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James Hunter

Born: 1953

James "Jungle" Hunter seemed to thrive on hard work and high speed, leaving many wild ski tales behind him.

Jim Hunter, nicknamed "Jungle" by his teammates, was born on May 30, 1953. Originally from the prairie province of Saskatchewan where his family had a farm, Jim and his family moved to Calgary, Alberta, where he began skiing.

Jim spent his younger days playing hockey and did not begin to ski until the age of twelve. His aggressive nature and determination were great factors in his remarkable progress. Inside of three seasons, he advanced from a club skier to the Du Maurier International (World Cup) and was named to the National Ski Team at age of sixteen.

In the 1971-72 season, he surprised the world with a ninth place in a World Cup Downhill at Adelboden, Switzerland. In 1972 at Sapporo, Japan, Jim placed third in the combined to become the first Canadian male skier to win a World Championship medal. That same year, Jim won both the Canadian and U.S. National Giant Slalom titles.

"Jungle" was the team's top all-around performer and in 1975-76 he placed in the top ten in World Cup Downhill events four times, and was tenth in the Olympic Downhill event at Innsbruck. In February of 1977 at the Shell Cup, Jim took his seventh consecutive giant slalom title, and also for the third time, became Canada's best overall male skier to win the Shell Cup as the Canadian Champion.

A religious person, "Jungle" was a leader who worked for the good for his team. On June 18, 1977, in his hometown of Calgary, Alberta, he was honored at the Canadian Ski Association's Annual Convention. A special presentation was made to Jim. After many years of dedication to his career as an amateur racer with the team; Jim was awarded the JOHN SEMMELINK AWARD. This award is presented annually, in the event of there being a candidate, by the Canadian Ski Association to the skier who, through sportsmanship, conduct, and ability best represents Canada in international competition. This award is achieved in the name of and in the memory of H. John Semmelink who lost his life while representing the association in the Arlberg-Kandahar on February 7, 1959, at Garmisch-Partenkirchen, West Germany.

Jim and his wife are presently working in Calgary. On receipt of the award, Jim related many interesting and entertaining anecdotes on his career and indicated his intentions to join other past National Team members of the Professional Ski Circuit

James Hunter was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1978.

