

Calgary switchboard lit up

Part 3 of 4

The climax of Brian Orser's skating career was his performance before a home crowd at the Calgary Olympics in February. It was a time of extraordinary excitement - and crushing disappointment. In this excerpt from his new book, *Orser: A Skater's Life*, Brian Orser describes the ecstasy of the reaction to his final performance, and the agony of discovering he had fallen short of a gold medal by the tiniest of margins...

My first reaction when I finished was that I'd done it. I'd stayed on my feet, the program was relatively clean and the audience liked it.

I thought I had won. That's why I didn't pick up any of my flowers or linger on the ice too long. I thought the sooner I got off, the sooner the marks would come up. When the first set flashed up I thought, "Oooh, oooh." They were all 5.8's except the mark awarded by the Czechoslovakian judge, Gerhardt Bubnik, who gave me a 5.9. I knew Brian had a lot of 5.8's too, but I didn't know exactly how many.

The artistic-impression marks came up and there were five 5.9's, three 5.8's and a perfect 6.0 from the Czech judge. My heart leapt and I thought, "Yes, I've done it." I couldn't

stop looking at the 6.0. It was the first I'd ever had in competition at this level.

I quickly searched for Brian Pockar and Debbie Wilkes at the broadcast booth. I could see them madly switching television monitor channels to find the ranking on the computer. Then I saw the expression on their faces sag and I thought, "Oh, no." Then another man looked over at me and reluctantly held up two fingers.

Then I knew. Immediately, a whole range of emotions battered me and it was difficult to sort them all out. The disappointment cut like a knife, ripped through every part of me. It was beyond any sense of loss that I'd ever felt before. I was also a little bit annoyed with the judging panel, I thought, "How can they do this to me?" Then I was thinking, "Why didn't they do it four years ago when they should have?"

And this was the most surprising emotion of all: Suddenly I became very angry that I hadn't won in 1984. In Sarajevo, and in all the time since, not winning the 1984 Olympics didn't bother me anything like as much as it did in sixty seconds after the 1988 Olympics. I'd been living through four years of skating just to get this title

that I felt I deserved four years ago. I knew in 1984 that I would come back four years later and win it. When it didn't happen, I thought, "How can they do this to me? Haven't they noticed the incredible pressure I've been under? Haven't they read that I'm Canada's only hope for a gold medal in these games? How can they do this?"

It was an instinctive reaction. I was looking for a place to direct my anger. It's not a reaction I'm proud of, but there is no escaping that that's what I felt in those few brief moments. The difference between my

dejection then, and the rush of what would have been one of the greatest moments in our sports history, was ONE-TENTH OF A MARK. I had actually won four judges outright; Brian had won three.

All these realizations were thrust upon me in a matter of seconds as I sat in the "kiss n' cry" waiting area at rinkside, the television cameras pointed at me. David Santee was the interviewer for ABC-TV and he moved in beside me to get my remarks. He said something like, "There's good news and bad news,

Brian. The good news, those are good artistic marks, and the bad - you're second," and he stuck the microphone in my face. It was a difficult time for him, too, and he just didn't carry it off. Apparently the switchboard at the Calgary CTV station lit up with complaints and a couple of days later I got a telegram ABC-TV apologizing for the incident. Actually, his remark didn't affect me as much as it affected the people in the audience. I'd known for a few seconds that I'd lost. I struggled through the interview as best as I could, because I

just wanted to get out of there. My disappointment was oppressing. **Conclusion on Friday.**

ALAN MARTIN



- Chartered Accountant Management Consultant
- Former M.P.
- Parliamentary Secretary to Hon. Jean Chretien, Minister of Finance

CANDIDATE FOR 1988

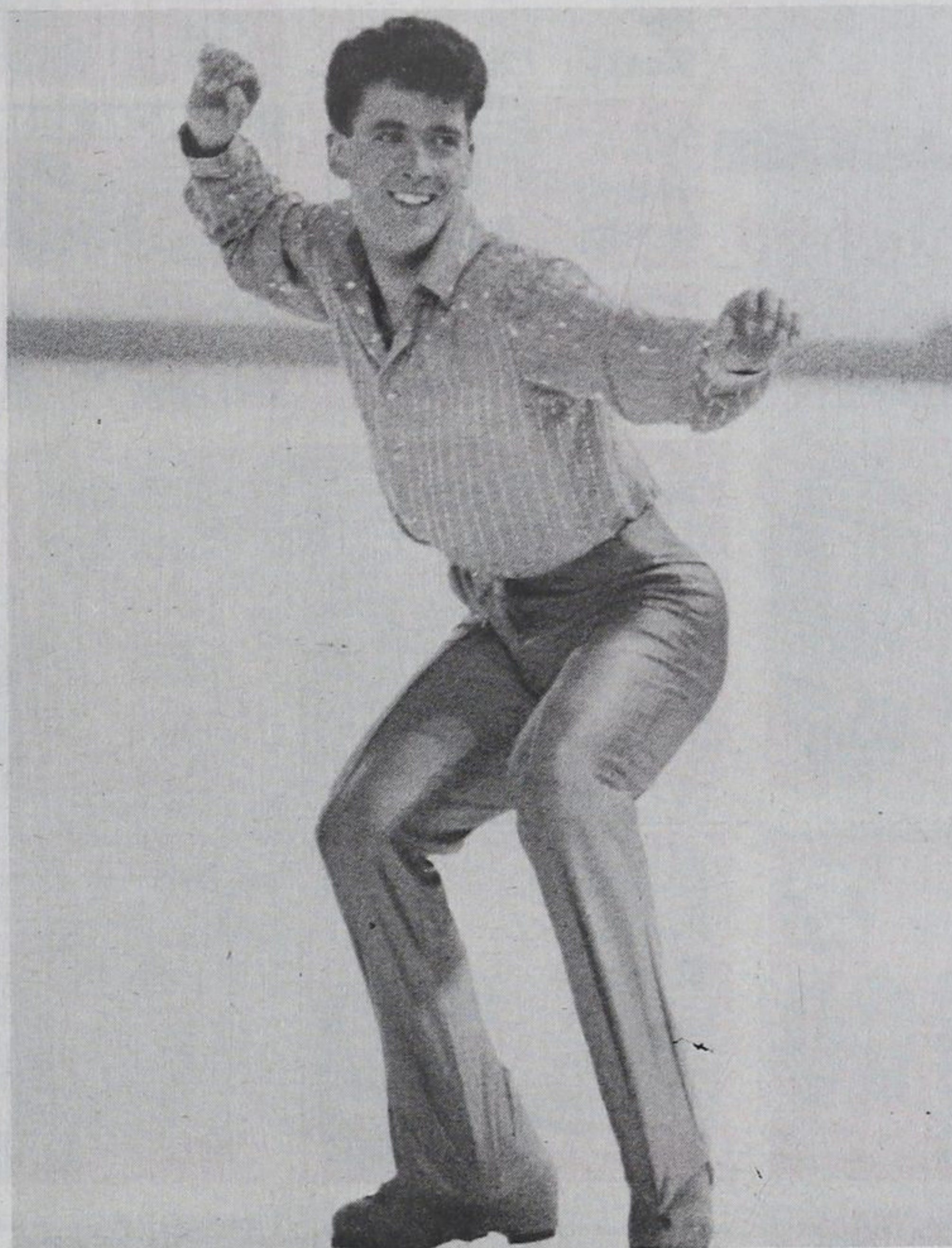
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Simcoe North

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Saturday, Sept. 17, 1988
1 p.m.

Mount St. Louis Ski Resort
(Exit 131 Hwy. 400)

Guest Speaker: Frank Stronach
Chairman Magna International

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WELCOME



Brian Orser

Where there's smoke...

Smoking is a habit hard to break - for at least two members of Midland town council.

In August the council voted to expand the ban on smoking in the municipal building to the board room inside which council committee meetings are held. Smoking already was banned inside the council chamber and in the building's foyer.

However, two members of the council, Mayor Al Roach and Councillor Robert Brush, smoked during the September public works committee meeting. Councillor Carolyn White didn't go without a cigarette during the September finance committee meeting, but she observed the No Smoking symbol on the wall of the committee room. She left the meeting to smoke in the

general office, where smoking is not prohibited.

Free trade worries farmers candidate says

Cont'd from pg. 7

Free trade is a big worry for farmers. Most of the big farm organizations, like the Ontario Farmers Association, are opposed to this agreement. They are concerned with the lack of protection for our price support systems and marketing boards. The agreement is full of loopholes which could allow U.S. produce to undercut our agriculture. Our farms are very efficient, but climate and the scale of operations mean that in some areas we can be overwhelmed by low-cost American produce. And nobody can compete with dumping. I feel that this government is really weak on agricultural policy. I've talked to farmers who say they have always voted Tory but this time they aren't so sure. **Harries:** One thing the polls do show is that NDP leader Ed Broadbent is very popular. But do you think Canadians are ready to turn against the Tory government?

McMurter: People voted for a change in 1984 but they didn't get it. People are disappointed and disillusioned. They had hoped that blatantly political patronage appointments would be gone with the Liberal government. We very quickly saw

them become part of the Tory government. Nothing's changed from when the Liberals were in. Mr Mulroney, with his enormous majority, did have a choice but he refused to take it.

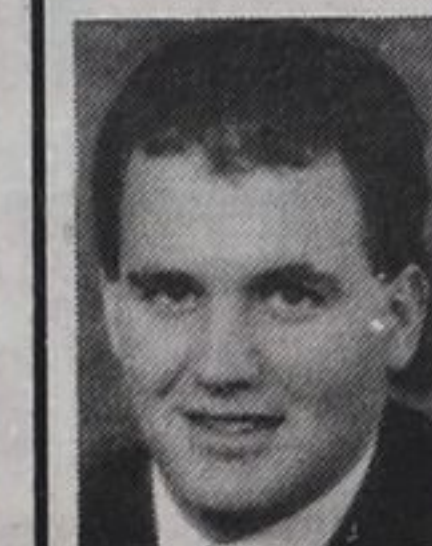
What Canadians want is a leader who is open and honest with them. I feel very positive about running with Ed Broadbent as party leader. He's not trying to fool people, he says what he thinks and believes what he says. If Ed were elected we'd have a government that would reflect his openness and honesty.

Harries: What would you, personally, bring to the House of Commons in Ottawa?

McMurter: My educational background is in science and engineering. I feel that we could do with more people who could bring an understanding of technology's uses and abuses to government. We have, as a nation, to be more involved in science and technology in order to compete in the world. Also, both as a volunteer and professionally during five years as a counsellor for the deaf, I feel that I understand the problems facing those people who go through life with disadvantages I think we need more understanding of their problems in government too.



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