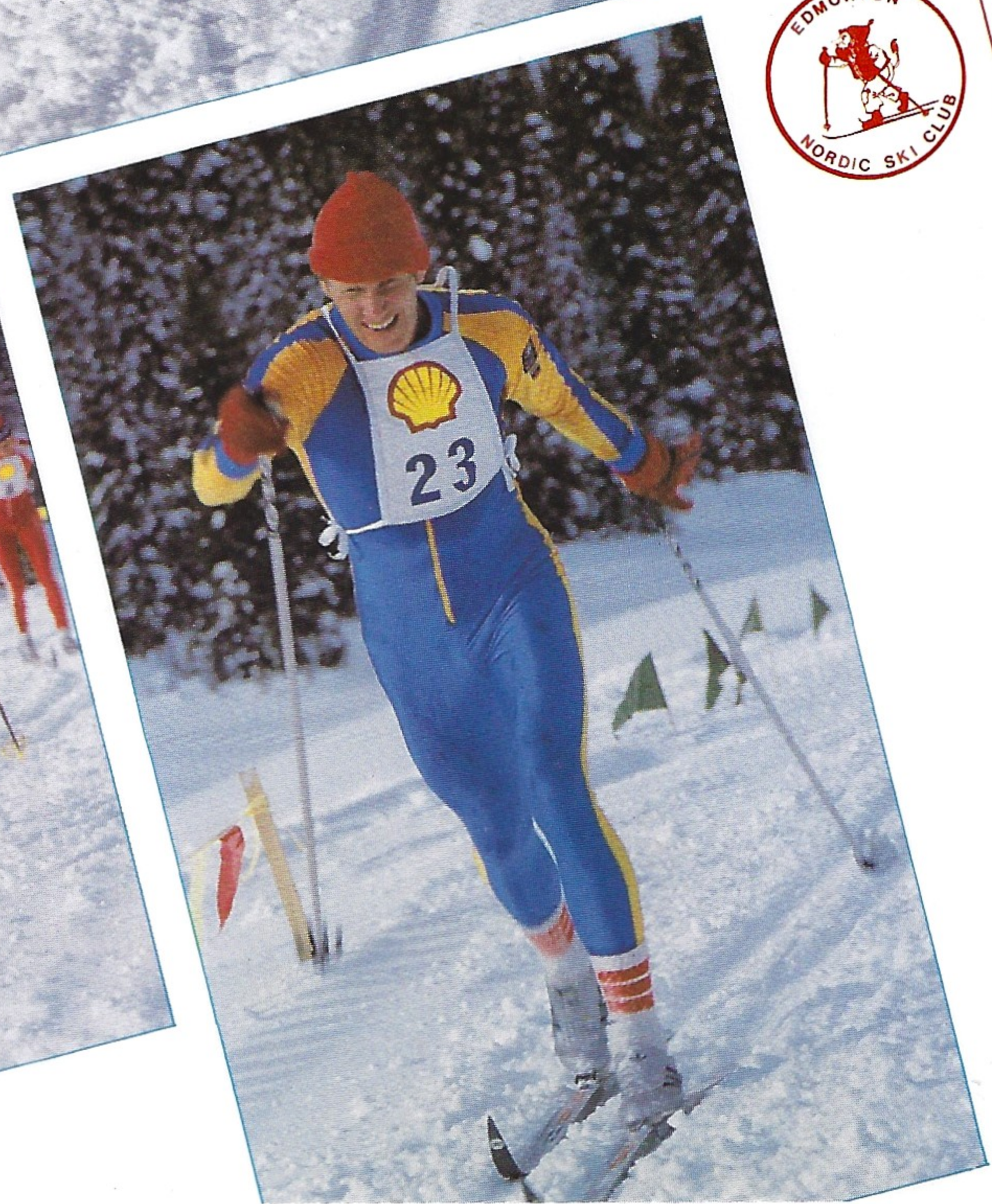


La Coupe Shell Cup Edmonton 1982



**CANADIAN
SENIOR
CROSS-COUNTRY
CHAMPIONSHIPS**
JAN. 28 - FEB. 2



Discipline in Action! Watch the Canadian Amateur Ski Championships

THE SHELL CUP

CANADIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS



CHAMPIONNATS CANADIENS DE

LA COUPE SHELL

En piste en vue des prochains championnats canadiens de ski amateur!





INDUSTRIAL PRINTING

A DIVISION OF THE BULMAN GROUP LIMITED

7805 ARGYLL ROAD, EDMONTON, ALBERTA
T6C 4A9

PHONE (403) 469-4495

SHELL CUP CANADIAN SENIOR CROSS-COUNTRY SKI SHAMPIONSHIPS

EDMONTON, 1982

PRESS CLIPPINGS:

Edmonton Journal

Edmonton Sun

'Coal roads' now trails for skiers

By NORM COWLEY

Trails once used to transport coal out of the river valley will carry Canada's top cross-country skiers during the next few days.

Although the mines and shafts have long since been shut down in the Gold Bar Park area, the beaten paths formed by the coal-laden carts have withstood the elements.

When members of the Nordic Ski Club converged on the Park to map out possible trails for the Canadian senior championships, they readily made use of the old "coal roads," along with many of the trails blazed haphazardly by the recreational skier.

Today, after 1½ years of continuous work, those trails have been widened to as much as 1.22 metres and are meticulously groomed for the first-ever ski nationals to be held in a major city.

"It's also the first time we've had so much visibility where people can see the racers," said Doug Kelker, the chief of course for the competition, which gets under way Thursday morning with the men's 30-km and the women's 10-km races.

The race courses are not exactly up to usual standards, but "because we're not in the mountains, there are a limited number of things you can do in a river valley," Kelker said.

"On the shorter races, we are a little bit shy on the recommended elevation (total of all the uphill climbs). But for the longer races, we are in the recommended ranges.

"It's not as physically demanding as some of the other courses at the nationals," he added.

It has taken more than 1,100 man-hours to convert the old trails into championship-calibre material.

"We've had roughly 90 different club members help clear the brush on the trail and put in bridges," said Kelker, a statistics professor at the University of Alberta who has led the work brigade. "That's just the physical labor, not any of the running-around stuff."

The club had their workers sign a book to keep a record of the hours worked when they started clearing brush in September, 1980. The task of clearing was required again last fall because of new shoots and brush that

grew back during the summer.

As well, the club obtained the services of bulldozers and their operators for addition brush-clearing.

"People complain it's unsightly," Kelker said of the clearing operation. "But we still haven't had time to clean up everything. Most of the labor was done to clear the brush before the Cats went in."

Bridges, which will have to be removed before the spring thaw (or else they will be washed away), were also installed at two locations.

Since the snow fell, Kelker's work has been limited to odds and ends, such as clearing up ice on the trail, removing snow drifts and shovelling in snow where the wind blew the trail bare.

"I've actually skied completely around the trail once," he said. "But I hear about problems from people who ski it and fix the things up."

Meanwhile, John Sernecky of the city's Parks and Recreation department has been whipping the track into its top-notch condition.

The foreman in charge of Gold Bar Park was out with the first snowfall to pack the trail "so the snow wouldn't blow away or melt if we had a Chinook," said Kelker.

Sernecky became so involved in his work that he invented a piece of equipment to ensure the trail would be in good shape for the championships.

"I just call it a base-builder," he said. "I decided to put blades on a

packer to bring snow in from the side. The front blade brings in the snow and puts it on the trail and the back blade levels it off.

"I should patent it, but I figured there wasn't enough use for it. I've had a few guys take pictures of it so they can build one for themselves."

The base-builder hasn't been required since the recent heavy snowfalls. "But we will be able to use it for all the ski clubs that need it from now on," said Sernecky. "If we get four inches of new snow, we can bring it right up to a tracked trail."

Because of the work of people like Kelker and Sernecky, skiers will be pursuing gold on trails that once saw only black, dirty coal.

Trails draw mixed reviews

Skiers competing at the national cross-country championship will find the course a challenge, but it's one they are looking forward to.

In fact, most skiers and their coaches training on the lower Gold Bar Park racing trails, have been pleasantly surprised by the challenging and excellently prepared tracks developed for the 1982 championships opening Thursday morning at 9:45.

"The five kilometre trail is tough. There's no rest anywhere," commented Sharon Firth of Banff, who recently returned from the World Cup circuit in Europe. "If the conditions remain as they are, it'll be fast."

Esther Miller of Burn's Lake, B.C., defending five-kilometre national champion, echoes Firth's first assessment of the trail.

"It's a trail without rest. And the five is more of a challenge than the other two trails."

The other two loops are of 7½ kilometres and 10 kilometres in length. "We thought the area would be flat as a pancake," said Perry Sakki of Sudbury, "but we were surprised to see how rolling the trails turned out to be."

Heinz Niederhauser, coach of the national capital division commented

that the trail system was relatively easy, but cautioned that "it's still going to be tough and fast."

Tara Paulson of Whitehorse summed up the comments well: "I haven't heard anyone yet complain about the trail. They're fun. We're looking forward to racing on them."

Because the track system lacks the long demanding climbs, the differences in finishing times between the elite skiers and the up-and-coming talents won't be as large. Racers vying

for berths on the Canadian team to the World Nordic championships are going to have to ski that much faster in order to guarantee their leading position.

The fact that each event will consist of a number of laps of the existing trails each race will almost provide the maximum amount of climb demanded of an international or national calibre senior cross-country racing course.

— Omholt-Jensen

Cup spectators will have it easy

Spectators at the Canadian senior cross-country championships this weekend at Lower Gold Bar Park (east off 50th St., north of 106 Ave.) should be well treated.

Organizers have arranged for a heated tent to be installed near the starting and finishing area along with the usual necessities such as outdoor bathrooms.

The 408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron from CFB Namao will operate a refreshment tent serving hot drinks, hot dogs and hamburgers in a refreshment tent.

Meanwhile, the Canadian Forces recruiting centre will run the timing van which can spew out unofficial

results as they happen on an electronic scoreboard.

There is parking available for about 150 spectator cars in Gold Bar Park. On Saturday and Sunday, when overloads are expected, stewards will direct traffic to an overflow lot.

A spectator area will be roped off at the starting line, but there are also excellent viewing locations along Hardisty Drive and from the access road to Gold Bar Park's south entrance.

Directions will also be provided for spectators who cross-country ski from 50th St. or Rundle Park so don't infringe upon the race cou-

SKIING IN THE SUN

The spirit of a champion



Pierre Harvey

By GARRY COOPER

Pierre Harvey is a regular Spartan in Canadian sport, and he prefers it that way.

"I don't want to be rich," said the 24-year-old Rimouski, Que., World Cup cross-country skier last night, on the eve of the Shell Cup Canadian championships that open this morning at the Lower Gold Bar Park course.

"We are really lucky. The Quebec team pays for everything. I tell my team-mates how lucky we are. I was talking with some skiers here from Ontario, and they have to pay for half of everything; their hotel rooms and meals."

Harvey was informed that the Alberta team skiers are on their own hook.

At any rate, Harvey sometimes thinks the Quebec team provides competitors with too much.

"Someone will see that another one has two pair of gloves when he has just one, or a better pair of boots than he, and he complains," says Harvey, who within his first two years on the National Team has become Canada's best nordic international contender ever.

He finished fifth in last March's World Cup final at Whitehorse, the best ever by a Canadian in more than 50 years of international racing. Earlier this month, Harvey won an FIS marathon (30 km) tournament at Castelrotto, Italy. It was a feat never before accomplished by a Canadian cross-country skier.

In the first three World Cup races of the 1983 schedule, Pierre finished 44th (at Reit im Winkl, W.Ger.), 34th (at La Brussa, Switz.) and 22nd last weekend at Brusson, Italy.

"It's usually like this," smiled Harvey. "I get better at the end of the schedule. Last year I was 21st, 15th and then fifth at Whitehorse, in my only World Cup races."

Harvey has five more World meets in which to improve himself. Next up is the World Championships at Oslo, Norway. Then there are World Cup meets in Finland, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia and, finally, at Castelrotto where Harvey enjoyed his victory.

"I'm pleased the final is there," said Harvey. "I liked the course and I know it now."

Pierre Harvey is an easy-going young man at the worst of times, but he's "on top of the world" this season, thanks to his new Quebec City employers, the skate blade factory that provides for more than 70 per cent of the world production, St. Lawrence Mill.

Harvey last summer graduated as a mechanical engineer from Laval University. It

took him six instead of four years to complete the course because he took time out to compete in the 1976 Montreal Summer Olympics, in which he finished 24th in cycling road racing. Cycling had been the Quebecer's sport until he turned seriously to cross-country ski racing just two years ago.

The factory vice-president, Pierre Rouillard, had never heard of Harvey or much about the nordic skiing sport before young Pierre went there job-hunting last summer. Rouillard hadn't even heard of Harvey's sensational Whitehorse feat.

"I had a good talk with him, however," said Harvey, "and he understood that if he hired me, I would need to go away for training and for racing for a few years until I had gone as far as I could in the sport. I told him cross-country skiers peak at about age 26 to 28, that I had been training since I was 12 and had so much invested that I would not take a job in which I could not get away for my sport."

M. Rouillard listened, was impressed with this young man, and hired him on pay for time worked.

"Quebec television was so surprised that I had found such an employer, that M. Rouillard was interviewed before the cameras, and asked why he hired me," grins Harvey. "He replied that people who are working hard and fighting in a sport have good discipline and make good employees. He said he believes that in three to five years when I am through with my sport I will be a very good employee."

"I am really lucky to find somewhere like that to work," said Harvey, who has been receiving about \$4,000 a year from the National Team, as do each member to help pay their way.

"It's okay. I'm used to being a student and living on less than \$5,000 a year. It's not much money, but I'll have plenty of time to make money after finishing with my sport."

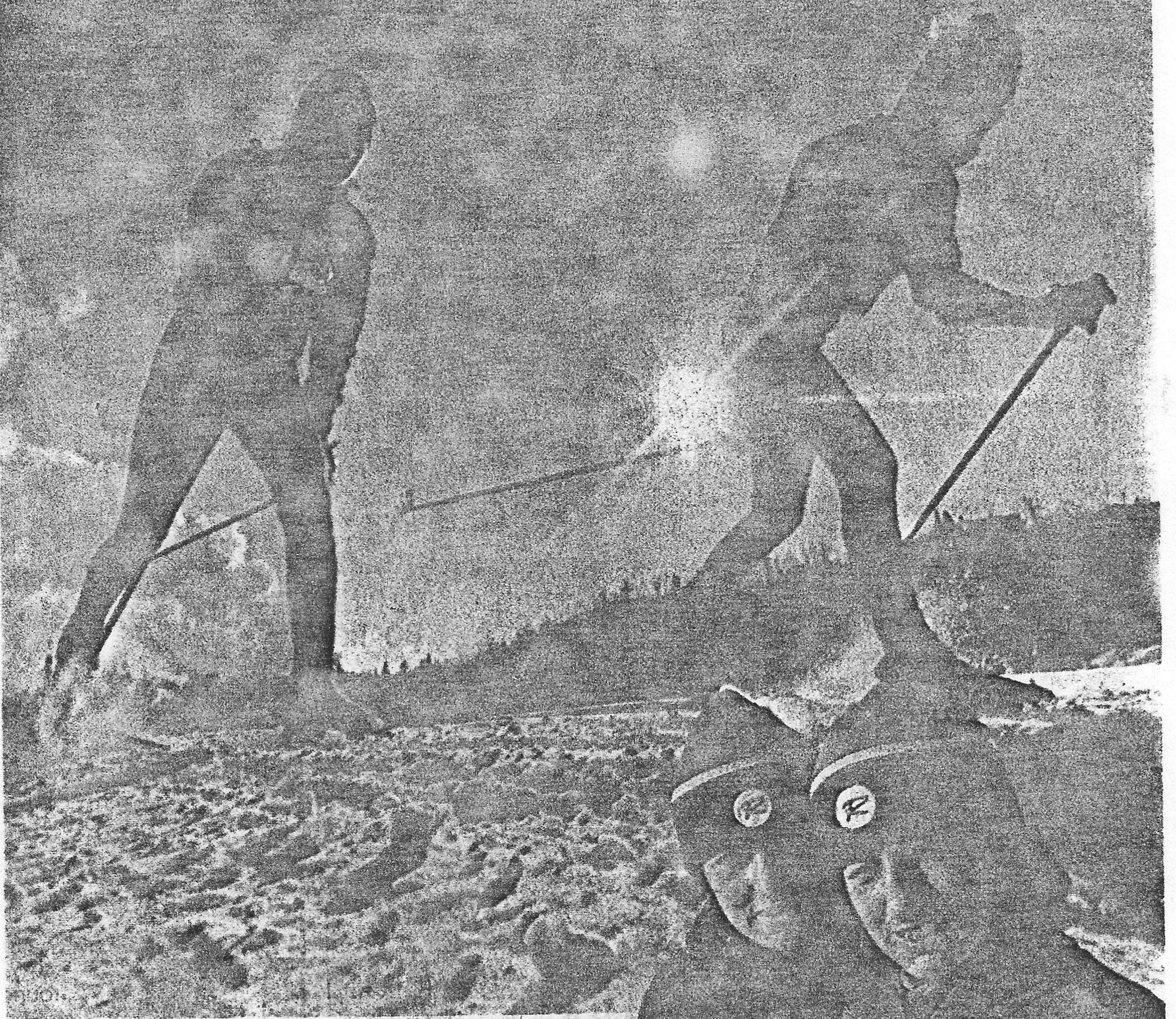
And Pierre Harvey dreams of finishing his sport a world champion.

Steaming right along, there

As Edmonton's 'Refinery Row' belches in the chill air in the background, Montague Watson of Whitehorse, Yukon, and National Team member Jenny Walker of Ottawa ski their final warm-up rounds yesterday afternoon at the Gold Bar Park course prior to the first women's event — at noon today — the 10-kilometre test of the Shell Cup Canadian cross-country skiing championships. The tournament opens at 10 this morning with the first men's event, the 30-km.

Photo by Don Dumbell

The fabulous Firth sisters



The sisters Firth at work and at rest

PICTURES: Jon Murray

By **NORM COWLEY**

It is 15 years and counting.

But the Firths — Sharon and Shirley . . . or Shirley and Sharon, depending on who won that day — show no sign of letting up.

In fact, if anything, they are getting stronger.

The 28-year-old Loucheux Indian twin sisters from the MacKenzie Delta river community of Inuvik in the Northwest Territories are Canada's premiere women cross-country skiers.

For years, they've provided each other with their only competition, except in major championships like the worlds or Olympic Games.

And it shouldn't be any different today when the Canadian finals get under way at Lower Gold Bar Park.

"You have to have competition," Shirley, who has been the senior women's champion the last four years, said after a practice run Wednesday afternoon. "If you have no competition, you have no incentive.

"Sometimes we're a little too competitive," she added. "Like right now

we're trying to see who can say the most in one minute or who can get dressed the fastest.

"But we're trying to stop that and just do it when you have the number on your back (in races)."

The Firth sisters, who narrowly missed becoming New Year babies when they were

Shell Cup schedule and Ski Journal, Page H8, H9

born about 10 minutes before midnight, are from a family of 11 — seven girls, four boys.

They first picked up cross-country skis as 13-year-old schoolgirls in 1967 through the TEST (Territories Experimental Ski Training) program started by Berger Petterson, who went on to become their trainer until 1975.

"Our friends were skiing in it and asked us to try it," said Shirley.

More FIRTH, Page H2.

Firth

(Continued from Page H1)

It didn't take long before they had the sport mastered. Sharon placed second and Shirley was third in the Canadian junior championships the following year.

They haven't looked back since.

Shirley overcame a bout with infectious hepatitis in 1971 to gather an all-time high of 36 medals in the national senior championships while Sharon has been awarded 31 medals.

"I would have been closer but I took one year off," said Sharon, not wanting to appear outdone by her sister.

The girls dropped all their other activities once they started skiing.

"That's what we wanted to do," said Shirley. "As soon as the bell rang (to end the school day), we went skiing."

"The first one, there got to choose the best equipment," Sharon chipped in, in part explaining their eagerness.

They were first attracted by the racing aspect.

"That was the most fun," Shirley said. "Then to travel. It was always nice to travel. We had always stayed in the settlement in Inuvik, and it was too boring to stay at home."

Now it's a case of them never being home. Shirley returned from Europe only last Friday, but will be heading back for another eight weeks after the Canadian championships. Sharon will likely be joining her, but will first have to qualify at the nationals.

In between, they'll have 1½ days to return to Banff — where they've lived since 1975 because of better training conditions — to pack their clothes.

The Firths also almost went to Europe to train during the summer. But a friend, Hans Gmoser of Canadian Mountain Skiing in Banff, offered to transport the national team to a glacier so they could ski there for a month.

"He said, 'Why go over there and train when you could stay in Canada,'" Sharon recalled.

Ever since they started skiing, the Firths have been primed on being the best. Petterson, their initial coach, told them about the best skiers in the world.

"We never knew about the Olympics or anything until 1964," said Shirley. "And we didn't know anything about training. We just wanted to ski."

"If we had more training when we were younger, we'd be much stronger and faster now."

"We were never pushed where we

Shirley said, "I'm not in for the Canadian flag bit.

"Just myself. If people don't like it, they'd better start doing something about it."

Despite their numerous accomplishments, the girls were almost forced off the national team in 1980.

"They (the national coaches) wanted all the old members off the team," said Shirley. "They did everything they could to discourage us." Initially, they had been told only one woman was being sent to the Olympic Games at Lake Placid. That competitor was supposed to be Joan Groothuysen, regardless of how the Firths did in the time trials.

Well, the Firths won and were eventually allowed to go to their third Olympics — but with only two weeks notice.

Naturally, they fared poorly. Shortly afterwards, however, Shirley finished ninth in a 20-km race at the world championships in Sweden.

The Firths also said they had problems with coaching up until 1978, so much that Sharon finally decided to retire.

"I was pretty upset with the way things were going. I couldn't take it anymore," she said, explaining her one-year absence from the national team. "So I worked at a sports shop in Banff."

"But it just wasn't for me. It was not demanding enough. I missed the training, and the travel, and Shirley."

The girls now have their own coach in Anders Lenes, and they credit him with their improved performances on the international scene of late.

"When he's around, our results are better because he really knows how to handle us," they said, practically in unison.

Shirley, whose placed 18th in the first official World Cup standings last year, ranks ninth overall this season after three races. Her best finish is an eighth in a 10-km race in East Germany. Sharon finished 17th in the same race.

"If you get the results you are looking for, it's always encouraging," said Shirley. "When your results are bad, that's when you get down. I just ski from race to race. If you do well, you look forward to the next race."

While Shirley is playing everything day-by-day, Sharon said she plans to ski until 1984 so she can compete in the Olympics once again.

Neither has any plans once they



CP wirephoto

Delighted with success are Quebec's (from left) Josee Auclair, Celine Giguere and Marie-Andree Masson

Quebec reveals champions

By JARL OMHOLT-JENSEN

If you took the combined times of the top skiers after the first 7.5-km lap in Saturday's 15-km sprint event, you would have been very close to predicting the eventual outcome of the men's 3 x 10-km relay Sunday.

Based on the combined times of the fastest individual performances Saturday, Quebec was given the title, on paper, by slightly more than two minutes.

Quebec's team, which successfully defended its men's 3 x 10-km title, consisted of Andre Tourigny, Richard Weber and Pierre Harvey. They outlasted their B.C. challengers to take the gold in a time of 1:38:04.7.

Lead runners Doug Gudwer and Reino Keski-Salmi for B.C. attempted to ski as hard as they could to build a cushion on which to send out 17-year-old junior racer, Kurt Tuggle of Tete Jaune.

Tuggle, as anchor man, had a one-minute, 45-second bulge over Harvey, chosen to anchor the Quebec squad.

Despite having the race of his life, Tuggle was passed by Harvey at the 5 1/2-km mark of the 10-km last lap.

With victory assured, Harvey took it easy on the remaining part of the course.

Tuggle skied strongly to assure B.C. of its silver in 1:39:49.2 while three other provinces battled for the bronze.

The National Capital Division, with Ottawa area racers Geoff Wasteneys, Bernie Sander and Dave Beedell, fought a tough battle with Saskatchewan in lap two and lap three. Anchor Wasteneys eventually prevailed to bring his division a bronze medal in 1:42:38.9.

Saskatchewan's third man, Mike Cherny of Saskatoon, held on to bring his team in fourth in 1:43:03.4, the highest placing ever held by that province.

Alberta, which was in the fight for the bronze, wound up in fifth position, with skiers Gary Hartling and Mike Dyer of Banff and Rocky Notnes of Hinton clocking 1:44:03.4. Seventeen teams completed the event.

With Shirley and Sharon Firth not entered in the relay for the N.W.T., the Territories did not have a third woman skier and the competition rested among five divisions. It was a junior woman skier, Marie-Andree Masson of Laval,

Quebec, who blew the race wide open on the second lap to give Quebec the lead it needed to eventually win the 3 x 5-km event.

Jossee Auclair of Sherbrooke, Masson and Celine Giguere of Beauport upset two-time defending champion, British Columbia, to take Quebec's first gold medal since 1968 in 55:35.3.

It was also the first time the province swept two relays in one championship.

B.C.'s Kaarina Engelbrecht, Margo Hartling and Esther Miller settled for the silver in 56:27.7, while NCD made the women's event identical to the men's relay by claiming the bronze with Clare Wasteneys, Jean McAllister and Janet Lamb.

NCD clocked 57:20.8 for the bronze and Alberta settled for fourth spot as Pat Wardlaw of Calgary, Carol Gibson of Camrose and anchor Joan Grootuysen of Vermilion posted 57:51.7 in the field of 14 official teams that finished.

The remaining two competitions, the 50- and 20-km long-distance runs, conclude the Shell Cup calendar in Edmonton on Tuesday.

Golden Boy Harvey

By JARL OMHOLT-JENSEN

Quebec skiing team leader Pierre Harvey stayed on the gold standard Saturday in capturing the 15-km national cross country sprint event at Gold Bar Park.

Harvey, 24, successfully defended the Canadian title he won last year in McBride, outlasting Reino Keski-Salmi of Salmon Arm, B.C.

Keski-Salmi was returning to action after collapsing from exhaustion in opening-day racing Thursday.

With a strong finish in the final 7.5-km lap, Harvey captured his gold medal in 47:08.5, 41 seconds ahead of the runner-up. Keski-Salmi had

closed in on the winner during the early going.

Doug Gudwer of Prince George grabbed the bronze in 48:14.7, ahead of Owen Spence of Regina.

Top junior was Jeff Wood, 18, of the Winnipeg Jackrabbit program.

Two other juniors were in the top 10. Wood's teammate Clinton Reece of Winnipeg ran eighth, with Bernie Sander of Dunrobin, Ont., ninth.

Alberta's best effort came from Gary Hartling of Banff. The 30-year-old was 14th in 50:43.5.

Shirley Firth of the Inuvik Ski Club won the five-km event by 2.3 seconds, good for her 27th gold medal of an amazing career in senior national racing.



Richard Weber



Andre Tourigny



Pierre Harvey

Harvey finds gold

By GARRY COOPER

Skiing over a race course that was once honeycombed with coal mines, Pierre Harvey has found a gold field at Edmonton's Gold Bar Park.

Flecks of gold dust, or "color" as prospectors call it, can be panned from the gravel bar in the nearby North Saskatchewan River... thus the name of the area.

However, Harvey has made the river flat his own El Dorado, yesterday picking off his third gold medal for Team Quebec in as many events in the Shell Cup Canadian seniors cross-country skiing championships that conclude tomorrow.

The 24-year-old National Team member from Rimouski, Que. pulled victory away from the B.C. team in his anchor-man run in the men's three-by-10-kilometre relay.

Harvey, who earlier in this championship plucked gold medals in the 30-km and 15-km events, took the tag with Team Quebec trailing B.C. by one minute and 45 seconds after 20 kilometres.

Canada's best World Cup contender easily overtook B.C.'s anchorman Kurt Tuggle and had brought Team Quebec's aggregate time even with B.C.'s at Harvey's half-way point. He then coasted the last five kilometres to win the relay by 1.45 minutes.

Harvey's 10-km time was 31.40, two seconds quicker than the 31.42 that Reino Keski-Salmi of Salmon Arm did as second

man for Team B.C.

For Quebec, Andre Tourigny of St. Leonard opened with a 34.02 lap, then Richard Weber of Cantley clocked 32.22, giving the team an aggregate of one hour, 38.04 minutes.

Doug Gudwer of Prince George timed 32.54 and Tuggle, of Tete Jaune, clocked 35.13 for a B.C. aggregate of 1:39.49.

For Quebec, the victory represented the successful defence of the relay team event. Harvey, Weber and Pierre Vezina were on the 1980 team. Team B.C. had dominated the event in previous championships.

Third was the National Capital Region (Ottawa) team of Bernie Sander, 35.24, Dave Beedell, 34.08, and Geoff Wasteneys, 33.13, in a total of 1:42.38. Saskatchewan placed fourth in 1:43.06 for its best result ever, and the Alberta team (Gary Hartling, Mike Dyer, Rocky Notnes) was fifth in 1:44.08.

The Ottawa (NCR) women's team (Clare Wasteneys, 20.07, Jean McAllister, 19.10, Janet Lumb, 18.03) was third in 57.20. The Alberta team (Pat Wordlow, 20.55, Carol Gibson, 18.28, Joan Groothuyssen, 18.28) was fourth in 57.51 and the Yukon fifth in 58.22.

There were 22 men's teams and 18 women's teams competing.

There's no racing today, a rest day in the schedule as skiers prepare for the closing-day marathon distances.

La Belle dynasty

The Quebec women's team came through yesterday for a surprise victory in the five-kilometre relay, starting talk of a new Quebec dynasty in cross-country skiing.

Quebec coaches Jacques Turcotte and Laurent Roux were not about to deny the possibility, for the women's team result uncovered La Belle Province's newest and hottest prospect, 18-year-old junior racer Marie-Andree Masson of Pondeurs de St. Jerome.

Masson, second skier in the three-member test, raced her lap in an astonishing 17.49... 12 seconds swifter than Shirley Firth clocked in capturing Saturday's women's five-kilometre gold medal.

"The snow was much faster today," allowed Roux, "but that time is still very close to the best. Very close."

Masson, who will be competing in the national junior championships in Flin Flon later this month and in the world junior championships in March in Austria, finished 10th in Saturday's five-km, but she fell in that race.

"Marie is the best junior racer in the country right now, and we're expecting good results from her in the world cham-

pionships," said Roux.

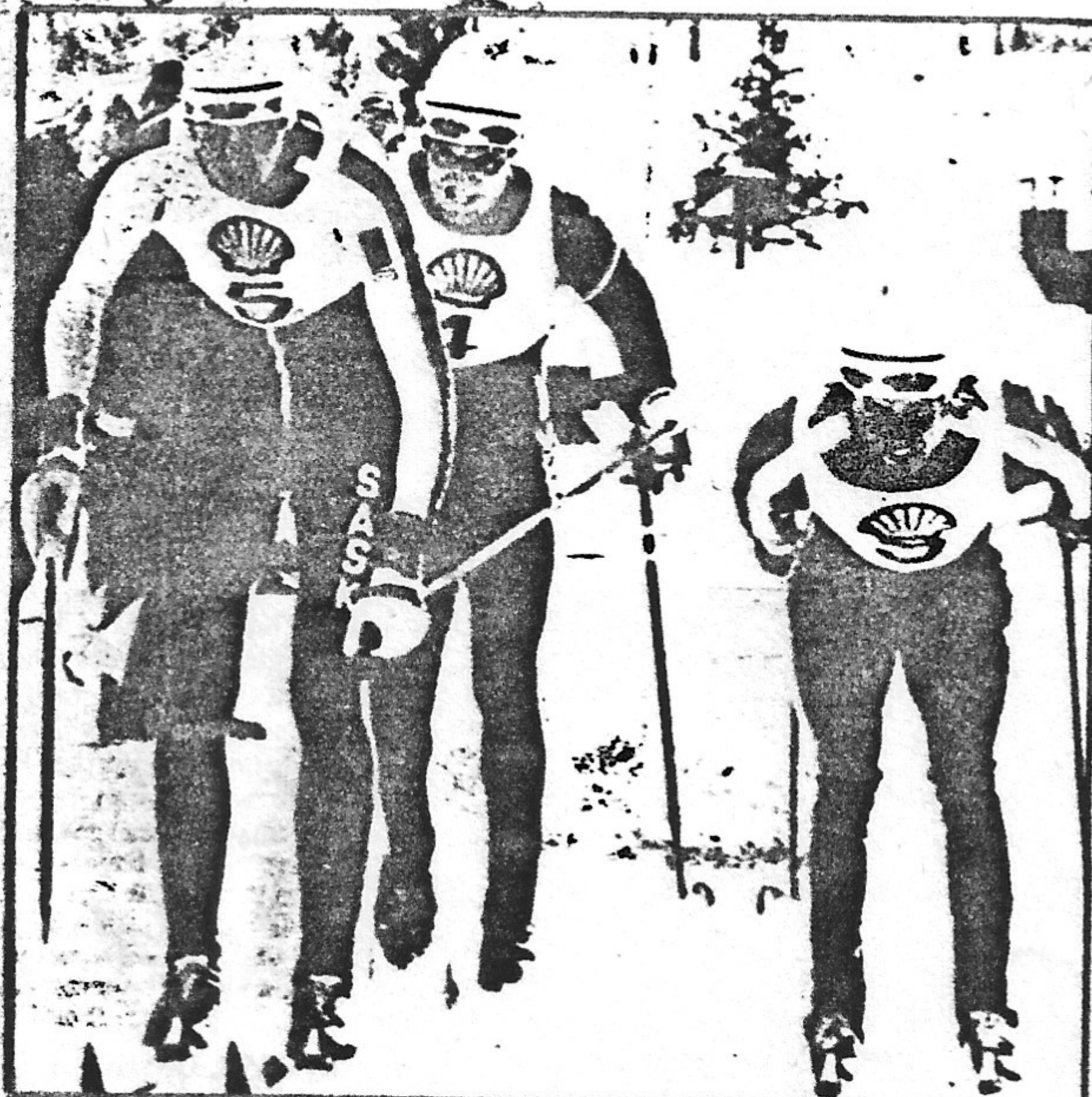
Masson's time — with a 19.30 from Josée Auclair of Suksit de Sherbrooke and the 18.15 of anchorman Celine Giguere, of Mont Ste. Anne — gave Quebec an aggregate of 55.36 minutes and a margin of victory of 51 seconds over the 1980 champions from B.C.

Last year, the Quebec women were fourth, and yesterday's victory was the first relay title for La Belle Province since 1968.

Esther Miller of Burns Lake paced the B.C. team with an anchorman lap of 18.04, the time Sharon Firth clocked Saturday to finish second — by a scant 2.2 seconds, officially — behind her twin sister in the five-km.

"It was really good, fast skiing today, but we were too far behind," said Miller. "I skied real hard through the first half but eased off to settle for the silver medal since there was no way to catch Quebec."

"Besides, I have the 20-km to run (tomorrow), it's a counting race and I'm looking forward to it," said the 24-year-old veteran B.C. racer. "I'm hoping the 20 will be my specialty this season."



The Saskatchewan team is off and skiing in the men's 30-kilometre relay.



PICTURES: Jim Cochrane

The end of the race meant different things to finishers. To Quebec's Richard Weber (above) it meant a gold medal. To Monique Waterreus (left) and Andre Tourigny (inset) the finish meant relief from the cold and the end to the pain of exertion.

Weber the surprise survivor in 50 km

By JARL OMHOLT-JENSEN

Edmonton-born Richard Weber was the surprise and the spoiler in the 50-km long-distance event, which concluded the 1982 Shell Cup Canadian senior cross-country ski championships Tuesday at lower Gold Bar Park.

Racing in one of the coldest 50-km events in years, Weber outlasted pre-race favorites Doug Gudwer and Pierre Harvey to claim his first national title of his three-year senior career.

Weber posted 2:54.34 in the event postponed three times due to cold temperatures. After coaches and the competition jury voted to allow the start, the first competitors left at 1:30, which meant skiers would be finishing at dusk.

The victory by Weber, a member of the Quebec team, spoiled Pierre Harvey's bid to sweep all four gold medals in the championships. Had he succeeded he would have been the first to do so.

Harvey, who prefers to start 30- and 50-km events slowly and then increase speed, started out too cautiously and was unable to catch his younger teammate with five km remaining despite a blistering 34:59 last lap.

Andre Tourigny, a first-year senior from St. Leonard, Que., ran second much of the way behind Rob Vellend of Toronto, who took the lead after Gudwer, defending 50-km champion, was forced to re-wax.

Vellend, 23, stunned everyone with the best performance of his career, but could not maintain his pace with 10 km left. Tourigny pulled away from the tandem and held on for the bronze to again sweep the top three for Quebec. Tourigny clocked 3:00:35.

Gudwer, who skied a blistering opening 20 km and built more than a three-minute lead on most of the pack, lost all the wax from his skis and was forced to re-wax twice. He finally abandoned the race after 45 km, after becoming chilled from having to re-wax.

It was a bitter disappointment for the marathon specialist who had hoped to become the first recipient of the 50-km Rolf Pettersen Memorial Trophy, dedicated to the memory of his deceased brother-in-law.

The victory by Weber was something of a surprise as he had stopped in the track after the opening 15 km and told his coach that he wanted to quit. "He didn't think he was skiing well," said assistant coach of the Quebec team Jacques Turcotte. "I told him he was a minute behind Gudwer (the leader) and he grabbed his poles and took off."

Harvey, who managed enough points with his silver-medal time to retain the Shell Cup as top overall champion in the nationals, was realistic about not winning: "I tried very hard to win that gold but I wanted to be careful not to ski too hard at the start.

"I wanted to be able to finish."

As a measure of his cautious start, Harvey was the only skier not to look fatigued when he finished. Both Weber and Tourigny and the remaining field of six skiers were exhausted.

Geoff Wasteneys, 23, of Ottawa, wrapped up his most improved racing season yet with fifth place in 3:08:13, less than seven minutes behind Vellend who clocked 3:01:49.

Complete results, Scoreboard, Page E4.

Sharon stops sweep by sister Shirley

By JARL OMHOLT-JENSEN

Sharon Firth of Inuvik prevented her twin sister Shirley from sweeping the women's individual events Tuesday as she came from behind to claim her second 20-km Shell Cup national cross-country ski title since 1976 with a time of 1:13:22.

In 1976, the 20-km long-distance event was introduced to the women's calendar and Sharon took the debut event in Sudbury.

By starting a half-minute behind Shirley, Sharon had the chance to compare her time to that of her sister. She gradually made up the 30-second difference to relegate Shirley, the defending champion, to the silver medal position.

Shirley's time of 1:13:52 was just enough to assure her of her fifth consecutive Shell Cup women's

aggregate award.

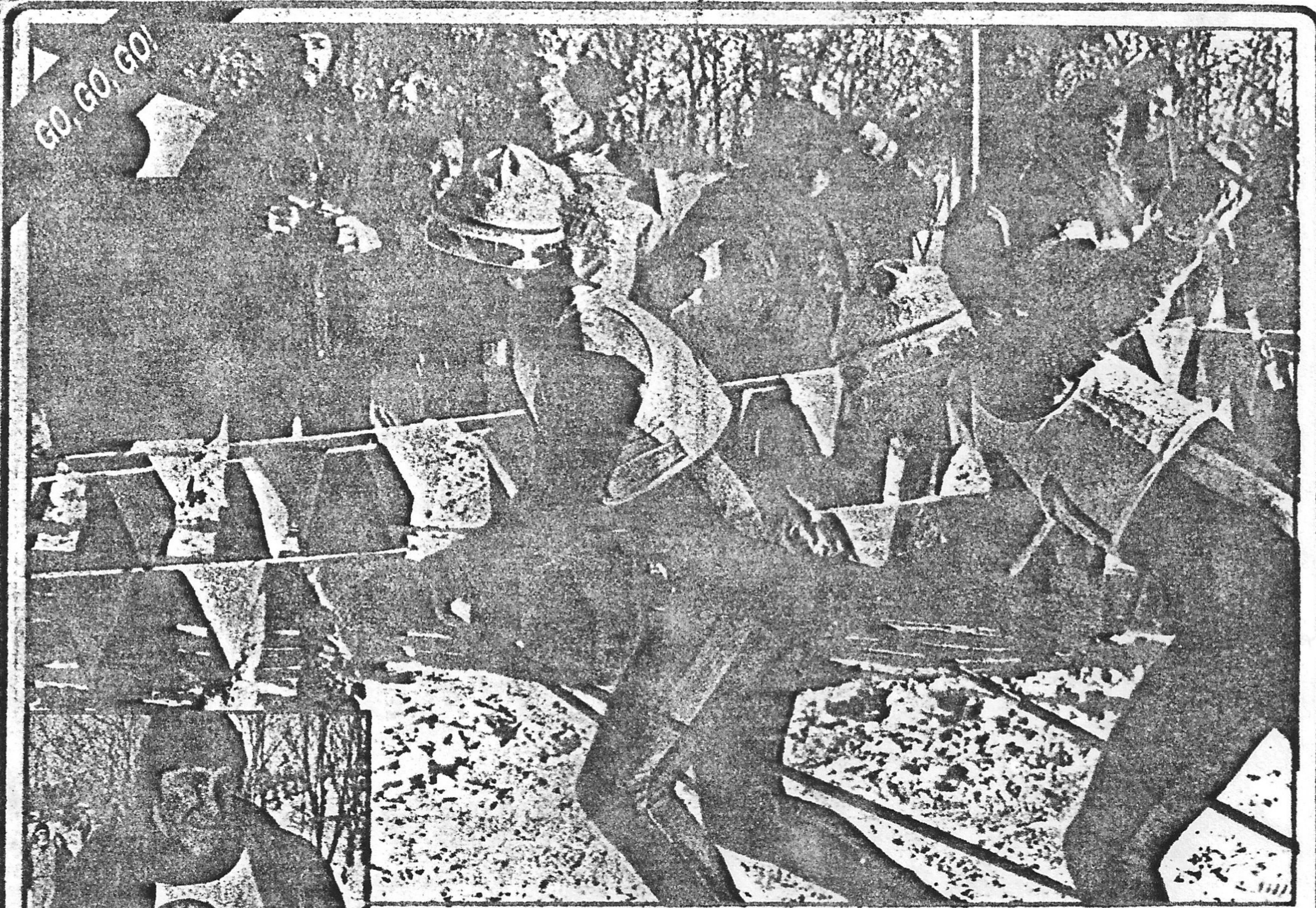
Esther Miller of Burns Lake, B.C., claimed the bronze in 1:16:04 in the field of 21 skiers who finished among the 23 entrants.

Because the women started with the men, they were able to enjoy the -18 temperature between 2 and 3 p.m., which resulted in a better survival rate among the women at the finish line. Only two women were unable to complete the distance.

Monique Waterreus, 20, of Whitehorse, ran a strong fourth with a time of 1:17:50.

Janet Lumb, 20, of Ottawa, placed fifth in 1:18:08, 55 seconds in front of Joan Groothuysen of Vermilion, Nordic.

Complete results Scoreboard, Page E4.



—Photo by Robert Taylor

Quebec strikes it rich at Gold Bar

It's not unusual for guys to give their team-mates a helping hand (above) in cross-country ski relay, but Quebec's Pierre Harvey (inset) needed no help yesterday as he powered to his third gold medal victory in Shell Cup cross-country action in Edmonton's Gold Bar Park. Full coverage by The Sun's Garry Cooper on Page 28.



PICTURES: Jim Cochrane

Tuesday's freezing temperatures were exhilarating for some (above) and exasperating for others (right)

Weber spoils sweep

Edmonton-born Richard Weber was the surprise and the spoiler in the 50-km long-distance event, which concluded the 1982 Shell Cup Canadian senior cross-country championships Tuesday at lower Gold Bar Park.

Racing in one of the coldest 50-km events in years, Weber outlasted pre-race favorites Doug Gudwer and Pierre Harvey to claim his first national title of his three-year senior career.

Weber posted 2:54.34 in the event postponed three times due to cold temperatures. After coaches and the competition jury voted to allow the start, the first competitors left at 1:30, which meant skiers would be finishing at dusk.

The victory by Weber spoiled Pierre Harvey's bid to sweep all four gold medals in the championships. Had he succeeded he would have been the first to do so.

Harvey, who prefers to start 30- and 50-km events slowly and then increase speed, started out too cautiously and was unable to catch his younger teammate with five km remaining despite a blistering 34:59 last lap.

Andre Tourigny, a first-year senior from St. Leonard, Quebec, ran second most of the way behind Rob Vellend of Toronto, who took the lead after Doug Gudwer, defending 50-km champion, was forced to re-wax.

Vellend, 23, stunned everyone with the best performance of his career, but could not maintain his pace with 10 km left. Tourigny pulled away from the tandem and held on for the bronze to again sweep

Stories by
Jarl Omholt-Jensen

the top three for Quebec. Tourigny clocked 3:00:35.

Gudwer, who skied a blistering opening 20 km and built more than a three-minute lead on most of the pack, lost all the wax from his skis and was forced to re-wax twice. He finally abandoned the race after 45 km, after becoming chilled from having to re-wax.

It was a bitter disappointment for the marathon specialist who had hoped to become the first recipient of the 50-km Rolf Pettersen Memorial Trophy, dedicated to the memory of his deceased brother-in-law.

The victory by Weber was something of a surprise as he had stopped in the track after the opening 15 km and told his coach that he wanted to quit. "He didn't think he was skiing well," said assistant coach Jacques Turcotte. "I told him he was a minute behind Gudwer (the leader) and he grabbed his poles and took off."

More WEBER Page E4

Switch for sisters

Sharon Firth of Inuvik prevented her twin sister Shirley from sweeping the women's individual events as she came from behind to claim her second 20 kilometre national title since 1976 with a time of 1:13:22.

1976 marked the introduction of the 20 kilometre long-distance event in the women's calendar and Sharon had taken the debut event in Sudbury.

By starting a half minute behind Shirley, Sharon had the chance to compare herself against her sister. She gradually made up the 30 second start difference to overcome her defending champion sister and relegate Shirley to the silver medal.

Shirley's time of 1:13:52 was just

enough to assure her of her fifth consecutive Shell Cup women's aggregate award.

Esther Miller of Burns Lake, B.C., claimed the bronze in 1:16:04 in the field of 21 skiers who finished among the 23 entrants. As the women started with the men, they were fortunate to enjoy the minus 18 temperature between two and three o'clock which resulted in a better survival rate among the women at the finish line. Only two women were unable to complete the distance.

Monique Waterreus, 20, of Whitehorse ran a strong fourth as she debuted in the event with a time of 1:17:50.

More SISTERS Page E4.



Weber

(Continued from Page E1)

Harvey, who managed enough points with his silver-medal time to retain the Shell Cup as top overall champion in the nationals, was realistic about not winning: "I tried very hard to win that gold but I wanted to be careful not to ski too hard at the start.

"I wanted to be able to finish."

As a measure of his cautious start, Harvey was the only skier not to look fatigued when he finished. Both Weber and Tourigny and the remaining field of six skiers were exhausted.

Geoff Wasteney, 23, of Ottawa, wrapped up his most improved racing season yet with fifth place in 3:08:13, less than seven minutes behind Vellend who clocked 3:01:49. Dave Bidell, 20, a first-year senior from Ottawa, ran sixth in 3:10:29.

The remaining three finishers were Albertans, who plowed through the gruelling race to run seventh, eighth and ninth.

Mike Dyer, 28, of Banff, clocked a creditable 3:20:41 while Pat McLellan, a 25-year-old student at U of A and not a member of the official Alberta team, posted 3:25:51.

Carl Covello of Edmonton, another non-Alberta team skier, rounded out the field with his time of 3:40:45, an excellent effort considering former 50-km champions Reino Keski-Salmi (80), Reijo Puiras (79) and Gudwer (78 and 81) were not able to complete the course for a variety of reasons.

The results of the 50 contributed to selection of Canada's national team to the World Nordic Championships in Oslo, Norway, Feb. 18-28. Named were Weber, Harvey and Tourigny.

Sisters

(Continued from Page E1)

Janet Lumb, 20, of Ottawa, placed fifth in 1:18:08, 55 seconds in front of Joan Groothuysen of Vermilion Nordic.

Only two juniors completed and both finished. Marie-Andree Masson of Laval, Quebec ran 14th in 1:24:19 and Barb Broen of Edmonton placed 20th in 1:43:34.

Based on their results during the championships Sharon and Shirley Firth, Esther Miller of Burns Lake, and Angela Schmidt of Midland, Ontario were selected to the World Nordic Championships team.

Although Schmidt, 1980 20-kilometres champion, did not compete, due to a mild illness, she was selected to Europe based on her bronze medal efforts in the 10 and five kilometre events.

Monique Waterreus, though not making the cut to the World Championships, was named to represent Canada in the 2nd annual Sapporo, Japan international 42 kilometre marathon Feb. 10.

Gudwer: One replay, please

By GARRY COOPER

Doug Gudwer can only hope this morning's 50-kilometre marathon in the Shell Cup Canadian seniors cross-country skiing championships will somehow turn out like it did for him a year ago.

But the luck of last night's draw for starting positions leaves the Prince George, B.C., racer behind the eight ball.

Gudwer drew start number 27. He'll be leaving on the marathon run 30 seconds ahead of Pierre Harvey, with bib No. 28.

"It's not good for me," lamented Gudwer after the draw. "It's definitely an advantage for Pierre. I think I'll go the way I'd planned the race, though. We both like to start slowly and gain momentum for the last 20 kilometres or less. Pacing ourselves will be especially important (today)."

In last year's race, Gudwer had a late number, and caught the lead from Harvey and B.C.'s 1980 Canadian champion Reino Keski-Salmi with 15 kilometres to go. Keski-Salmi set the swift opening pace before Harvey overtook him. This time, however, Keski-Salmi of Salmon Arm might not be in it to set up the pace of attrition that is his style.

Keski-Salmi did draw in last night, and he'll start 23rd only if the weather isn't too cold.

Harvey of Rimouski, Que., the premier National Team racer who has already swept this championship with three gold medals, has yet to win at 50 km.

The 25-year-old veteran Gudwer, on the other hand, is a proven distance specialist. He won the 50-km in 1978 as well.

Keski-Salmi, who collapsed in the championship-opening 30-km race last Thursday in minus-17 cold and wind, came back to place second to Harvey in the 15-km and to lead B.C. to the 3x10-km men's relay silver medal (again behind Harvey's Team Quebec) in Sunday's event.

In Thursday's 30-km, Keski-Salmi, 24, was leading Harvey by more than a minute and with only one kilometre to go when he "hit the wall," as skiers call it when hypothermia strikes.

The 1981 over-all Shell Cup senior men's champion, however, has felt strong again in the weekend races, and that's why he entered the draw.

"I doubt Reino will start," said Gudwer. "Still, he could help my chances (today) if he does race. Pierre might waste himself on Reino's pace again..." Gudwer just hopes.

Meanwhile, the Firth sisters drew bib numbers 50, for Shirley, and 51, for Sharon, in today's women's 20-km finale. Shirley edged her twin sister, for gold-silver sweeps, in the earlier 10 and five-km stakes. The 26-year-old twins from Inuvik, NWT, didn't compete in Sunday's relay.

Shirley is defending champion at the 20-km distance, as well as senior women's over-all champion. Sharon has a chance to snatch the over-all title away today, only if she can beat Shirley by at least a minute.

The men's 50-km is scheduled to start at 11 a.m., weather permitting, at the lower Gold Bar Park.



Help is immediate for Reino Keski-Salmi

Exhaustion drops leader

By JARL OMHOLT-JENSEN

Exhaustion for cross country racers is a lurking enemy that can strike down any skier competing in a long-distance event.

Reino Keski-Salmi of Salmon Arm, B.C., and Phil Hoffman to Saskatoon fell victim to exhaustion and failed to complete the 30-kilometre opening event of the national championships Thursday at Gold Bar Park.

Keski-Salmi was denied victory when he was unable to finish.

Yet, only five days earlier, he swept all others aside in his class in winning the Montana 50-kilometre marathon of the Great American Ski Chase circuit.

The U.S. event was held despite bitterly-cold winds and heavy snows.

Keski-Salmi's journey here and the short turnaround period leading to this city's national 30-

kilometre event Thursday probably took the heaviest toll. There was simply not enough time for the athlete to rebuild lost energy supplies.

The weather at the start of the event was warm, and Keski-Salmi chose to wear a thin, unlined racing suit.

Later, when the skies cleared and the wind picked up, he had little protection from wind-chill in exposed trail areas. At such times, the wind can act as an air-conditioner. An athlete faces sudden cooling off. Other telling factors can include the lack of liquid intake.

In Keski-Salmi's case, an incredible, energy-burning pace may have triggered exhaustion, then brought on his eventual collapse.

More STRIKES, Page H5.

Just who did win? Page H2.



PICTURES: Jon Murray

Alberta's best was eighth-place performer Gary Hartling

Prairies' best skiers challenge

By JARL OMHOLT-JENSEN

The surprising success of Prairie skiers almost challenges the dramatic victories of both Shirley Firth of Inuvik, and the Quebec team members.

Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta produced excellent results in the three events of the Shell Cup Canadian senior championships.

Weather permitting, the men's and women's senior cross country championships of the Shell Cup were to be run today in Edmonton.

The talents of Winnipeg racers Jeff Wood and Clinton Reece, both 18, were developed by the junior Jackrabbit program that was launched in the province only six years ago.

Yet, the pair set the senior runners on their collective ears Saturday in the 15-kilometre sprint.

Wood placed sixth in the field of 60 finishers, two minutes, 14 seconds behind defending gold medallist Pierre Harvey of Quebec. He was four seconds slower than 30-kilometre silver medallist Richard Weber of Cantley, Que., who ran fifth.

Reece finished eighth, one minute and one second behind his teammate. Both ran ahead of Andre Tourigny of St. Leonard, Que., winner of the bronze in the 30 kilometres. Tourigny was 11th in the sprint.

Although Manitoba wound up eighth of the 17 men's relay teams Sunday, Wood had the third fastest time on his lap and the sixth fastest time of the day.

As a team performance, Saskatchewan's fourth-place finish in the 3x10-kilometre relay was the most exciting effort made by that province in the nearly-60 years the nationals have been held.

Saskatchewan first entered relays in 1976 as part of a mixed team which didn't count in the official standings. In '79, the province entered an official team which wound up 14th.

Sunday, Saskatchewan junior Dennis Lawrence and seniors Owen Spence and Mike Cherny were in the bronze medal position before National Capital overtook the team with four kilometres remaining. Saskatchewan finished fourth, five minutes and two seconds behind gold medallist Quebec.

Carol Gibson, 17, of Camrose demonstrated her potential as a junior in the senior championships. Although 21st in her 10-kilometre debut on Thursday, she moved up to 8th in the five-kilometre sprint Saturday in the field of 42 finishers.

Coaches applaud many of the western skiers and other visiting racers, notably the junior-aged competitors. They say the athletes have improved dramatically so as to guarantee each senior championship being more difficult, especially the sprint and relay events.

In the national junior championships scheduled for Flin Flon Feb. 18-21, the predictions are that Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta juniors will be right in the battle for medals against Southern Ontario, Quebec and National Capital skiers.

— Omholt-Jensen

Exhaustion claims B.C. skier

By JARL OMHOLT-JENSEN

It might have been a gold medal for 24-year-old Reino Keski-Salmi.

Instead, the favorite and leading British Columbia marathon specialist collapsed one kilometre from the Gold Bar Park finish-line Thursday morning.

Keski-Salmi, an entry in the 30-kilometre event of the Shell Cup Canadian senior cross country championships, was rushed to hospital suffering from exhaustion.

He had set a blistering pace to lead by more than 1½ minutes over Pierre Harvey of Rimouski, Que., going into the final 7.5 kilometre lap.

The defending champion, Keski-Salmi lost his lead with a kilometre to go.

Hans Skinstad, Alberta coach, said he noticed the skier "barely moving" up a small incline.

"I told him he could still make it to the finish. I told him to go slowly, but to keep moving."

Skinstad said the young athlete began "swaying on his skis," then collapsed into the snow.

Edmonton Nordic trail checkers helped Skinstad carry the limp skier across the windy, open field to the lower Gold Bar field house.

Keski-Salmi was moved to the warmth of a military tent, and examined by an on-site doctor, then transported by ambulance to University Hospital.

He was to be detained overnight for observation.

With Keski-Salmi out of the race and now out of the running for overall men's honors, Harvey grabbed top spot from teammates Richard Weber (2nd) and Andre Tourigny (3rd).

"I was really surprised at how fast Reino was skiing," said Harvey. "I was wondering if he could keep that pace."

Harvey, who prefers to start slower and build his speed as the race progresses, had his tactics pay off for his first 30-kilometre national title, in 1:37:10.77.

Richard Weber, 22, of Cantley, Que., realized his best individual national performance of a three-year senior career for the silver, in 1:38:14.04.

Andre Tourigny, 20, of St. Leonard, Que., in only his first season as a senior, claimed the bronze, in 1:38:52.89.

It was the first time ever that Quebec has swept the top three placings in the 30-kilometre event.

Gary Hartling of Banff produced Alberta's best effort with an eighth-place finish in 1:42:12.

"I was surprised at the depth of the ski teams from the east," said Hartling. "We'll be hard-pressed to win medals."

Mike Dyer of the Banff Ski Runners wound up 12th in 1:45:05, and Rocky Notnes of Hinton finished 14th in 1:46:52.

Two Edmonton skiers ran in the top 20 of the 38 finishers.

Pat McLellan of the University of Alberta and Peter Piercy of Edmonton Nordic ran 17th and 19th, respectively, in 1:48:29 and 1:49:21. Ken Karpof of Edmonton Nordic finished 21st in 1:49:25.9.

The men's events continue Saturday, with the 15-kilometre sprint at 11 a.m.

Strikes

(Continued from Page H1)

Phil Hoffman and the Saskatchewan team have raced little this season because of the extreme cold. So why did he fall?

There are other variables that can apply.

The demands for high-tempo performance and the high energy needed for competitive skiing may have cost Hoffman. Suffering Thursday from less severe exhaustion, nevertheless he slowed perceptibly, finally had to quit, and remarked later of being "quite weak" until he warmed up and drank warm liquids.

In past races, Canadian long distance skiers have stopped or collapsed from exhaustion, while at international races top-rated Russians and Scandinavians also have been forced to quit.

It is called "hitting the wall," and athletes falling victim of it usually rest a day or two, eat lots of food, then look for the next race to enter.

(Continued from Page F1)

Angela Schmidt of Midland, Ont., who scored internationally with a 13th-place showing in the second event of the World Cup, has the potential to dominate a national championship.

Defending champion (5 km), Esther Miller of Burns Lake, B.C., can expect opposition from Joan Groothuysen of Vermilion Nordic and Ottawa racers Jenny Walker and Janet Lumb.

Alberta's Carol Gibson of Camrose, Marie-Andre Masson of Laval, Que., Lana Lindaas of Burns Lake, and Jean McAllister, are juniors who will press the leading seniors in the five-kilometre sprint and relay events.

In the senior men's category, the man to beat is Pierre Harvey, 24, of Rimouski, Que., an international cyclist who turned cross-country racer in 1979 with much success.

Harvey has just returned from the World Cup circuit in Europe. Although failing to repeat his top 20 showing of last season, he won a major international 30-km event in Castelrotto, Italy — a first for Canada's men.

Harvey will be defending his Shell Cup aggregate award, won last year for the first time by a senior Quebec division skier. Also, he could have a crack at the 1976 feat turned in by Bert Bullock of Inuvik, who swept all three individual titles in a single championships.

Many male athletes have won two races in a row, only to falter in the 50-km long-distance event which wraps up their schedule in the Nationals.

Harvey has a strong back-up in team members Richard Weber of Cantley, and Andre Tourigny of St. Leonard.

Quebec won the relay last season in McBride, B.C. for the first time in more than 15 years.

Expected to challenge Quebec is B.C., with Doug Gudwer of Prince George and Reino Keski-Salmi of Salmon Arm, both multi-medallists in previous nationals.

B.C., northern Ontario, Lake Superior and southern Ontario are the chief rivals for Quebec in the men's 3-by-10-km relay.

Alberta's women have the chance to improve on their relay bronze medal of last season, and the men join the battle for a silver or bronze in the relay.

Sunday's relays are expected to be the most spectacular events.

With 103 competitors entered as of Tuesday night, Edmontonians will have a ring-side seat to see some excellent Nordic skiing, the type which take only three minutes or less to ski a kilometre.

Cross-country racing has many variables. Waxing, equipment, snow conditions, temperature, the athlete's physical and mental condition — all are important.

Some 37 Albertans will be attempting to show how important in the Nationals, coming to this province for the sixth time since 1937.

The best of skiing

By JARL OMHOLT-JENSEN

Championship skiing is at Edmonton's doorstep, beginning Thursday.

For the first time in more than 35 years, the 1982 Shell Cup Canadian senior cross-country skiing championships will be held within the boundaries of a major urban area.

In a switch from most national cross-country events, this year it moves to where the people are. Often in the past, the championships were even held in remote regions.

The switch gives Edmontonians the opportunity to cheer on much of Canada's top racing talent.

Starting Thursday morning, the eight events could amount to a classic confrontation between east and west, with athletes also to include residents of central Canada, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

Headlining performers will be the Firth twins, Shirley and Sharon, both of the Inuvik Ski Club. Residents of Banff, the 28-year-olds have retained their affiliation with the club that first revealed them as national and international stars in 1968.

Shirley has collected four consecutive national aggregate champion awards for most points based on finishes in the three women's individual events within the Nationals and will be after her fifth title in a row.

Her medal count in the Canadian seniors is the most prolific of any Canadian regardless of the discipline. Since her debut in 1969 in Camrose, Shirley has won 25 gold, eight silver and three bronze medals.

Sharon Firth is not far behind. She has gathered 17 gold, 10 silver and four bronze medals since 1969.

Challenging the Firths is 20-year-old Monique Waterreus of Whitehorse, who recently broke into the North American winner's circle with victories in the Nor-Am series.

More BEST Page F4
Everything's in a day at the Gold Bar Park. Stories Page F2.



A lone skier warms up for the big day

Exhausted skier returns to action

By Jarl Omholt-Jensen

Reino Keski-Salmi of Salmon Arm B.C. will be back in action today in the Shell Cup Canadian senior cross-country championships at lower Gold Bar Park in Edmonton.

The 24-year-old marathon specialist collapsed in the 30-kilometre event Thursday one kilometre before the finish due to exhaustion.

Keski-Salmi was expected to spend Thursday night in hospital but left for his hotel at 10:30 that evening after doctors determined he was healthy.

Keski-Salmi was leading by over a minute and a half going into the final lap when at the 24th kilometre he felt as if "someone threw an anchor out behind me and slowed me down."

"Within a matter of minutes I was completely under. I had no energy and my stomach felt awful."

Reino skied slowly to the 29th kilometre and dropped into the snow. As for this morning's 15-

kilometre event, Reino is entered among the 67 skiers, one of the largest fields ever in the Canadian championships. He will start No. 56, a minute behind Pierre Harvey of Rimouski, Quebec. "I hope for the best today but if it's too cold I don't think I'll race. If the weather is okay then I'll compete in the 15 and Sunday's relay. I'll pass up the 50 kilometre Tuesday," he said.

He was realistic about his misfortune Thursday: "You can't expect to have everything handed to you on a silver platter. It's my nature to ski as hard in a national event as I do in an international race. I skied fast and paced myself well but finishing the race wasn't to be. Mother Nature was stronger than human nature. It's all part of the game."

The 15 kilometre event begins at 11:00 at lower Gold Bar Park. The women's five km sprint with 46 entrants begins at 1:00. It'll be an excellent opportunity for spectators to see 113 of Canada's top skiers competing.

Harvey et les soeurs Firth favoris

JDUC MHC 82-01-28

EDMONTON (CP) — Pierre Harvey sera l'homme à battre lorsque débiteront, aujourd'hui, les championnats canadiens de ski de fond senior.

De retour d'Europe où il a gagné une compétition internationale au 30 km, Harvey tentera de conserver le championnat canadien du combiné qu'un Québécois a remporté pour la première fois, l'an passé.

Harvey et ses coéquipiers Richard Weber et André Tourigny essaieront par ailleurs de conserver leur titre au relais. Leurs plus dangereux rivaux seront les skieurs de la Colombie-Britannique.

D'autre part, les soeurs Shirley et Sharon Firth seront les têtes d'affiche du côté

féminin. Shirley est en quête d'un cinquième championnat canadien, elle qui a mérité 25 médailles d'or, 8 d'argent et 3 de bronze à cette compétition nationale depuis 1969. Au cours de la même période, Sharon a remporté 17 médailles d'or, 10 d'argent et 4 de bronze.

Leurs concurrentes les plus menaçantes seront Esther Miller, championne défendante du 5 km, Angela Schmidt, qui a obtenu une 13e place en Coupe du Monde, et Monique Waterreus, gagnante d'une épreuve de la série Nor-Am.

Cent trois skieurs prennent part à ces championnats.



Quebec cross-country ski coach Laurent Roux poses with six-foot-eight inch team member Jean Luc Simard, who competes today in Canadian championships. Quebec's Pierre Harvey is man to beat.

UPC

Quebecer defends X-country ski title

CAZ E DE 82-01-28

EDMONTON (CP) — The Canadian senior cross-country skiing championships start today along trails once used to transport coal out of the North Saskatchewan River valley.

The man to beat is Quebecer Pierre Harvey, 24, of Rimouski who will defend the aggregate title he won in this event last year. Harvey is an international cyclist who took up cross-country skiing in 1979.

The championships are being held within the boundaries of a major urban area for the first time in more than 35 years.

The eight championship events amount to a confrontation between East and West, although skiers from Central Canada, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories are also competing.

Headline performers will be the Firth twins, Shirley and Sharon, both of the Inuvik Ski Club. Now residents of Banff, Alta., the 28-year-olds have retained an affiliation with the club where they became internationally known in 1968.

Shirley has collected four consecutive national aggregate champion awards for most points based on finishes in the three women's individual events within the championship and will be after her fifth title in a row.

The Firths will be challenged by Monique Waterreus, 20, of Whitehorse, who recently broke into the North American winner's circle with victories in the Nor-Am series.

Also on hand is Angela Schmidt of Midland, Ont., who scored internationally with a 13th-place showing in the second event of the World Cup.

All told 103 competitors are entered in the championships.