

BROCK, Brad.

**Belleville's Brad Brock - freestyle skier** *Intel March 27/89*

# Sights set on Winter Olympics

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Competitive skiing has taken Belleville's Brad Brock to Lake Placid, Washington, Canada's Olympic Park in Calgary, Vermont, Quebec and most recently Japan.

But the 20-year old freestyle skier still has his sights set on Albertville, France. If he has his choice he wants to go to Albertville in 1992.

That's when the city in France will play host to the Winter Olympics.

Freestyle skiing was a demonstration sport at the 1988 Olympics in Calgary but it will be a medal sport at Albertville.

"That's been my goal from the start, to go to the Olympics," says Brock, who first began freestyle skiing just three years ago.

In Japan earlier this month Brock placed 7th in the moguls event—his specialty.

"I thought I skied quite well, I was pleased considering Japan and the U.S.S.R. had their World Cup skiers," said Brock.

Competing and skiing almost daily for the past several months has given Brock some added confidence.

"I've made a lot of progress this year. Concentrating on the moguls and working at it everyday has really improved my skiing," he says.

This past season Brock was a member of the Ontario team but he hopes to move up to the Canadian squad next year.

"There are no guarantees but I'm hoping to be on the Canadian team," said Brock.

Prior to the competitive season Brock will sit down with the Canadian coaches to determine whether he has progressed enough and has the potential to be on the Olympic team in 1992.

This year alone Brock has had to fork over about \$10,000 (the majority of it as a lump sum fee as a competing member of the Ontario team) and next year his cash layout will be around \$15,000; not an easy task for someone without a sponsor or unlimited funds.

To complicate matters even further Brock competed in the ski season while taking a first year Financial and Economics course at Western University.

"It's a lot of work—combining schooling and skiing," said Brock. "Next year I won't take as many courses. It's just too hard to concentrate on skiing and schooling at the same time." Last year Brock often took his studies on the road with him to the weekend competitions. He even wrote an exam at a competition.

"The school and coaches have been very good about it."

Brock says if his coaches feel he has the potential to make the Olympic squad he'll continue. Otherwise his competitive freestyle skiing career will probably come to an end.

"If they don't feel I will be able to compete at the Olympic level then there isn't really much sense to keep spending all this money," said Brock.

Brock was one of 10 skiers invited by the Canadian team to compete in the Pan-Am Pacific championships at Japan earlier this month.

The team spent about two days touring Japan but spent the other eight days on the ski slopes of Madarao.

Brock "couldn't believe the hospitality shown to the Canadians."

Armed with some Canadian flags and lapel pins provided by Hugh O'Neil and Lyle Van Clief, Brock did a brisk trading business with some of the other competitors from Japan, Australia, U.S.S.R. and the United States.

He even managed to swap for a sweat jacket from a member of the Soviet team.

"No wear, no wear," Brock said the Soviet athlete cautioned. It seems the Soviet team was discouraged from associating too much with the other athletes and trading of jackets was a no-no.

"The Soviet team had their own bus, and no one else was allowed on it. The other teams pretty well went on one bus," said Brock.

Brock said he heard about the high prices in Japan but it wasn't as bad as he thought.

A bottle of coke was \$1.50 and a Big Mac would run you \$5.

"I was really surprised to see how Americanized Japan was—they played our music, their signs were in English, lot of American clothes. They all wanted to practice their English," said Brock.

Brock even managed to learn a few phrases in Japanese.

A Japanese 'friend' even supplied him with a pick-up line.

He never tried it out however because he wasn't quite sure what the line really meant.

It's an off-season now for skiers but cycling, weight lifting, stretching and dryland training are all part of a summer program to prepare for next season.

Brock hopes to go to British Columbia to workout at Whistler ("where most of the Canadian and U.S. team members go") this summer but that will depend on finances.

If he can't afford summer ski camp, Brock says he may operate his Para-sailing program at West Lake again to help raise funds for school.

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