

Members of Canadian ski clubs affiliated with the Canadian Amateur Ski Association are invited to become Overseas Members of the Kosciusko Alpine Club of Australia. Candidates must be proposed in writing by their club secretary and seconded by another member. Elected candidates are entitled to receive, post free, one copy of the *Australian & New Zealand Ski Year Book*, to wear the Kosciusko Alpine Club badge and colours, and to certain other privileges. The fee for Canadian Overseas Members is \$1.00, payable to the Honorary Canadian Representative, Kosciusko Alpine Club, 23 Otter Crescent, Toronto 12, Ontario, who will be glad to furnish any further information.

MR. BRIAN MEREDITH, our Associate Editor, has gone to England to reside permanently, where he will carry on his journalistic work in London. Connected with the Seignior Club for many years, he was editor of their magazine *The Seigneur*. A graceful writer, he is responsible for the present set-up of *The Year Book*. He will be greatly missed but as he will have so much larger scope for his talents in his new environment, we can hardly begrudge his leaving and wish him every good luck and happiness.

TO BRIAN MEREDITH, our contributors, our advertisers, and to our publishers, John Lovell & Son, Limited, I offer my sincere thanks for their fine co-operation.

Lunacy at the F.I.S.

By Dwight Shepler, in "The Sportsman"

ALTHOUGH there were mitigating circumstances, the F.I.S. downhill race at Innsbruck on February 21, 1936 was a harrowing experience for both skiers and spectators. The downhill course, nursed through a warm spell of a thoroughly perverse winter, was a ribbon of ice crust flanked with stumps, rocks, and bare ground, and the promising-looking sun of February 21 failed to soften the pavement into corn snow. On rasping, rattling skis the best racers in competition threw form and control to the winds, and approximately half of the one hundred and twenty lads and girls reached the finish line at the foot of the final murderous schuss.

It is our hope, and that of many Americans who know and love skiing and who watched this race, that this world's championship, or any other race for that matter, will never be run under such impossible conditions again. The dauntless competitors, who would doubtless race a course down the south slope of the Empire State Building if requested, were confronted with a trail whose lower stretches were a corduroy road of concrete snow packed by the skis of the hard-working Innsbruckers who had miserable fortune with the weather. Most of the elaborate plans for their week of winter sports festival had to be abandoned, and if the day had only been warmer the course would have been acceptable. As it was, steel edges wouldn't hold on turns, or else caught in the ruts and threw the racers on to the merciless surface of this trail above Mutters. Conditions for the slalom and jumping were much better, and in these two events some real skiing was seen.

Rudolph Romminger of Switzerland, the gods of fate skiing protectively at his elbow, flew over the unfriendly ice and crossed the finish line of the long downhill course in 4 minutes 29.8 seconds, 14 seconds faster than the madcap Sertorelli of Italy, who placed second.

Richard Durrance of Dartmouth, who acquitted himself so well in the Olympics, came in fourteenth in the field of seventy, and gave the best American performance in the F.I.S. America is young in skiing, and Durrance was competing against professionals and amateurs from nations to whom a ski bears the same significance as a baseball bat to us.

At the very finish of the course there was a steep, winding schuss, punctuated with a few stumps, and it was here that some of the accidents happened which cause our plea for sanity. Willy Steuri of Switzerland, first man to run, appeared in sight with his forehead all bloody. As he catapulted down the steep slope he tried to check, caught an edge, and took a spill that ripped the skin clear off one cheek, and from his shins, thighs, and arms. His ankle was badly sprained. Sigmund Ruud, who has a habit of jumping obstacles rather than going around them, jumped twice, failed to hold the hard ice, and plunged off into an army of

stumps. He caromed from one to another, and everybody figured that he was dead, but miraculously he rose with only a broken nose. Herman Steuri, brother of Willy, dislocated his shoulder in the upper slopes of the trail, and finished the race. Other accidents included a broken leg and many minor injuries.

This worst lower part of the trail was eliminated from the women's race. Most of the lady competitors looked quite unhappy as they strove to cope with the intractable crust, and there was little of the dashing style that characterized their Olympic performances. Elizabeth Woolsey of the United States took an eighth place, a very fine performance. The race was won by Evie Pinching of England, with Elvira Osirnig of Switzerland second. Gerda Paumgarten of Austria, sister of Harold Paumgarten, so well known to American skiers, was third.

The famous Rudi Matt of Austria, jabbing his inside pole, hopping and twisting in rhythmical fashion, turned in the best time for two trips through the flags of the steep course. The way in which these European experts can worm through a flush, where the flags are in a straight line, is almost incredible.

The slalom flags that were used in Europe this year are about shoulder high and have a rubber section in the shaft which permits them to fall down flat when run into, but pop right back automatically.

The following day special jumping was held at Seefeld, and Birger Ruud repeated his Olympic triumph by leaping farther and better than anyone else, seeming to lie on his ski tips as he soared through the air. His brother, Sigmund, launched his broken nose out into the ozone for a second place. Birger's longest jump was 65 metres.

The spectacle of the downhill race of the Federation International de Ski leads us to hope that officials will descend from the rarefied atmosphere of lunacy and run future ski races on something approximating snow.

Combined Ranking—Men:—1st, Rudolph Romminger, Switzerland; 2nd, Heinz v. Almen, Switzerland; 3rd, Eberhart Kneissl, Austria; 4th, Rudi Matt, Austria; 5th, Ciacinto Sertorelli, Italy; 6th, Birger Ruud, Norway; 7th, Willy Walch, Austria; 8th, Emile Allais, France; 9th, Hans Schlunegger, Switzerland; 10th, Peter Lunn, England; 12th, Richard Durrance, America.

Combined Ranking—Women:—1st, Evie Pinching, England; 2nd, Elvira Osirnig, Switzerland; 3rd, Gerda Paumgarten, Austria; 4th, Nini Arx-Zogg, Switzerland; 5th, Erni Steuri, Switzerland; 6th, Frieda Clara, Italy; 7th, Jeanette Kessler, England; 8th, Marcelle Buhler, Switzerland; 9th, Herta Rosmini, Austria; 10th, Elizabeth Woolsey, America; 17th, Clarita Heath; 20th, Grace Ellen Carter, America; 21st, Helen Boughton-Leigh, America.