



## Dave Irwin

Inducted CSHF: 1992  
 Hometown: Thunder Bay, ON / Banff, AB  
 Date of Birth: July 12, 1954  
 Affiliated Discipline(s): Alpine, Downhill  
 Active Career Date(s): 1971 - 1997  
 FIS Code: -10200  
 Club: Loch Lomond Ski Club, Vernon Ski Club

Dave Irwin learned to ski at the age of three on the slopes of his father, Bill's, Loch Lomond ski resort in Thunder Bay, Ontario. He came by his later fame naturally. The name Irwin is synonymous with Canadian skiing with no fewer than seven family members involved on National teams at various times. Named to the Canadian National Ski Team in 1971 at the age of 17, he remained on the team until his retirement in March, 1982. He won the Can-Am Slalom title in 1972, earning him the NOVA Cup as Canada's most improved skier in that year. A year later he competed in his first World Cup Downhill race at Schladming, Austria, placing 14th, an auspicious beginning.

Throughout his career he was plagued by a succession of injuries sidelining him on the World Cup circuit for prolonged periods, but it is a measure of his courage and determination that he never considered retiring. In the year before he retired he explained his philosophy to Sportwest Magazine, "The reason I keep coming back is because I love racing - It's as simple as that." As a member of the legendary "Crazy Canucks" team of Dave Irwin, Ken Read, Dave Murray and Steve Podborski, he left an enduring legacy which changed the status of ski racing history in Canada. Known as the "Kamikaze Canuck", or in Europe as the "Big Red Frog" (because of the size of his thighs) he became the second Canadian male to ever win a World Cup Downhill event, doing so at Schladming, Austria in 1975.

In the year he retired, he received a Sport Excellence Award from the Government of Canada at the 1982 Tribute of Champions and was the recipient of the prestigious John Semmelink Memorial Award given annually by the Canadian Ski and Snowboard Association in recognition of the athlete who through sportsmanship, conduct and ability best represents Canada in international competition. The award is given in memory of H. John Semmelink who lost his life in a skiing accident while representing the Association in the Arlberg-Kandahar races at Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany on February 7th, 1959.

On the World Cup circuit, he competed in 35-Downhill events, placing in the top 15 on 17-occasions, a remarkable record.

### Competitive highlights

- 1973 14th place, Downhill event, World Cup competition, Schladming, Austria
- 1974 3rd place finish, Canadian National Championships, Slalom event
- 1976 4th place finish, Downhill event, World Cup competition, Madonna di Campiglio, Italy
- 1st place finish, Downhill event, World Cup competition, Schladming, Austria
- 4th place finish, Downhill event, World Cup Championships, Val D'Isere, France
- 14 place, Downhill event, World Cup competition, Val Gardena, Italy
- 8th place finish, Downhill event, Winter Olympic games, Innsbruck, Austria
- 1977 4th place finish, Downhill event, World Cup competition, Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy
- 1978 7th place, Downhill event, World Cup competition, Schladming, Austria
- 1979 1st place finish, Downhill event, Europa Cup competition, Verbier, Switzerland
- 3rd place finish, Downhill event, Canadian National Championships
- 14th place, Downhill event, World Cup competition, Val d'Isere, France
- 1980 5th place finish, Downhill event, World Cup competition, Kitzbuhel, Austria
- 11th place finish, Downhill event, Olympic Winter Games, Lake Placid, USA
- 12th place, Downhill event, World Cup competition, Lake Louise, Alberta, Canada
- 7th place finish, Downhill event, Canadian National Championships
- 1st place finish, Downhill event, United States National Championships
- 4th place finish, Downhill event, North American Championships, Squaw Valley, California, USA
- 5th place finish, Downhill event, World Cup competition, Val d'Isere, France
- 11th place, Downhill event, World Cup competition, St Moritz, Switzerland
- 12th place finish, Downhill event, World Cup competition, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany
- 1981 11th place finish, Giant Slalom event, Canadian National Championships
- 4th place finish, Downhill event, Canadian National Championships
- 3rd place finish, Downhill event, Federation Internationale de Ski (FIS) event
- 13th place finish, Downhill event, World Cup competition, Aspen, Colorado, USA
- 1982 3rd place finish, Downhill event, World Cup competition, Whistler, British Columbia, Canada
- 13 place finish, Downhill event, World Cup competition, Aspen, Colorado, USA
- 7th place, Downhill event, World Cup competition, Aspen, Colorado, USA

*Please Note: The ski information gathered here is compiled from a number of sources; it may not be inclusive of all accomplishments.*

The Canadian Ski Museum / Le Musée canadien du ski • 1960 rue Scott Street • Ottawa, ON • K1Z 8L8 • Canada