were taking lessons," he said of his initial interest in adult racing. "And with the philosophy that the essence of skiing is wanting to do it better, I started the Masters ski camps."

There are so many warm memories of Dave Murray. In Whistler his rich legacy lives on.

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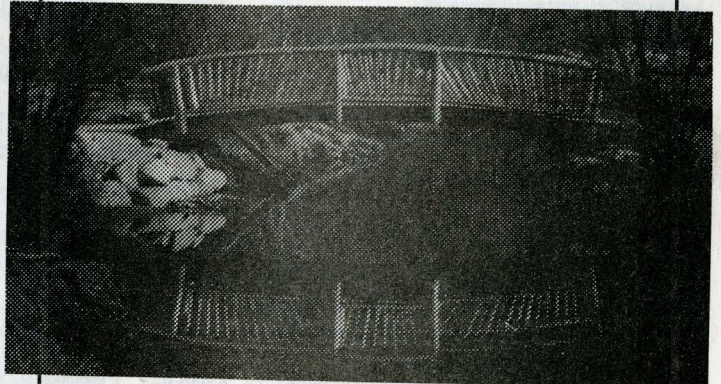
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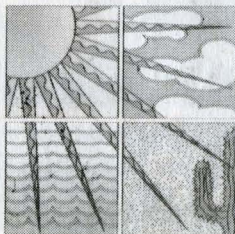
<b>Tuesday Feb. 23</b>	9:00 am	Course tour for media (meet at media centre)
	12:00 noon	Course setting
	4:00 pm	Jury meeting
	5:00 pm	Team captains meeting
<b>Wednesday Feb. 24</b>	8:00 am	Course inspection by racers and officials
	10:00 am	Training runs, Labatt Blue World Downhill
	12:30-closing	Labatt Blue Rock and Ski Party*
	5:00 pm	Team captains meeting
<b>Thursday Feb. 25</b>	10:00 am	Training runs, Labatt Blue World Downhill
	12:30-closing	Labatt Blue Rock & Ski Party*
	5:00 pm	Team captain's meeting
<b>Friday Feb. 26</b>	10:00 am	Training runs, Labatt Blue World Downhill
	12:30-closing	Labatt Blue Rock & Ski Party*
	5:00 pm	Team captains meeting
	5:00 pm	Draw for starting positions, downhill, top 15 racers The Atrium, Whistler Conference Centre
	5:30 pm	Going for Gold -dinner/auction/dance - \$75 each Sea to Sky Ballroom, Whistler Conference Centre
<b>Saturday Feb. 27</b>	10:00 am	Labatt Blue World Downhill race
	12:00 approx.	On-hill medal presentations, finish area
	12:30-6:00 pm	Labatt Blue rock & Ski Party, finish area & village
	4:00 pm	Awards ceremonies, downhill - village centre
	5:00 pm	Draw for Super G starting positions (Conf. Centre)
	8:00 pm	Blue Rodeo concert, Sea-To-Sky Ballroom, (Conf. Centre)
<b>Sunday Feb. 28</b>	8:00-9:30 am	Inspection of Super G course
	10:00 am	Fila World Super G race
	Time TBA	On-hill medal presentations, finish area
	12:30-6:00 pm	Labatt Blue Rock & Ski Party, finish area and village

### Rockin' & Skiing With Labatt's

Labatt Blue Rock & Ski Party has three locations:

1.) 12:30-5:00 daily: Finish area marquee (by Dusty's, Creekside, Whistler South) 2.) 3:00-6:00 daily: Labatt Blue Caravan (by Whistler Express Gondola, Whistler Village) 3.) 9:00 to closing: At participating clubs and bars throughout Whistler Village.

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# R O B B I E

Canadian ski team veteran Rob Boyd is happy to be back in Whistler and ready to defend his title on the Dave Murray Downhill. Since winning the '89 Whistler downhill, Boyd has had his ups and downs on the White Circus. This season he's coming off back and knee surgery and his results have been inconsistent. The *Answer* caught up with Boyd while he was training on the downhill course with the other Canadian racers. He is interviewed by John Colebourn.

**Answer:** Since returning from Europe what have you been



doing to prepare for the Whistler race?

**Boyd:** We've been training on the downhill. It's no secret. The Europeans do it all the time and it's nice to get a chance to ski the course before the other racers get here. We've had some intensive training in Whistler and it's

also been really good to train on hard snow. This winter we haven't had good conditions. It's been really good to try out some of the sections. A lot of guys will get here and have never run the course before. People will be wondering how much air they'll get off Hot Air and we already have an idea.

**Answer:** What about the new parts of the course?

**Boyd:** The changes are going to make the course tougher and by the time you get to the finish you'll be really tired. With the new section it's going to require more strength because by the time you get down to that section you'll be pretty tired. Blow it on the bottom of the course and you'll have a lot less speed going into the finish."

**Answer:** What about Hot Air, the new jump near the bottom?

**Boyd:** I like the jump. It's a really well-formed jump and the landing rolls away so the farther you go it really doesn't get any harder. I figure we'll be going about 100 feet off that jump.

**Answer:** Will the Europeans want the jump shaved down?

**Boyd:** When the FIS guys come they'll get it to their liking. I hope they don't shave it down.

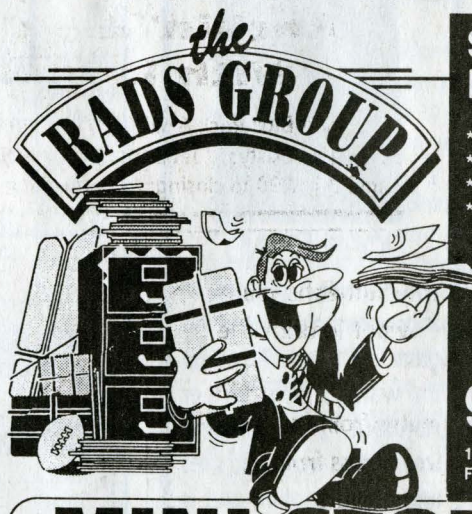
**Answer:** What is the toughest part of the course?

**Boyd:** The Weasel-Fallaway is probably the toughest part. That section is going to be much more tiring than in the past as the jumps are bigger.

**Answer:** What's it like to be defending race champ and

LARRY CHARRON PHOTO

*To be a world class downhiller requires year round training. Rob Boyd is seen here doing dry-land training last summer with assistant Nadine Stone.*



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# THE WHISTLER ANSWER

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# THE WHISTLER ANSWER

competing on a course at home?

**Boyd:** There's added pressure because it is at home and also because I've been doing so shitty this year. Maybe things will come together here.

**Answer:** You haven't had the results this year. What's been happening?

**Boyd:** At all the races I've felt comfortable and ready but I didn't quite have the flow as I had before. I'm confident I'll get it back it's just a matter of time.

**Answer:** First training run, what's your game plan?

**Boyd:** First run I'll be feeling the course out. There's a lot of pressure on me to repeat my last performance and it's going to be a tough mental battle to keep in control."

**Answer:** What does the World Cup event mean to Whistler?

**Boyd:** For the community it really gives them a chance to get involved in the race. It's great for the town.

**Answer:** What do you have to say about Whistler's Weasel Workers?

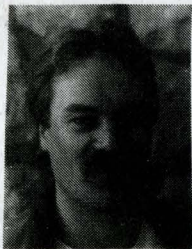
**Boyd:** We couldn't have a race without



*Robbie with two precious items: his first World Cup trophy and his nephew Matthew. While Matthew has grown, the trophy's still the same size.*

them. I'm sure they must be really proud after the race is over. They do a great job. They did a great job getting the course ready in '89 and I hope it works again for me.

## Whistler ANSWER



JOHN BLAND

The Answer is pleased to announce the signing of this great free agent. Picked up on waivers, this former standout for the Grocery Store will be working in sales and administration and is looking forward to this exciting and bizarre opportunity.

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# Top Fourteen Things **Not** To Do During World Cup

14. Claim that you beat Nancy Greene at arm wrestling.
13. Compliment FIS officials on their scheduling this winter.
12. Refer to the CBC as the Canadian Broadcorping Casteration.
11. Toboggan on the course.
10. String piano wire across the track.
9. Ask Boyd if you can borrow his Fischer's for a few runs.
8. Yodel in lederhosen.
7. Muss up Ken Read's hair.
6. Tuck the Green Chair.
5. Draw the Maple Leaf in yellow snow.
4. Turn down a free Labatt sample.
2. Tell the girl at the bar that you have to go back to her room early because you have to race in the morning.
1. Forge *Answer* media credentials.

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### **Artist In Attendance**

February 26 - 27

### **DEREK WILSON**

Derek Wilson was born in the village of Butedale on Princess Royal Island south of Hartley Bay in the Haisla nation and is of the Killer Whale clan. He first learned to carve in wood from his uncle' Henry Robertson. In the early seventies, influenced by Dave Gladstone, Russel Smith and Ron Hamilton he started carving silver and gold. Essentially self taught, over the years he has developed his own unique style. Derek has been commissioned to design and carve many pieces incorporating precious and semi-precious stones, and is known both nationally and internationally for his work. Derek has also influenced a number of younger artists who have developed styles of their own. At present, Derek resides in Vancouver.

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# MEN'S TECHNICAL TEAM IMPROVING DRAMATICALLY

By Bob Colebrook

Assistant coach of the Canadian men's technical team, Dave Kerwynn, was beaming as he entered the *Answer* executive offices to boast about how his charges were improving.

After sixty days on the road with the team, he yells across the Southside Deli to anybody who would listen,

"I woke up this morning at 8:30, looked at the clock and said, 'Holy Shit, who's driven the boys to the hill.'"

The Whistler resident has reason to smile, as the technical team has shown great improvement this year, and things, according to



**THOMAS GRANDI**

Kerwynn look even brighter for the immediate future.

"We're not a real flashy group of guys," he says. "We're meat and potatoes. They work hard and I think it's only going to get better. There's good

spirit, camaraderie and group momentum. The entire team is greater than the sum of the parts."

Whistler racer Willy Raine has been having a good year, and Kerwynn is optimistic about his potential.

"Willie has shown great improvement in his slalom and his GS is really starting to come along. In

the slalom he was ranked 109 in the world at the start of the season, now he's 55th, and shows signs of improving upon that in the second half of the season."

Must be something in his genes, but those Mars bars endorsements



**WILLY RAINE**

final thirty three times this year, and he won three Nor-Am slaloms and is leading the title race on that circuit."



**DAVE KERWYNN**

Europa Cup GS and he was the Canadian GS champion last year."

Kerwynn attributes the major improvements to a competitive atmosphere in training, as well as 63 days of on-snow training in Norway, Chile, Switzerland and Nakiska.

"We would've been happy with 55," notes Kerwynn.

Yes, folks, there are other skiers with Canadian flags on their uniform. And while they don't get the press and attention of the downhillers, perhaps they should. We might be hearing more from them.

are a way off yet.

Yet another bright light on the horizon is Rob Crossan.

"Crossan is showing major improvement, he started the year 94th in slalom, and is currently ranked 45th. He's made it into the

Kerwynn is very high on youngster Thomas Grandi, from Banff. The twenty year old is the highest ranked Canadian GS skier since Jim Read.

"He's a real bright spot, he's already had a fourth in the

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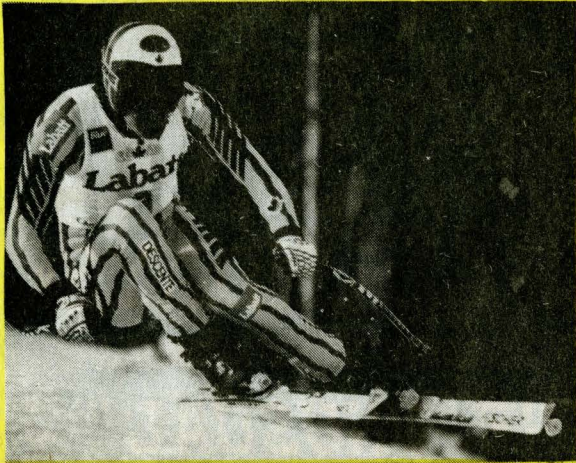
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