

pared favourably with those turned in by the men during the Intercollegiate Ski Union championships several weeks before.

Youthful Miss Johannsen found the course too slippery, as did the majority of Canadian skiers, and fell on three occasions. This deprived her of any chance to overtake the foreigner. The runner-up's time was twelve seconds slower than Miss Pembauer's.

After the races, the American transients made their way back to their respective hotels and started preparing their exodus to the homeland. That night when the boys, girls, women and men awaited the two-locomotive train to pull into the quaint station, they gazed upon the sky and wondered why New York could not be so picturesque a spot. The Northern Lights and the pageantry of the Aurora Borealis combined their efforts and put on a great show for the New Yorkers. After everybody had been accounted for, the train pushed and panted its

way back to the confines of New York but the thoughts of the boys had been left behind.

This observer has been accompanying "snow trains" for years but can vouchsafe the fact that a healthier bunch of individuals he never saw as that on the Laurentian return trip. Without exception, everyone was toasted a "brick red" that proved to be the envy of all New York the following morning. The trip will never be forgotten by those fortunate to have made it.

The innovation doubtlessly will result in the Laurentians becoming the playground of Americans during the winter, as well as the eight to ten thousand Canadians who gather there each week-end for Spring ski-ing. Just let the railroads outline an expeditious trip at a reasonable charge and there will be no boundary between the United States and Canada. How about it, New York Central, Delaware and Hudson and Canadian Pacific?

## My Canadian Impressions

By Karl Webber

*Manager of the 1937 Swiss Universities Ski Team*

**T**HINKING of Canada I still look back on it with infinite pleasure. Montreal especially won my heart as it reminded me so much of our Swiss town, Zurich. Trees grow in nearly all the streets, eliminating that "empty" feeling which you so often find in most of the great towns of America.

The surrounding countryside of St. Marguerite and especially of St. Jovite is very similar to the west part of Switzerland, the Jura. The view seen from Mont Tremblant, looking over the immeasurable forests and ice-covered lakes, puts one in a lonely frame of mind and awakens in one a sort of homesickness. At the same time, however, you have the earnest desire to wander in these far unexplored regions. When the pine-clad, snow-covered hills turn a beautiful rose-violet colour, due to the setting sun, one feels absolutely at home in Canada.

My friend Walter Praeger, coach of the Dartmouth Outing Club, Hanover, was a valuable stimulant and a great asset in helping me with the following reports and the observations about Banff are from him.

The Swiss boys will never forget the journey from Montreal to the West of Canada. All breathed a sigh of relief as the Rocky Mountains appeared in sight from behind a veil of purple mist after a three-day rail journey through endless plains, for now the destination,

Banff, could not be far off. With a light heart everybody descended from the comfortable carriage of the Canadian Pacific Railway which had slowly given us the impression of being in a prison.

On arrival we were heartily received by Mr. Crosby, who escorted us to our lodgings.

There is not one district either in Canada or America which so closely resembles our native country as Banff does. Already during the journey from Calgary to Banff huge rocky crags and tops appeared before us, so similar to our mountains in the Urnerland, only that here in Canada the transition from the plain to the cliff-like mountain side, is much rougher and the beautiful woods and alpine meadows which clothe our icy giants, are entirely missing in the Rocky Mountains.

I believe in no other country than Canada we felt so soon at home and found such a fine spirit of comradeship. Canadians are inspired by a wonderful enthusiasm for sports and to a great many of them we cannot deny an excellent knowledge of ski-ing.

The adjoining districts of St. Marguerite and St. Jovite though excellent for jumping and cross-country, are not so good for downhill races. The narrow downhill trails do not give the runner much chance to develop his art and more depends on the knowledge of the place and on reckless rushing than on technical run-

ning. A proof thereof—may I be forgiven for mentioning it—is, for example, the triumph of the sympathetic young Canadian at the Mont Tremblant downhill race.

Facing the downhill trail in Banff, which leads to a very steep woody path, all were silent at the thought of charging down here. To our consolation, however, the best racer ran this path in 10-20 swinging curves. As the surroundings reminded us so much of our own country we easily got used to this extremely steep ground which is only very seldom used by us as downhill trails and one might really say, absolutely avoided. I use this opportunity to remark, that, in my opinion sooner or later such downhill trails will lead to serious accidents and I would not be surprised if one day several people racing down these trails did not break their head. In my opinion a downhill trail should be at least fifty metres broad. In case too great a speed is developed, one should put some control flags (Kontrolltore) as it is often done in Europe and not wrongly so, for the idea of racing is not to see how quickly and surely young people can break their bones. For the older ski-racing generation there falls the duty of seeing that the racing trails are not too dangerous and that besides a daring race, the technique of the racer may be used to full degree.

As for the slalom races, the slalom in St. Marguerite was excellent, the one in St. Jovite, however, a matter of ski acrobats. The stretch was much too narrow and it was quite impossible for the skiers to race down fluently, which made a very painful impression to a skilled ski man. A slalom may be tricky (affording great difficulties) but the ready, quick race should never be hampered.

At the slalom in Banff, the top steep part of the downhill trail was used the first day as slalom slope. The snow conditions were excellent, but unfortunately, probably no incitement for a modern slalom had reached as far as Banff. The slalom was placed very one-sidedly and one had to swing from one hair-pin bend to the other, till even our own hair stood on end. As a result of these sharp swinging curves, coming from such a "Tor" combination, there was soon a deep ditch at every "Tor" so that the racers with high starting numbers were put to a great disadvantage.

In my opinion variety is the first thing for a good slalom, for example, first a few open "Tor," through which one could swing freely, then a vertical one, a "Knickschneise," a "Stemmschneise," an elbow curve and then also a few hair-pin bends. Well, variety and fluentness are the characteristics of a well placed slalom. We were pleasantly surprised to see the proper slalom flags everywhere, as the F.I.S. prescribed.

Cross-countries are ideal, at first an entirely unaccustomed thing to us, with their constant ups and downs, through bushes and woods, but

just for this very reason extraordinary exciting.

The jumping hills are well built, although at times the air compression and side winds make themselves felt, as for example in St. Marguerite.

The jumping hill in Banff could count as one of the best in the world, if one could remedy some of the deficiencies. Firstly the start is too steep and the passage from this to the hill is too short. It needs, therefore, very much exercise to enable one to take the jump at the precise moment. Just in Banff one saw very many jumps with too little extension because most of the jumpers were too slow to pull up and jump on the course from the start to the hill within a fraction of a second. The "Aufsprungbahn" is very good and if more attention were paid to the extension run, it would surely be a pleasure for every jumper to jump 180-200 feet.

In general the deportment at ski-ing of the Canadian is too little suited to the country side and is not flexible enough for downhill and slalom. In the steep, wavy countryside that is predominant in Canada one should absolutely try to use the proper ski technique. Loose in the joints, especially at the knees and hips, weight in front, not only by leaning the top of the body forward but by pressing the knee and hip parts forward. Another but very important factor should be considered and that is always to put the weight on the right ski, i.e., always on the slopewards ski, as soon as one is running across the slope.

Even if the difference in time at the downhill races between the first five to ten racers was not so big and the different techniques of ski running of the American, Canadian or Swiss was not an absolute proof for the good of the one or the other technique, in the slalom the difference in the ski technique was very noticeable. In the slalom, where one can win much more time with precision and technique, as for example at the downhill race, it shows how much easier and surer without any cramped position, the racer with a sufficient leaning forwards, proper weight distribution, comes over the "Piste." In the slalom it was especially to be seen how many runners were trying to gain a good end result by force alone. Very often the most important leaning-forward position was lacking and one saw the competitors with stiff legs and open ski direction, falling down the slalom slope. There was certainly no lack of courage in all these racers and I think that under the direction of a good coach, much could be got out of these young people. There are only a few, but therefore all the more important points of ski technique which are given too little attention nowadays in Canada. The proper technique together with courage and enthusiasm which these young racers show, would give them the possibility of increasing their results considerably and just in the classical discipline of the alpine downhill and slalom. I have no doubt, however, that in a few years

this lack will be removed by constant exercise.

In both the discipline cross-country and jumping the influence of the Norwegians was very noticeable. The use of the different step movements in cross-country is in general still a little one-sided and not too well suited to the countryside. Also the wax problem, one of the most difficult problems of a cross-country, is not properly solved. But also here things can be improved in course of time.

Results in cross-country and jumping are extraordinary impressive, and there is no doubt that the young Canadian skiers could compete with the best European racers.

I was especially pleased to see how the young Canadian students fought for every metre and every second in the race, and with what pleasure they took up the fight. Not in one position, even if there was absolutely no chance,

could I see that any one of the boys would have given up the race. This shows a true sporting spirit, and where this predominates, there is no need to worry about the efforts and the improvements of the results.

A very great impression did Mr. H. Smith-Johannsen make on me and all the other Swiss. Sixty years old and such enthusiasm, such understanding for youth, is truly something for which every land could envy Canada. When I think how Mr. Johannsen was always the first and the last at a race, how he heeded every detail how he personally always gave a helping hand, for example when the starting run of the jumping hill in St. Marguerite had to be covered with snow: Mr. Johannsen's ever living-up to the ski sport will remain unforgettable to us. As long as such people are engaged in skiing in Canada, a big success can and will not fail to come of it.

## Lukin Robinson

### In the "Toronto Ski Runner"

WE HAVE recently been shown the results of the British Open Ski championships, held at Grindewald, Switzerland, January 9th and 10th. We were particularly pleased to see how well Lukin Robinson of our club had done. As you may remember, Lukin, along with his brother Peter, was picked on the Canadian Olympic Ski Team last year, but unfortunately they were not able to take part. Although Lukin has done most of his skiing in Switzerland we cannot help a feeling of reflected glory at his success.

The downhill or straight race was won by Peter Aitchison of the Downhill Only Club with a time of 4.25.2. Michel Lehner of Montana was in second place, and Otto Boss of Grindewald third. Lukin finished eighth, with a time of 4.52.8.

The slalom was held on the following day. This race was won by A. Brandicourt of Kandahar with the two runs of 71.2 seconds. Michel Lehner came second in this event also, with a time of 72.7. Lukin did particularly well and came third, his time being 73.7, only 2.5 seconds behind the winner. The fourth man was almost 4 seconds slower than Lukin.

In the combined Straight Race—Slalom results, the standing was as follows:—(1) Michel Lehner, 440.6; (2) Andre Brandicourt, 441.0; (3) Otto Boss, 458.0; (4) Lukin Robinson, 462.3.

For the benefit of our readers with technical knowledge, the final score was compiled by

means of the new method of combination, according to the F.I.S. rules.

As Lukin, was the first Britisher in this final result, he was given the British Closed Championship, probably the highest ski-ing distinction won by a Canadian since George Jost won the Roberts of Kandahar.

We have besides the British championship results reports of some of the other competitions in which Lukin further distinguished himself. Just to show his versatility, he also placed sixth in the Grindewald Ski Club Jumping Competition with jumps of 47, 46 and 49 metres. The winning jumps were 50, 53.5 and 56.8 metres.

Further we have the results of the Oberlandishes Verbands-Skirennen. Undoubtedly our knowledge of German is very limited, but as far as we can make out this means, roughly, the Oberland Ski Championships. We are quite willing to be corrected on this point.

Racing in the class Senior II, Lukin came third in the straight race in a field of twenty-six and first in the slalom with two fine runs of 38.9 and 38.1 seconds. In the jumping competitions he placed eighth out of twelve.

By way of explanation, the Class Senior II is composed of seniors who have not won prizes in the Swiss National Championships in senior competition. When a Senior II does win a prize, or if he represents Switzerland in an international team race, then he becomes a Senior I.