

# Gronlid native also to compete in Austria

BY ALLAN HART **B 6317**  
**GRONLID** — A love of skiing has led to another opportunity for Rodney (Rody) Jansen to display his skills at the international level. Later this month, Rody, along with some 100 other Canadian athletes, will be catching a flight to Austria to compete in the Fifth World Winter Games

for Athletes with Mental Retardation.

For Rody, this will be his second appearance at the Special Games. In 1989 as a 16-year-old, he brought home a gold medal from the International Winter Special Olympic Games staged at Squaw Valley, California after recording the fastest time in the intermediate

downhill event. He also finished sixth in both the intermediate slalom and the intermediate giant slalom.

Rody is expected to wear the Canadian colors in both downhill and slalom events at Schladming, a small town in the Swiss Alps, as 276 athletes from 60 countries participate in alpine skiing. In all, the six events —

cross-country skiing, floor hockey, figure skating, speed skating, floor hockey, unified floor hockey and alpine skiing — will attract 1,600 competitors, making it the largest winter sport event in the world this year.

On hand when Rody heads down the slopes will be his parents Henry and Ann Jansen. They also traveled with their son to Squaw Valley, as well as attending a number of provincial competitions and two national events at which he was skiing.

"We can't travel with Rody's group, he has to stay with the team, but there is a flight out of Calgary being organized for supporters," Henry said. Rody's expenses are covered by the Special Olympics committee, however, his parents have to cover their own costs.

Shortly after Wapiti Ski Hill opened, Rody and his parents took a ski lesson and the youngster was from the start hooked on the sport.

"One of his teachers at Melfort (where Rody attends special education classes), Mrs. Imogene Watt, encouraged her students to compete and Rody learned to love all sports. He also has won medals in swimming, track and bowling," Henry said.

Rody just returned from a training session at



Rody Jansen celebrates a gold medal performance in downhill skiing at the national championships at Mount Blackstrap last year. With the victory came the opportunity to represent Canada at the Special Olympics Games in Austria later this month.

Nakiska, just outside Calgary, where he had the opportunity to meet and ski with one of Canada's all-time skiing greats — Ken Reed.

The Austrian games run from March 20th to 28th.

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