

Winners of Canadian Amateur Ski Association Championships since founding of the Association in 1921

MONTREAL, FEBRUARY 19-20, 1921

SKI JUMPING—E. O. Sunberg, *Temiskaming Ski Club*
CROSS-COUNTRY—Frank MacKinnon, *Montreal Ski Club*

OTTAWA, FEBRUARY 26-27, 1922

SKI JUMPING—R. Omtvedt, *Norge Ski Club, Chicago*
CROSS-COUNTRY—R. Monsen, *Norsemen Ski Club, New York*

MONTREAL, FEBRUARY 24-25, 1923

SKI JUMPING—R. Monsen, *Montreal Ski Club*
CROSS-COUNTRY—R. Monsen, *Montreal Ski Club*

OTTAWA, FEBRUARY 23-24, 1924

SKI JUMPING—N. Berger, *Montreal Ski Club*
CROSS-COUNTRY—E. Condon, *Ottawa Ski Club*

MONTREAL, FEBRUARY 21-22, 1925

SKI JUMPING—N. Berger, *Montreal Ski Club*
CROSS-COUNTRY—J. Johansen, *Nansen Ski Club*

OTTAWA, FEBRUARY 28-29, 1926

SKI JUMPING—N. Berger, *Montreal Ski Club*
CROSS-COUNTRY—J. Satre, *New York Ski Club*

MONTREAL, FEBRUARY 26-27, 1927

SKI JUMPING—L. Lehan, *Montreal Ski Club*
CROSS-COUNTRY—R. Reid, *Nansen Ski Club*

OTTAWA, FEBRUARY 25-26, 1933

SKI JUMPING—C. Lund, *St. Paul*
CROSS-COUNTRY—E. Penttila, *Montreal Ski Club*
COMBINED—K. Baadsvik, *Viking Outing Club*
SLALOM—J. Blair, *Red Birds Ski Club*

OTTAWA, FEBRUARY 25-26, 1928

SKI JUMPING—R. Sivertsen, *Montreal Ski Club*
CROSS-COUNTRY—B. Grayson-Bell, *Ottawa Ski Club*
COMBINED—George Sumner, *Montreal Ski Club*

MONTREAL, FEBRUARY 23-24, 1929

SKI JUMPING—G. Dupuis, *Cliffside Ski Club*
CROSS-COUNTRY—H. Paumgarten, *Austria*
COMBINED—J. Nordmoe, *Camrose Ski Club*
SLALOM—H. Paumgarten, *Austria*

OTTAWA, FEBRUARY 22-23, 1930

SKI JUMPING—R. Sivertsen, *Montreal Ski Club*
CROSS-COUNTRY—E. Penttila, *Montreal Ski Club*
COMBINED—J. Nordmoe, *Camrose Ski Club*

REVELSTOKE, FEBRUARY 3-4, 1931

SKI JUMPING—J. Nordmoe, *Camrose Ski Club*
CROSS-COUNTRY—H. Smejda, *Vancouver Ski Club*
COMBINED—H. Smejda, *Vancouver Ski Club*

MONTREAL, FEBRUARY 20-21, 1932

SKI JUMPING—A. Finsberg, *Viking Outing Club, Montreal*
CROSS-COUNTRY—E. Penttila, *Montreal Ski Club*
COMBINED—K. Engstad, *Burns Lake Ski Club, B.C.*
SLALOM—F. Campbell, *McGill University*

WESTERN EXPERIENCES

FREDERICK. D. TAYLOR

THERE'S wonderful ski-ing in the Rockies and the Coast Range and you'd enjoy it. Last winter I went to the West from Ottawa and within half an hour of first putting on skis had resolved to write an account of my experiences despite the fact that many excellent descriptive articles have appeared of late. It was a marvellous adventure which I heartily recommend to all skiers and to those of Eastern North America in particular.

The National Parks Branch, Department of the Interior, which kindly furnished the photographs reproduced herewith, in collaboration with the Associated Screen News and the Canadian Pacific Railway, invited me to go to Lake Louise to assist in the filming of a short ski-ing motion picture. I accepted, and on March 23 reached Calgary. There I met John Southam, a hard-working and eminently capable exponent of the sport. The next morning we went to Banff for a day's sliding before joining the "picture party" at Lake Louise on March 25. Calgary is some 3,500 feet above sea level, yet it seemed as though we were traversing a low-lying plain, as the train forged westward from the city along the banks of the Bow River and I sat gazing up at the snow-capped peaks ahead.

Before I had begun to satisfy my appetite for such sights, the valley widened and soon we were at Banff. Without delay, for John knew the way, we set out south of the railway in the direction of Mount Norquay, Stoney Squaw and Cascade Mountain. We went up through the timber, following a delightful trail which broadened out from time to time and afforded us views of the big slopes lying ahead and on both sides. I was feeling the altitude and climbed slowly, stopping occasionally to rest and enjoy the magnificent panorama of the valley below. Mount Rundel awoke memories, as from that angle its crest resembles the Schiltgrat seen from "Martha's Gate" near Mürren Switzerland, where I had so lately stood and watched the running of the "Roberts of Kandahar." All at once the trail widened and we passed a sign which informed us that we were 5,600 feet above sea level and in a few more strides were in sight of the Mount Norquay Ski Hut. In that fine big log cabin we found among others Ted Paris and Rupert Edwards of Banff. Right now I must tell you that although Banff is a large town and the whole population skis, only four families really count! The Whites, the Brewsters, the Paris' and the Edwards are the people who do things.

Possibly you have long wanted to know as I had, what the snow is "like" in the Rockies and elsewhere in the West; and almost the first question I was asked by everyone I met there was, "What is the snow like in the East and in the Alps?" On November 20 I was sliding on slippery grass in the Gatineau Hills near Ottawa; in the four months which intervened between that occasion and my arrival at Banff, I had experienced successively hard crystal snow at St. Moritz, deep powder snow at Mürren, dry wind crust and salty drifts in the Gatineau and light powder snow on a hard bottom at Mont Tremblant. At the time of year when the light is ideal for photography, the snow in the Rockies is seldom ideal for ski-ing and vice versa. In our case primary consideration had, of course, to be given to the pictures and consequently I did not experience the best snow—light powder, fairly deep, on a hard dry though not icy, wind crust bottom, quite general in February, early in March and late in the spring at high altitudes. My experience late in March and early in April was that the snow was heavy; there was a great deal of it, all about the same consistency—far too much of it. When dry, it was difficult enough and when wet exceedingly slow, the most elementary manoeuvres necessitating the expenditure of considerable energy. I saw very little stratified snow such as is so common in the East, resulting from periodic thaws and freeze-ups and producing the icy breakable and non-breakable crust, our "bete blanche." The snow I experienced out there rendered pure Christianias impossible, but was ideal for wide sweeping Telemarks, provided that one didn't edge, and made the execution of close continuous Telemarks strenuous and uncertain. One could do jump turns if necessary, but they necessitated an even greater than usual expenditure of strength. In descending long precipitous slopes, both open and wooded, I employed series of closely connected pure stem and lifted stem Christies with success and managed to maintain good speed and keep out of trouble, though not without using every ounce of energy at my command on some occasions. There has never been a shortage of snow in the Rockies in the memory of the oldest living mountaineer and the meteorological records have yet to record that common Alpine and Eastern North American condition. That is something to remember on top of the fact that while there is ski-ing to be had throughout the year in all high mountains, in the Rockies the only month in which it is not recommended is September.

In the course of my all too brief visit to

Banff and Mount Norquay I was, of course, able to see only a small part of the available terrain, and although no one pretends that the immediate vicinity of Banff is typical of the best Rocky Mountain ski-ing country, there is so much there which would delight the average Eastern skier that he would be well repaid the trouble and expense of travelling that far, and be justified if he went no further. Banff is principally important as a base or centre from which to start to parts of the Rockies were the ski-ing is second to none anywhere in the world.

For comprehensive information on the subject of ski-ing in the Canadian Rockies and the Coast Range I refer you to articles by N. Rankin, R. H. Bennett and F. Weaver, which appeared in the 1932 British Ski Year Book, and to those by G. C. Stockand, Clifford White and Don Munday in the 1932 Canadian Ski Annual.

That evening a number of the hospitable "Banffites" dropped in to our hotel to welcome us, offer assistance of every sort and extend us invitations. As in the custom among ski enthusiasts, the talk turned to equipment and the technical phases of the sport, and as a result of that evening's discussion and my later experience, I am convinced that metal-edged skis will never enjoy the popularity in the Rockies they have in the Alps. Practically speaking, they are a handicap rather than an advantage for they are unnecessary. "Bone" edges might prove successful if any sort of applied edge can be trusted when one is miles from the railway where there are no roads, and where everything a man needs, including food and bedding, has to "go in" on his back. For general purposes a fairly broad touring ski of moderate length is best; Langlauf skis are useless for general purposes and the broad heavy Continental downhill skis too heavy. Wax is, of course, advisable and useful when employed with intelligence based upon experience, as it is everywhere else. The old reliable standard brands applied in a slightly different way to that which you are accustomed under apparently similar conditions will see you through. The supply available in Calgary last winter was limited but the shops in Vancouver and White's at Banff carry a good stock of wide variety, but if you are not planning to stop at these places on your way to the Mountains, take a generously gauged supply with you.

In the Rockies and the outlying parts of the Coast Range, everything—one's very life—is dependent upon one's equipment, just as an aviator's existence is dependent upon the fabric of his plane. It's the thin thread that is all the difference between a glorious experience and a disastrous pre-



NATIONAL PARKS BRANCH, OTTAWA

ON MOUNT SADDLEBACK LOOKING NORTHWEST ACROSS THE BOW VALLEY

dicament. Don't attempt to economize on equipment if you are preparing for a trip in those mountains. Next in importance after skis comes bindings and the favourite out there for general purposes is the combination of Alpina toe-irons and Bildstein heel springs and tension clamps. In the Rockies it pays to have a good stout binding which will give sooner than the hickory or your bones. I would recommend the best Tonkin cane for poles, with wide and strongly made snowshoe-rings. Nothing is going to keep your feet quite dry, but good bear grease applied liberally every third night to stout boots, together with hide or canvas gaiters, will help enormously. The hardy Westerners scorn the assistance of skins for climbing but I used mine often and was glad I had them. If you know that you're going to climb for half an hour or more and the grade is such as to necessitate real effort with skis waxed for general purposes, it is well worth taking time to put on skins. Instead of rucksacks one finds packboards used, and the numbers of them in use increases steadily with the distance travelled west. They are undoubtedly superior for carrying any sort of a load that weighs more than twenty-five pounds. With them it is easier to centre, adjust and place the weight of the load where you want it than with a rucksack. Pleasure ski-ing is out of the question if you are carrying a real load, so the Westerners adjust their packboards, get the work over with a minimum expenditure of effort and then, unburdened, set out for pleasure. You'll need sun glasses and if yours don't happen to have trip'ex lenses,

take two pairs of whatever sort you favour. You'll also need a good supply of your special brand of dope for alleviating the pains of sun and wind-burn. And finally, whether you plan to sleep indoors or out, you won't regret a sleeping bag.

Among our visitors that first evening in Banff was Victor Kutschera, the instructor-guide of Skoki Ski Camp, and a cosmopolitan if there ever was one, though I believe he claims Austria as his native land. He is one of the best and most courageous skiers in Canada today, and

remarkable in several respects. His ability to ski well at high speed in difficult country at high altitudes in every sort of weather, packing as much as seventy-five pounds of awkward bulk for prolonged periods, is amazing and all the more so since he does all that and never stops talking! His verbal influence upon ski-ing in the Rockies is second only to his great personal example. He can ski and he can explain how others should do so and his influence has been proportionate to that of Arnold Lunn's upon the English-speaking skiers in the Alps. Out there the sport is in its infancy, yet the degree of skill attained in that time is extraordinary and puts us Easterners to shame.

I found a widespread interest and knowledge of European ski-ing throughout the West, more general and searching than in the East. They have correctly credited downhill and slalom, jumping and cross-country to Central Europe and Scandinavia respectively. One finds an intelligent interest in the several schools of technique, together with an excellent knowledge of the international meetings, principal competitors and the latest writings of the various European authorities. They're as keen a lot of sportsmen as you'll meet anywhere, and some day when Canada sweeps the Olympic laurels clean, the champions will hail from Western Canada! Most of all I was delighted to discover that the Anglo-Saxon element of the Western ski-ing population favours "The Downhill School of Ski-ing Thought" even though they haven't any funiculars as yet, although the many Scandinavians at the

Coast naturally remain true to their old loves, jumping and cross-country racing.

Anon, John and I arrived at Lake Louise where we met the genial Camera-Man-Director, Bill Oliver of Calgary, and the guides. Right now I want to tell you some thing of that staunch little band of five of the finest chaps it has been my good fortune to meet, the Swiss Guides of Golden and Lake Louise. They are an old established C.P.R. institution and bid fair to become one of national importance. Edward Feuz (pronounced "Foitz") his brothers, Ernest and Walter, Rudolph Aemer and Christian Haesler. Edward came over here some twenty years ago, saw the Western mountains, shouted, "Excelsior! This is just as good as home!" and immediately sent word to his brothers and friends in their native Bernese-Oberland to grab their ice axes, their skis and the next boat. Their business is climbing and from what I heard on all sides there isn't much they don't know about every aspect of that great sport. They have a fine village, neat and spick and span, all their own, just west of Golden, B.C., called "Edelweiss," where they live with their families when not actually engaged, and at Lake Louise a fine big log chalet hard by the Chateau. Thither we went up their ski trail from the station, and there we stayed for two of the happiest and most enjoyably interesting weeks of my life, enjoying Rudolph's cooking and swapping yarns around the great barrel stove. During that fortnight I gained a great appreciation of "The Swiss Guides," as they are universally and affectionately referred to out there.

From the trail to the lake one obtains a marvellous view of Mount Temple and some interesting glimpses of Mount Saddleback and Fairview, and, looking back, a magnificent panorama view of the northern slopes of the Bow Valley. Nearing the lake itself Mount St. Piran rears up in front and then suddenly, as you turn left into the open at the very edge of the lake, Mount Victoria and "all her court" strike you with the full force of their majesty. There are a score or more peaks to be seen from the immediate vicinity of Lake Louise but no other is so impressive and infinitely wonderful. The aptness of the naming of many of the features of the Rockies is noteworthy but in no case more so than in this great mountain, exuding the regal air and serene dignity which was so typical of the late Queen and which is invariably associated with her memory. Though many of her "court," or neighbours, are also fine—particularly Mount Lefroy, they serve but to enhance her grandeur. Victoria is the local weather vane, and if in the early morning clouds obscure her

peaks it is probable that the sky will be overcast and the weather uncertain throughout the day. On cloudless nights when her crest is set in a halo of stars and lit by the brilliance of the moon, she is superb. One day as we were traversing the lake in her direction, we heard a loud report and looked up just in time to see a mighty avalanche sweep off the upper glacier. It was a grand sight.

We began the filming of the picture on March 26, I do not as yet know what its title is to be. Poor light rendered the progress of the work slow during the first nine days. Working with Bill Oliver and for his camera was, however, one of the most illuminating and enjoyable experiences I have had. He is making history in the West, his pictures of every phase of wild life and human endeavour are remarkable, and the stories of the difficulties which have been overcome to take them even more so. Jovial and ever genial, it was a great privilege to work for Bill.

On days when light conditions forbade picture work John and I toured in the vicinity of Lake Louise. On our first trip we climbed from the level of the lake to the Little Beehive, a shoulder of Mount St. Piran. We went up through the trees following a delightful bridle path past little summer shelters whose roofs were many feet deep in snow and where good winter fairies certainly must dwell. Snow fell softly during the beginning of our climb but later stopped and we saw two great eagles soaring high above. The utter stillness of it all impressed me enormously and when I forged a little ahead of John at one stage, the creaking of my bindings and the sharp crunching of the snow under my poles broke the silence with the apparent force of thunder. Anon we reached Mirror Lake, a "vest-pocket size" little thing, minute in scale, in its cosy pocket 6,650 feet above sea level, which is fed by Lake Agnes. The latter in its turn lies in a pocket between the big Beehive and Mount Niblock under Mount White. On we went high above the little cabin on the edge of Lake Agnes, cautiously crossing avalanche slopes, until we reached the timberline 7,800 feet above sea level, on St. Piran. There we rested, but being fearful of getting "hung up" in the clouds which were swirling near, we didn't linger long. As soon as we had regained our breath we pointed 'em downhill, wound our way down the first thousand feet at high speed, finishing up with a whirlwind "schüss" on the surface of Mirror Lake. A brief pause and we began the run down the trail, as fine a stretch of wood-running as there is. Conditions were perfect for an evenly controlled



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AMONG THE SNOW MUSHROOMS EN ROUTE TO MOUNT LEFROY

descent but we weren't in the mood. Full of the joy of being alive and in such marvellous surroundings, we launched ourselves upon the trail, one second on it, the next scudding, scooting through the trees with reckless abandon, we went helter-skelter down the steep slope hooting and screaming our delight as we passed and repassed each other before finally running out on the clear slope behind the Chateau within a stone's throw of the swimming pool. Another day when photography was impossible and snow conditions even better, we went up there again, climbing higher to the last lone larch of the northeast slope of St. Piran. The view of the whole Bow Valley spreading out at our feet, of Mount Ptarmigan, Mount Richardson, and all the others to the north, was second only to one we enjoyed later from Mount Saddleback. As we gazed we noticed a train crawling over the floor of the valley and everything was put in scale. Then in series of thigh and shin-shattering stems we made the descent to Lake Louise.

Going from the lake along the winding trail to the Plain of the Six Glaciers, there are some fine slopes running off Mount Fairview. They are avalanche slopes and for that reason completely clear of all obstructions. There the Easterners' dreams are fulfilled, for they offer straight slides of more than a thousand feet in altitude on twenty degree slopes. You may try one but you won't hold it. If you should happen to do so, however, you may try a second then you'll be sorry. John and I made one particular slope our special hunting ground, adopted it, considered it our own and re-

ferred to it as "The Big Hill." We enjoyed some fine sport on that great slope. On yet another day we descended to the station and crossing the Pipestone River, followed the trail which Niall Rankin has described so well, to the Ptarmigan Hut. Halfway we stopped to look back towards "our" side of the valley. We obtained a fine view of Mounts Saddleback and Fairview and a glimpse of the peaks of the "Valley of the Ten Peaks," but from that point of view it seemed to me that Mount Temple appeared particularly sinister

and forbidding despite its undeniable grandeur. The skiing was not good and upon our arrival at the hut, which is 7,500 feet above sea level, we contented ourselves with contemplating from afar Boulder Pass, Fossil Mountain, Mount Ptarmigan on the left and Mount Redoubt on the right. Though we didn't sample it that day, there is excellent skiing to be had hard-by the hut on the slopes of a southern spur of Ptarmigan. The run back down to the railway is excellent. Under good conditions it can be ever so exciting and would tax the skill and endurance of the hardest trail runners. Its steepest part is called "The Switchbacks" and if you are unsuccessful in switching back at the right moments on any of the hairpin turns in the trail which follow each other in apparently infinite succession, you will hit something hard, something like a tree, or imbed yourself in the sidehill.

The following day dawned crystal clear. The weather had changed and remained so for several days, so we started in and really got on with the picture. In the course of the work we did a lot of skiing on the Plain of the Six Glaciers enjoying the long rolling slopes of the moraine as well as those of the glaciers themselves which are such a delight to the ski tourer. There is a wonderful run starting from the mouth of Abbott's Pass, another from the base of Mount Mitre, and a multiplicity of other equally marvellous runs during the course of which one descends more than a thousand feet in a distance of nearly two miles to Lake Louise. On one occasion we visited the ice cave in the glacier

which "runs" off Mount White. It is an amazing natural phenomena, as you can see from the photograph, and has undoubtedly existed for thousands of years. Its vaulted, roof formed by the action of water which courses down beneath the glacier in summer is so symmetrical that it is hard to believe that it was not man made. From the mouth it is possible to walk in a hundred feet standing upright, and the guides told us one could crawl much further. We romped and we ran under Mitre, that gem-like little peak which is so much smaller in scale than its big brothers and sisters, and which delighted me because of its delicate contours and proportions. There is a mighty crevasse at the foot of its glacier, down whose wall we whistled on intermittent stretches of overhanging snow between the gleaming patches of green ice for short breath-taking runs.

The day's work I enjoyed most of all was up on Mount Saddleback. We put on skins and set out early climbing up through the beautiful sunlit woods along the summer pony trail until we reached the place the stirrup would hang—if there was a stirrup. Switching back and forth, we climbed, traversing the upper slopes through the little pines until we came to the regions of the great gaunt larches, every one a fit subject for a delicate etching or wood-engraving. On my way up I just missed sight of a magnificent mountain goat which rounded a crag close to me and advanced some distance across the open before it saw the others coming up the slope when it turned in its tracks and disappeared over the ridge. Those big woolly fellows are a fine sight and amazingly spry. And then the run down! What a run! There is a course for championship downhill races; from the peak of either Fairview or Saddleback right away down to that "stirrup" at the edge of the dense timber. It would mean a drop of 2,000 feet, a simultaneous start would be possible and I would say that a first class runner in good shape could do it under three minutes if the snow was fast and not too deep. It had been a glorious day and the sun's intensity almost unbelievable, so when four

abreast we pointed them down that first great slope then in the shade, we seemed to fly. Reaching the level of the little pines we turned into the course of a summer stream and followed its twisting bed down to the tall timber.

We finished up the work on the picture on "The Big Hill" on a day when the snow swirled before a gusty wind which ripped the silver stuff off the peaks in great long wisps. Having seen the developed, but uncut film, I can tell you that the "action shots" we made that day are the best part of the picture. Afterwards Bill and John went back to Calgary. The next day I took my last look at Victoria, said good-bye to the guides, and with blankets and a stock of food, set out for the Ptarmigan Hut. Crossing the railway, I met Peter White, the painter, who is the host of Skoki Ski Camp, and Charlie Proctor, late of Dartmouth College, an old friend and opponent. They were coming out from the Camp with some others. After a brief chat, I set off again alone and climbed "The Switchbacks" slowly. When about a mile from the hut I surprised a large flock of ptarmigan. At first I thought that the curse of snow-blindness had fallen on me for I had never seen those snow-white birds before and there didn't seem to be any other way of accounting for the moving white spots which I seemed to see about fifty yards away. Upon my arrival at the hut, which is commonly called the "Halfway Hut" as it is a little more than halfway to Skoki from the railway, I found Bill Morrison of Banff, and spent the night there with him. The hut is a very snug



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THE PARTY AT THE MOUTH OF THE ICE CAVE

little cabin, built, as is usual in the Rockies, of stripped spruce logs well caulked with oakum. The next morning, Norman Knight, also of Banff, arrived on his way to Skoki and after breakfast I set off with him. The trail lies over Boulder Pass, across Lake Ptarmigan and then over that so aptly named Deception Pass. We paused at the head of the Pass to rest and my companion pointed out the landmarks to me. The weather was ideal, the air crisp and the clear sky as blue as I have ever seen it in Italy or around the Mediterranean. I gazed up at the great peak of Mount Ptarmigan apparently but a stone's throw away, whose rocks stood out in bold relief reflecting a range of saturated blues, browns and ochres that would tax the palette of most painters. Then, with a mighty drive-in of our poles, we hurled ourselves upon the slope and revelled in the splendid run down into the Skoki Valley and so arrived at the Camp.

I was warmly welcomed by Mrs. White, who introduced me to some twenty members of a charming mixed party who had come from far away Boston under the leadership of Charlie Pierson of Hochgebirge Ski Club. The Camp is ideally situated and most comfortable. Spacious men's and women's cabins flank a large central cabin which is the living and dining accommodation, most suitably decorated with Pete White's oil-sketches, hides, broken ski tips, photographs and other trophies of the trails. There I heard for the first time of The Red Birds' good work in the team race down Mount Hochgebirge a few weeks before. Later, I went out to see what I could of the wonderful terrain which lies about the Camp on every side, the potentialities are enormous and I would imagine utterly inexhaustible in a season, let alone a few weeks' stay. There is every sort of skiing to be had and some day a Rocky Mountain Davos or St. Moritz will stand on the site of the present Camp.

On my way back to the Halfway Hut I joined the party from the Camp on one of the lower slopes of Fossil Mountain across the Valley from Mount Ptarmigan where they were engaged in running practice slaloms. Wise people! They had been doing that all morning, too! It is quite the most generally beneficial form of instruction as well as being tremendous fun. Then, having said "good-bye," I climbed up the Pass, took one last look at the gleaming ice at the foot of the lower Ptarmigan glacier before the sun went down behind White Douglas, and then dropped down the other side of the Pass to the lake. The next morning, after a second comfortable night at the Halfway Hut, I packed up and went

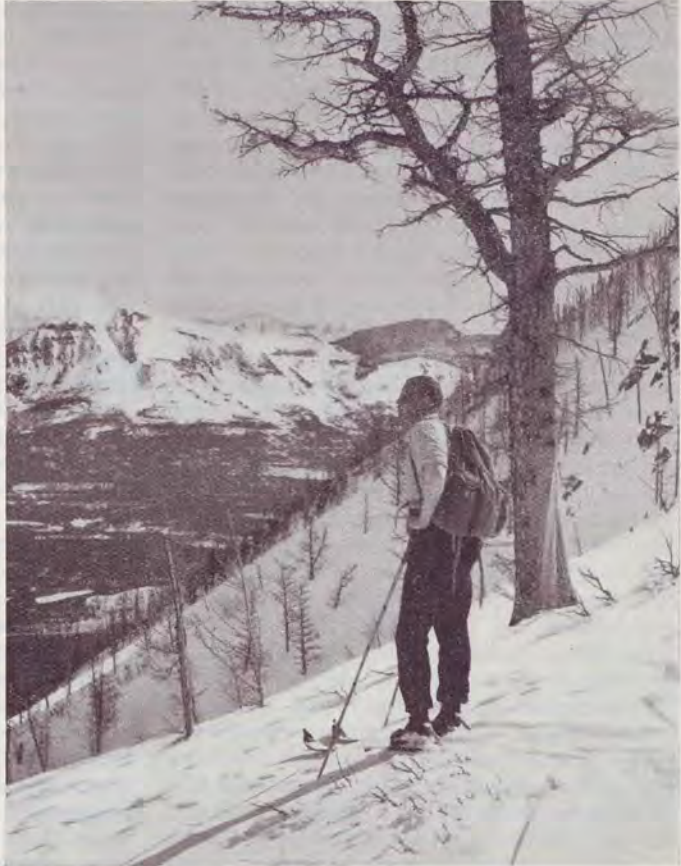
down the trail to the railway, arriving just in time to catch the Westbound out of Lake Louise station. And so my first skiing trip in the Rockies came to an end. My experience was really no more than an appetizer and I am planning to return to enjoy the sumptuous repast which is waiting for all who care to partake.

Now for the experiences I enjoyed with my hospitable and kindly friends on the Coast. The Northwest International Ski Tournament was held on Grouse Mountain Plateau on Good Friday, April 14. It was excellently organized and conducted, in the face of great difficulties, by a large but comparatively inexperienced committee representative of the leading ski clubs of Vancouver. Eighteen clubs in all took part, eleven from out of town, their representatives being accommodated as guests of the Tournament at the Vancouver Hotel, where the committee had its headquarters. Each competitor was given an envelope containing a letter of welcome from the President of the Association, complete information in regard to the arrangements which had been made for his convenience, programmes, time schedules, transportation slips, identification badge and tickets of all sorts, and in addition, there were always obliging officials at hand to render every conceivable assistance.

The telephone in my Vancouver room awoke me at 5.45 on the morning of the 14th, and after breakfasting with the other competitors, we left the hotel at seven o'clock in taxis with our gear, for the Ferry. As we sped through the almost deserted streets, the sun's first rays glistened on the wet and steaming asphalt. A soft warm rain had fallen during the night and the lawns shone with that peculiarly vibrant sappy green which grass attains after spring rain, perfectly setting off the daffodils which clustered in full bloom in beds bordering many of the buildings. After a short ride we alighted at the dock to wait the arrival of the ferry which was to bear us north across the Bay. As we stood waiting my eyes wandered out over the placid water where seagulls, duck and loon swam; at the end of the dock men were fishing; along the street passed hikers, motor cyclists, picnickers, many of them hatless, clad only in shirts and shorts, all a contrast to my heavy ski trousers, flannel shirt and windbreaker. I wondered if I was dreaming, and, if not, what type of skiing I was going to experience. I looked over the Bay hoping to catch a reassuring glimpse of the mountains I had seen the day before, but billowy clouds hid their snow-capped peaks from view. There on the dock and later on the ferry, I found it difficult to

reconcile myself to my surroundings. I had set out to go skiing and here I was in a setting in which I would have felt much more at home wearing flannel trousers with a tennis racquet in my hand and a bathing suit over my shoulder.

We crossed and, disembarking from the ferry, made our way a short distance up the street to several large busses, packed ourselves in with our skis, and, passing rapidly through North Vancouver, began the winding ascent of Grouse Mountain. Up we went, peering ahead into the mists which still overhung the summit and obscured it from view, passing through several stages of vegetation till at last the cry went up "Snow," and patches of white began appearing. The timber grew thicker and with each mile the individual trunks of the mammoth trees reached higher and higher into the sky and the patches of snow increased in area and depth. At nine o'clock we reached snowline where we paused while chains were put on the trucks. Continuing, the snow lay deeper and deeper as we followed the twisting road up the ever increasing slope, until suddenly it was truck-high, then higher and higher until the road—which it had taken scores of men and rotary ploughs weeks to clear—became a one-way gorge through an immense depth of snow which hid all but the sky from our view and against which the hub-caps scraped. At ten o'clock we reached the end of the road, and climbing a ladder set against a ten foot snow-bank and following a path, soon emerged on the plateau where the snow lay twenty-two feet deep in the open. In a short time, over a distance of little more than fifteen miles by road and less than five as the crow flies, we had come from the pavements in the heart of a city where spring filled the air, to a mountain-top, a winter fairyland, where as I stood in a somewhat bewildered condition, kicking a lump of ice to test its existence, I heard the old familiar swish of sliding skis. And listen to this, you Eastern enthusiasts, letters I received later informed me that there was no less than sixteen feet of snow remaining on May 24 and that a meet was being organized for July 4. So you see, if you yearn to effect a compromise between a



NATIONAL PARKS BRANCH, OTTAWA

UP AMONG THE LARCHES ON MOUNT SADDLEBACK

city life and eight or more months skiing annually, Vancouver is your logical goal.

I approached a small crowd grouped about what I at first thought was some sort of a well, but which, upon reaching its edge, I discovered was simply a deep hole in the snow with a ladder down which people were going to the door of a two-storey ski hut, part of whose pitched roof I had not previously noticed protruding from the snow a few yards away. Descending, I entered a room where a number of people were industriously waxing skis by artificial light, and having received instructions from them how to get to the Grouse Mountain Chalet, I climbed to the surface and went there. I "waxed," and leaving my excess clothing at the Chalet, repaired with other competitors to the scene of the slalom which was about to begin. It was, I was told, only the second formal slalom held in the Coast Range. Its setter and the other officials in charge had not any previous experience in setting and conducting modern slaloms, yet their achievement was remarkably good, particularly the actual conduct, but the setting was unorthodox as were the rules by which the race was governed. The

start was at the peak of Grouse Mountain, 3,975 feet above sea level, and the course, which descended 474 feet vertically in a distance of approximately 700 yards on the snow through twenty-four pairs of flags, finished on the plateau close to the outrun of the jump. As the view of the start from the finish is partly obscured by the intervening ground and is often rendered entirely invisible by clouds, a telephone system connecting them had been installed the previous summer. It proved most satisfactory and in addition to its use for timing purposes greatly facilitated the expeditious conduct of the race. Two receivers were used by independent timekeepers, each operating a stopwatch, the average of the two watches being the official time for each run. Officials of ski-ing events in the East would have envied those timekeepers, sitting comfortably, basking in the warm sun at a large and steady table on the snow, with a clear line of vision along the finish line. With a minimum of patrolling, the spectators behaved exceedingly well and a splendid sporting atmosphere pervaded everything. By means of a loud speaker set up in the judges' stand of the jump, everyone was kept informed of the progress of the race and in the intervals beguiled by popular airs on a gramophone. Due to lack of time and the fact that a course had not as yet been cleared, a downhill race to serve as an eliminating event for the slalom wasn't held as is customary. That was regrettable for many reasons, particularly since many of the local runners who would certainly have qualified were forced to remain out of the race to allow inferior visiting skiers to compete. As it was, there were thirty-nine entries, thirty-two of whom started. Fifteen completed two runs successfully, the remainder being disqualified or dropping out after one run. The first three places were won by H. Davidson, J. L. Taylor and K. Hague, respectively, all members of the Vancouver Winter Sports Club. T. Paris of the Banff Ski Club and G. Johnson of the Hollyburn Pacific Ski Club, Vancouver, tied for fourth place and H. Paris of Banff was fifth. Davidson's best time was 51 415 sec., Taylor's 58 $\frac{3}{4}$ sec. No one else ran the course in less than one minute.

And now, a few words in an attempt to describe the snow conditions. The wide range of freedom of movement with great ease which the snow permitted was almost unbelievable and quite new in the experience of the skiers from Banff and my own. We had never known anything like it before. It was fairly coarsely granulated, very wet yet fast. Throughout the course and on the adjacent slopes where many

people had skied, it was loosely packed so that when walking one did not sink above the ankle. After my first run down, I awoke to the realization that one could execute everything from sweeping Telemarks through the whole gamut of stemmed turns to pure swing Christianias with ease, and that it furnished sufficient support for relatively easy control at high speed. Though wet to grayness, it flew high in the air in a spray when one stopped or turned abruptly at high speed. It was amazing.

To make the most of the potentialities of that snow, the Vancouver skiers have developed many original varieties of skis and other equipment, the leader among the experimenters and the foremost craftsman being Hamish Davidson. He has produced a wide range of fairly broad, multi-laminated types of skis which are unbelievably light and the apex of the bend of which is midway between the toe-iron and the heel of the ski. These skis possess maximum moisture-resisting properties, some of them have sliding surfaces and internal laminations of a fibre composition amazing in its strength and hardness, and are much more flexible than other types of laminated skis I have seen in the East and in Europe. A guarantee against warping and breakage and other defects accompanies their purchase but in the three years they have been on the market it has never needed to be fulfilled. Their one disadvantage for local use is the shallowness of the groove which results, of course, from the nature of their structure. In my opinion, they are too light for use elsewhere and the points are not sufficiently turned up for use on deep dry snow. These flexible skis follow the undulations of the surface of the snow without sinking in to any extent and the abnormal bend facilitates control, giving great ease and freedom in turning on snow which furnishes good support.

At the conclusion of the slalom everyone repaired to the Chalet for lunch, afterwards returning to the plateau to witness the jumping. There were more than thirty competitors in the Senior Jumping Class representative in all of ten clubs, three from the State of Washington, six from British Columbia, and one from Alberta. All the competitors, with the single exception of C. Edwards of the Banff Ski Club, were of Scandinavian descent. I was delighted that Tom Mobraaten, a Scandinavian-Canadian of Vancouver, took first place in the competition that day.

After watching the jumping for a while, I climbed to the very peak of the mountain and looked down on the city spread out in plan far below, and through the milky haze of mist and smoke, I discerned moving specks

in the harbour which I knew were coastal steamers, and, looking out to sea, saw still other specks which I supposed were ocean tramps and liners, and I wondered if it would ever fall to my lot to cross in one of them to ski in Japan. Later, I toured about the inland slopes of Grouse Mountain and looked over the surrounding country contemplating the good fortune of the Vancouver skiers for *here is* touring terrain only surpassed by that which lies about a few European resorts.

It had turned out a gorgeous day, the sun was bright and warm and the huge fir trees cast deep small shadows on the undulating "blue-gold" snow blanket that stretched away towards Mount Hollyburn and The Lions, the special precincts respectively of the Hollyburn Pacific and The Lions Ski Clubs. Before returning to the Chalet, I made a "descent" into, that is, paid a call, at the Vancouver Winter Sports Club clubhouse. All day spectators had sat on the ridge of its roof between the chimneys resting their feet on the surface of the snow while watching the competitions. The clubhouse is a fine one, a large living room with great open fireplace where stout fir logs burned and about whose hearth a few tired skiers lounged, mugs of good B. C. ale at their elbows, living over again the adventures of the day. I was shown the spacious dormitories where hunks, tier upon tier, accommodate the members on the week-ends; the spotless kitchen and dining room where a

genial chef, in a tall starched cap, held sway and catered to large ski-ing appetites. Returning to the Chalet, I passed other "buried" clubhouses and ski huts and some built on stilts whose front doors, therefore, were more easily reached. After a visit to the Thunder Birds Ski Club quarters which are in one wing of the Chalet, I joined the great throng overflowing the main dining room where the prize-giving was held during dinner. The predominating language throughout the Tournament was Norwegian, or, as it is colloquially called, "Ski-Wegian." During dinner it was employed for general conversation, for the formal speeches, and for many songs whose airs were most pleasing and whose words seemed known to all, and which were sung enjoyably and with evident amusement, accompanied on a species of banjo-like by one of the prize-winning jumpers. Afterwards, dancing started and the party carried on and on until the small hours.

I would like to be able to describe the Grouse Mountain hospitality and entertainment. I can only say that I enjoyed it immensely and it will always remain among my happiest memories.

A few hours later I boarded the train and with increasing regret as the miles went by left the West and the Westerners farther and farther behind.

And so again I say—there is wonderful ski-ing in the Rockies and the Coast Range and that you'd enjoy it. Ski heil!

1932-1933—EUROPEAN TRIP OF MCGILL—RED BIRDS SKI TEAM

STIRLING MAXWELL, Captain

A FIVE MAN undergraduate ski team composed of Jack Houghton, Frank Campbell, Bill Ball, Walter Dorkin and Peter Renold, of McGill University, sailed from Saint John, N.B. on the S.S. *Duchess of Atholl* on December 15, 1932. The trip was organized and conducted by the Red Birds Ski Club and was made possible by individual contributions from the members of the team, the Red Birds Ski Club, the generosity of certain Montreal sportsmen and Alexander Keiller, past president of the Ski Club of Great Britain. The object of the trip was to repay the visit of the Oxford and Cambridge ski teams which had come to Canada the year before, by competing against their combined team at St. Moritz, Switzerland, and also to participate in the International University Ski Championship Meeting which

was held there from January 5 to January 8. Four graduates, including the President and Vice-President of the Red Birds, accompanied the team, the party being in charge of Stirling Maxwell, who was ably assisted in its management by Fred Taylor. Harry Pangman, Olympic runner, was appointed Honorary Coach in charge of Cross-Country and George Jost took charge of training the team for the Slalom race.

Most of us prefer to forget the details of the voyage across. It was typical of the worst kind of winter crossing with a dull, overcast sky, huge rollers, and a wind that whipped the tops of the waves into spray. At times the ship rolled to such an angle that it appeared it would never right itself again. Three of us who remained at dinner one evening witnessed an extraordinary