

Well done Brian Orser

Canadian senior men's figure skating champion



To the winner goes the cake

Canada's newest senior men's figure skating champ, 19-year-old Brian Orser looks at a cake baked in his honor presented to him Monday at Midland arena where he stopped off on his way

home from Halifax. A packed arena full of well-wishers were on hand to say "well done" to the superstar who skates out of Midland Figure Skating Club.

by Doug Reed

There's an old adage that goes like this: if at first you don't succeed, try, try again.

That's exactly what Penetanguishene's Brian Orser has done. Last year in Calgary he placed fourth in the senior men's figure skating championship.

Several weeks ago he topped a field of four to win the eastern divisionals at Ottawa and on the weekend he was crowned champion at the Canadian Figure Skating Championships at Halifax.

The 19-year-old figure skating whiz, who skates out of the Midland Figure Skating Club, had to come from behind to win the gold medal but he did it with the zest of the champion he is.

Orser was in second spot after Thursday's figures. Friday he challenged three-time Canadian figure skating

champion Brian Pockar of Calgary. Although Pockar placed first in the short two minute program it was Orser, in second place, who used an error-free routine with high jumps to get within striking distance of Pockar.

As a matter of fact the 5,000 fans who packed the Halifax Arena gave

Orser several long ovations for his efforts.

And one of the seven judges went as far as to award him a 5.9 for technical merit while three of the judges gave him the highest marks of the competition following his two minute program.

Pockar just getting back from a foot injury and Orser recovering from two broken bones in his right hand squared off the following day for some of the best skating ever performed at the national level.

Pockar won the luck of the draw and skated first in the gruelling five minute program. His program turned out to contain a few flaws especially a cross-foot spin that gave him trouble and a triple-toe-loop that turned out to be less than perfect.

Then it was Orser's turn with five more competitors to follow him.

But there was no doubt from the opening seconds of his routine that his performance was going to be "right on" and that with any luck he was going to skate away with the championship... and that's exactly what he did as he had the crowd on its feet with hand-clapping music and a sensational triple axle (three and a half rotations in the air) which had the crowd clapping for more.

Orser's performance was flawless. He tried all the tough moves and made them all.

For technical merit he collected five 5.9s and for artistic impression he added two more 5.9s.

A couple of 5.6s awarded him brought boos from the crowd. His jumps were clean. His program was exciting and he eventually collected enough points to walk away with the national crown.

That he will add to his Canadian junior figure skating championship he collected at the national level some years ago.

For Orser it is off to the World's Figure Skating Championship in Hartford, Conn., March 5-8...and we wish him every success.

Sensational routine

There are not enough superlatives to describe the flawless performance of Penetanguishene's Brian Orser, 19, who skated off on the weekend with the senior men's crown at the 1981 Canadian Figure Skating Championships at Halifax.

Orser had the packed Halifax Arena eating out of his hands during both his short two minute and gruelling five minute performances.

But it was his five minute program that overwhelmed the judges, spectators and national television audience.

His artistic movements, his athletic jumps including a sensational triple axle underscored Orser's exciting five minute program which captured most marks and eventually helped him to win the gold medal he'd been seeking for the past two years. (Last year you'll recall he placed fourth in Calgary in the senior men's section.)

What all this means is that his picture perfect performance (an error free routine) pushed his marks ahead of three-time Canadian champion Brian Pockar of Calgary.

As I See It

by

Don Lawrence
sports editor



Brian Orser, he's the best

main foyer of the arena.

Orser was then standing on a wooden box in front of the swelling crowd that filled the arena foyer but for that moment, that rough wooden box was more, much more.

He was the centre of attention and the box had become a sort of pedestal on which he had been placed by the people of Midland and Penetanguishene.

Mavor Moreland Lynn of Midland spoke first to Orser and the crowd and he commented on how proud he was.

Lynn stated that a "Brian Orser Day" will be instituted once Orser's heavy training schedule has eased off a bit but that day is further off.

Orser has to worry about the world competitions in Hartford, Connecticut in March yet.

But, that couldn't have seemed further away Monday afternoon as Orser stood before the people of Midland and Penetanguishene.

Then, it was newly elected Penetanguishene's Mayor Ron Bellisle who got up and spoke to Orser.

He started off by playing a tape recording of the commentary of Orser's perfect skate the day he won the championship and a small smile was seen to cross Orser's lips as the tape played, as if he was taken back to the ice in Halifax for that brief time.

Bellisle then spoke of Orser's accomplishment, calling it the "greatest feat an athlete had ever completed in this area."

Orser was then presented with the

Penetanguishene Achievement Award, Bellisle joking that it had been engraved two years ago because they had known Orser was going to win that title.

Diane Edwards, president of the Midland Figure Skating Club commented on Orser, claiming, "We cheered and we applauded right along with him, this is the greatest we've seen yet."

She went even further to describe him as "a young man who has always been a champion to us and always will be."

Reeve Morris Darby of Tiny Township extended his welcome to Orser from the township exclaiming, "Your win was just fantastic!"

He continued by saying, "You're going onto bigger and better things."

Butch Orser, Brian's father declined to say anything in front of the crowd but one could tell he and his wife were proud of their son.

Brian Orser, the young skater who has enjoyed a steady climb to the top of men's figure skating ladder still has a long way to go, the world competitions in the near future and the 1984 Olympics in the not-so-near future...1984.

Whatever the results, Orser has earned a place in the hearts of people in Midland-Penetanguishene forever.

Monday's welcome was proof positive of that.

Well done Brian we are all so very proud of your success and feel honored to have been part of the welcoming crowd Monday night.