Sports Federation of Canada honours top athletes

Wayne Gretzky, the National Hockey League's top player and Carling Bassett, the rising teen-age tennis star, have been named Canada's male and female athlete of the year by the Sports Federation of Canada.

Wayne Gretzky, the scoring wizard of the Edmonton Oilers, was the recipient of the Lionel Conacher award as the top male athlete for a record fourth consecutive year in voting conducted by the *Canadian Press* among sports writers and broadcasters across the country.

Carling Bassett, 16, who reached the quarter finals at Wimbledon last year, is the first female tennis player to receive the Bobbie Rosenfeld award, named in honour of Canada's female athlete of the half-century.

Canapress

Carling Bassett named female athlete of the year.

Amateur athletes were also honoured by the Sports Federation. Speed skater Louis Grenier and modern pentathlete Lynn Chyrnobrywy were named the federation's male and female amateur athletes of the year.

Louis Grenier, 23, of Ste. Foy, Quebec, rebounded from an ankle injury to dominate every event he entered in 1983. At the world short-course (indoor) championships held last April in Japan, he won gold medals in the 1 000- and 3 000-metre events and set a world record in the 500 metres with a time of 45.37 seconds. Lynn Chyrnobrywy, 21, of Baie d'Urfe, Quebec, captured the world modern pentathlon championship in August 1983 at Gothenburg, Sweden over 47 athletes representing 15 countries.

New system streamlines computer language

A new general purpose computer language has been born at the University of Toronto which may bridge the chasm between simplicity in use and complication in application that has bedevilled older programming languages, according to the *Globe and Mail.*

The new language, called Turing, after British mathematician and computer theoretician Alan Turing, is described by its three creators as having the capacity on one level of teaching computing to children and on another of allowing scientists to complete complex numerical calculations.

Of importance to programmers whose interests lie between those points, Turing has been designed to provide a kind of early-warning system of the errors or "bugs" which have sneaked into programs. "The language tells you that if, for example, you add 'five' to 'elephant' that doesn't make sense," says co-author Richard Holt, chairman of the University of Toronto's Computer Systems Research Group. Bugs in the software, some as apparently trivial as dropping a comma or failing to close a bracket, have apparently caused space probes to misfire and were associated with failures aboard the first US space shuttle.

Turing, which was a year in the making and which is being tested by 3 000 University of Toronto computer science students, has another debugging advantage over widely-used languages such as the home computer buff's Basic and the professional's Fortran or Pascal; its precise programs are to be proved by mathematics.

Turing's authors, who include James Cordy and J.N.P. (Pat) Hume, say they started the new language because they were tired of having to patch together new pieces onto Pascal's 20-year framework. They say that besides being simple, the new language organizes information in pieces or "modules" which allows a user to complete its programs in sections. Changes in programs using older languages often created unforeseen and disastrous side effects.

Malaysian contract for Canada

A $143.7-million (US) financing agreement will support a sale of Canadian goods and services for the South Sabah pulp and paper project in Malaysia. The announcement was made on the occasion of the recent official visit to Canada of the Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad.

The project, totalling $324.5 million (US), will be built by a consortium led by Klockner-Stadler Hurter Ltd. (KSH) of Montreal. Klockner Industrie Anlagen GMBH of Germany and Voest-Alpine AG (Voest) of Austria are the other members.

An Export Development Corporation (EDC) loan supports the Canadian portion of the contract. The German and Austrian portions are receiving similar support from the export credit agencies of Germany and Austria.

The buyer is Sabah Forest Industries Sdn. Berhad, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah.

The project, situated near Sipitang on the island of Borneo, will involve the construction and commissioning of a pulp and paper mill and associated facilities.

Mineral industry up last year

The Canadian mineral industry had a return to sustained though moderate economic growth in 1983, it was announced recently by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. During the year, the value of mineral output increased by $2.2 billion.

The total value of output of the four sections of the industry – metallics, non-metallics, structural materials and fuels – reached almost $36 billion, compared with $33.8 billion the previous year. The metallic sector, which showed a 20 per cent drop in 1982, reached $7.2 billion in 1983, a 5.3 per cent increase. Output for non-metallics and structural materials totalled $3.6 billion, down slightly from that of the previous year. The fuel sector, by far the largest of the four, totalled $25 billion, an increase of 8 per cent over the 1982 level.

The ten leading minerals in 1983 were: petroleum, natural gas, natural gas by-products, copper, coal, gold, iron ore, zinc, nickel and cement. These represented 87 per cent of the total output of the industry, and all except natural gas, iron ore and cement showed increases over the previous year's figures.