

Acton freestyle skier earns first Noram podium finish

HERB GARBUTT
Special to The IFF

Travis Gerrits reached new heights, and threw in a couple twists along the way, as he earned his first podium finish on the Noram circuit.

The rural Acton freestyle skier earned a bronze medal at the final stop on the Noram acirials circuit—a developmental series for the World Cup—in Penticton, B.C. It's the latest first for Gerrits, who also competed in his first World Cup events this winter.

The Grade 11 Milton District High School student turned in a personal best score of 172.10 to narrowly edge fellow Canadian Alain Morin of North Bay for the bronze. Morin was just nine one-hundredths of a point behind, finishing with 172.10.

It was a close finish all around as just four points separated the top six. Oliver Rochon, the series champion, won with a score of 175.76.

For Gerrits, his practice jumps prior to the event didn't give him reason for optimism.

"I trained very poorly," Gerrits said, "but I pulled it together."

Sitting in third after his first jump, Gerrits performed a new jump—a full double full—in which he does two backflips with three twists. Despite the bronze medal win, the 16-year-old still sees room for improvement.

"If the landing was better, maybe I



TRAVIS GERRITS

could have won it," said Gerrits, who previous best Noram result was a fifth-place last year.

With his sights set on qualifying for the 2010 Olympics, Gerrits picked up some valuable experience in the last month, competing in his first two World Cup events. Going up against the best in the aerialists in the world, he finished 22nd and 23rd.

Gerrits said the World Cups were a great experience, not only helping him learn how the top competitors prepare but also helping him block out distractions.

Gerrits has one competition remaining this season, the Canadian nationals, which will be held this weekend at Mont Gabriel in Quebec. He'll be looking to improve upon his ninth-place finish with a goal of cracking the top six.

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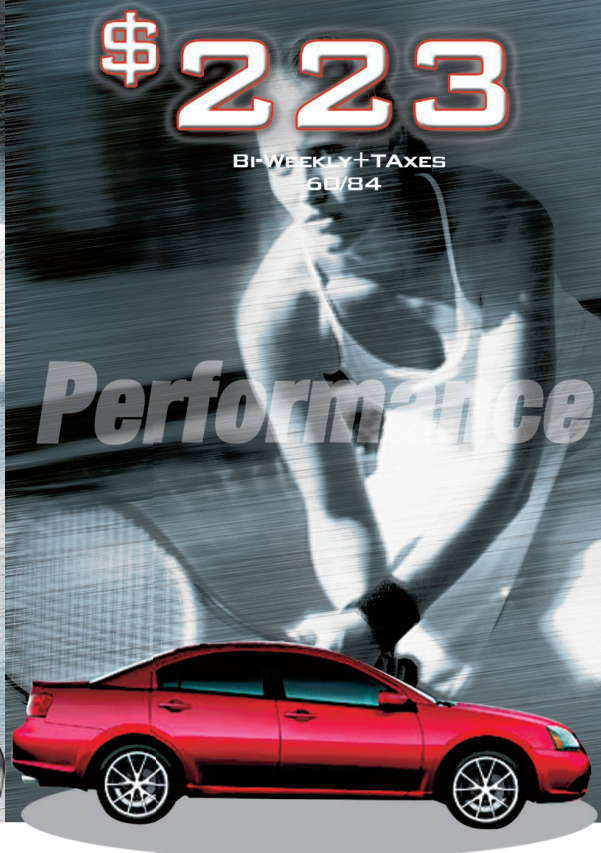
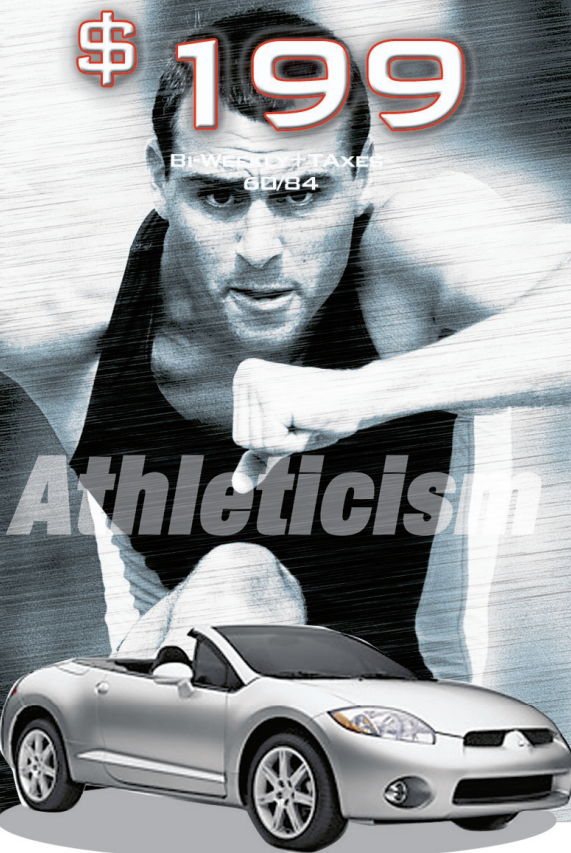
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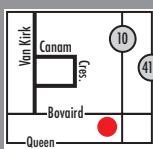
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SUDOKU

		7				4		3
9				1			8	
			5				1	9
2				7	9			
4		3	6	8	1	9		7
			3	2				4
8	9				3			
	2			6				8
3		4				6		

The rules of Sudoku are simple
Enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces.
Every row must contain one of each digit.
So must every column, as must every 3x3 square.
Each Sudoku has a unique solution
that can be reached logically without guessing.

**Last
Week's
Solution:**

1	6	8	3	4	2	7	9	5
5	3	2	7	9	6	1	4	8
7	9	4	1	5	8	2	6	3
4	7	1	6	3	5	8	2	9
8	2	3	9	7	4	5	1	6
9	5	6	2	8	1	3	7	4
6	8	7	4	2	3	9	5	1
3	1	9	5	6	7	4	8	2
2	4	5	8	1	9	6	3	7

Difficulty Rating: Easy

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