

Podborski takes World Cup title

Canadian skier Steve Podborski became the first North American to capture the men's World Cup downhill championship during the final races of the season held in Aspen, Colorado, March 5-6.

Podborski, of Toronto, placed fourteenth in both final races but took the over-all title on the strength of three first place finishes and two seconds during the season. Peter Mueller of Switzerland won both the races in Colorado to tie Podborski for the points lead at 115. Rules call for a sixth result to be a tie-breaker and the Canadian skier took the title because his sixth result was a fourth place finish, while Mueller's was a sixth.

Finishing behind Mueller in the first race at Aspen was Harti Weirather of Austria and in the final race Canadian ski team member Todd Brooker of Paris, Ontario placed second.

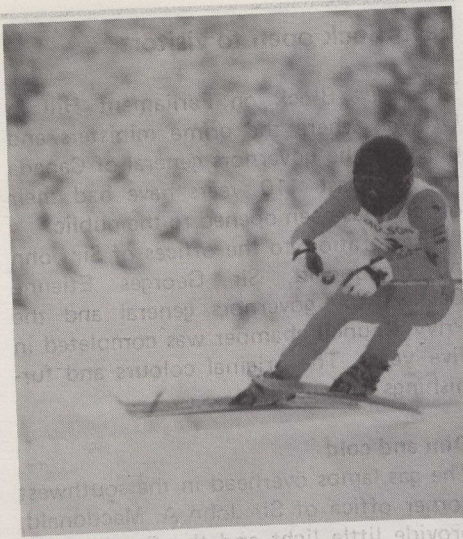
"It's something that has been floating around in our imaginations for many years. It's finally come through and it's hard to believe," said Podborski following his victory.

Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau telephoned his congratulations to the 24-year-old telling him, "All Canadians are proud of you. You've done a lot for the young Canadians. They will try to emulate you. That's a big responsibility."

Began racing eight years ago
Podborski started his skiing on the slopes of the Craighleith Club near Collingwood, Ontario. Eight years ago Podborski, then 16, won a summer camp race in British Columbia and so impressed Canadian Ski Association officials that they invited him to join the national team.

In 1975-76, Podborski had his first taste of life on the international skiing circuit and that same winter tore knee ligaments in Kitzbuhel, Austria two weeks before the 1976 Olympics. Podborski did appear in the 1980 Lake Placid Olympics winning a bronze medal. A second injury to his right knee in 1980 at Hinterux, Austria appeared to have finished Podborski's skiing career.

However, Dr. David MacIntosh of Toronto invented a special surgical procedure that salvaged the knee and placed Podborski in a cast reaching from his groin to toe. The cast came off six weeks later and following three months of physical therapy, Podborski returned to the international skiing circuit. Last year, he won three World Cup races and placed second



Steve Podborski in action.

over-all on the final race of the season by placing second — 28/100ths of a second behind Harti Weirather, who took the over-all crown with the first-place finish.

After fourth place finishes in the first two races this season at Val d'Isere, France and Val Gardena, Italy, Podborski won at Crans-Montana, Switzerland. He was second and first at Kitzbuhel before slipping to eleventh place at Wengen, Switzerland. He bounced back to win at Garmish-Partenkirchen, West Germany and placed second at Whistler in British Columbia.

The end of the World Cup season also brought to a close the ten-year skiing career of two Canadian team members, Dave Murray of Whistler, British Columbia and Dave Irwin of Vernon, British Columbia.

Fashion jeans big sellers

Three Manitoba men are busy proving that a business can thrive despite hard economic times, reports the *Canadian Press*.

The three men — Ed Cowan, an accountant, Tony Siragusa, a production specialist and Benji Terk, a garment merchandiser — founded Galaxy Garment International, a jean manufacturing company in Winnipeg two years ago. In 1981, the company's sales soared to \$3.9 million from \$1.4 million in the first fiscal year. Sales are projected at \$8 million for 1982. "We know we're going to reach that plateau because we can tell from the bookings that went out September 1," said Cowan.

Galaxy manufactures fashion jeans for 900 customers under three labels. The

company employs 100 in its downtown Winnipeg plant. Cowan said orders piled up so fast he sub-contracted the excess to another city manufacturer when demand outstripped his own company's production capacity.

To skeptics who doubted the timing of the start of Galaxy, Cowan said, "I told them that if a company succeeds in hard times, it will succeed any time. Business doesn't stand still."

Unique snow road

The small village of Old Crow, 800 kilometres from Whitehorse and north of the Arctic Circle is being temporarily linked by road with the rest of the Yukon to allow for the delivery of a new school.

A 250-kilometre road is being built beginning at Eagle Plains Lodge, midway on the remote Dempster Highway. It will be constructed of hard-packed snow and will cost about \$350,000 to build and keep open for a month.

The road will only be used to bring in the pre-fabricated school and to replenish food and supplies, currently flown in to the Old Crow Co-operative, the village's only store. Private vehicles will not be allowed to use the road.

Preservation of native lifestyle

When the Dempster Highway was being built, members of the Old Crow Indian band indicated they did not want a road into the village because they thought it would bring in too many strangers who might destroy their lifestyle. They were also concerned that the road might cause village families to break up and young people to leave the community.

Old Crow is the only Yukon settlement where people have retained their traditional native lifestyle. The villagers depend largely on the Porcupine caribou herd to supply them with meat and other necessities. The average income is between \$3,000 and \$7,000 a year.

The village's 68 children learn hunting and trapping traditions from their elders, but they also attend school at a log schoolhouse administered by the Yukon government. The school was destroyed by fire just before Christmas last year just after a new gymnasium had been added to the structure.

The new school will include a grade ten class for the first time, a gymnasium, offices, a teachers' residence and five classrooms. It is expected to be ready by September.

G. Bigras

Photo by M. M. M.