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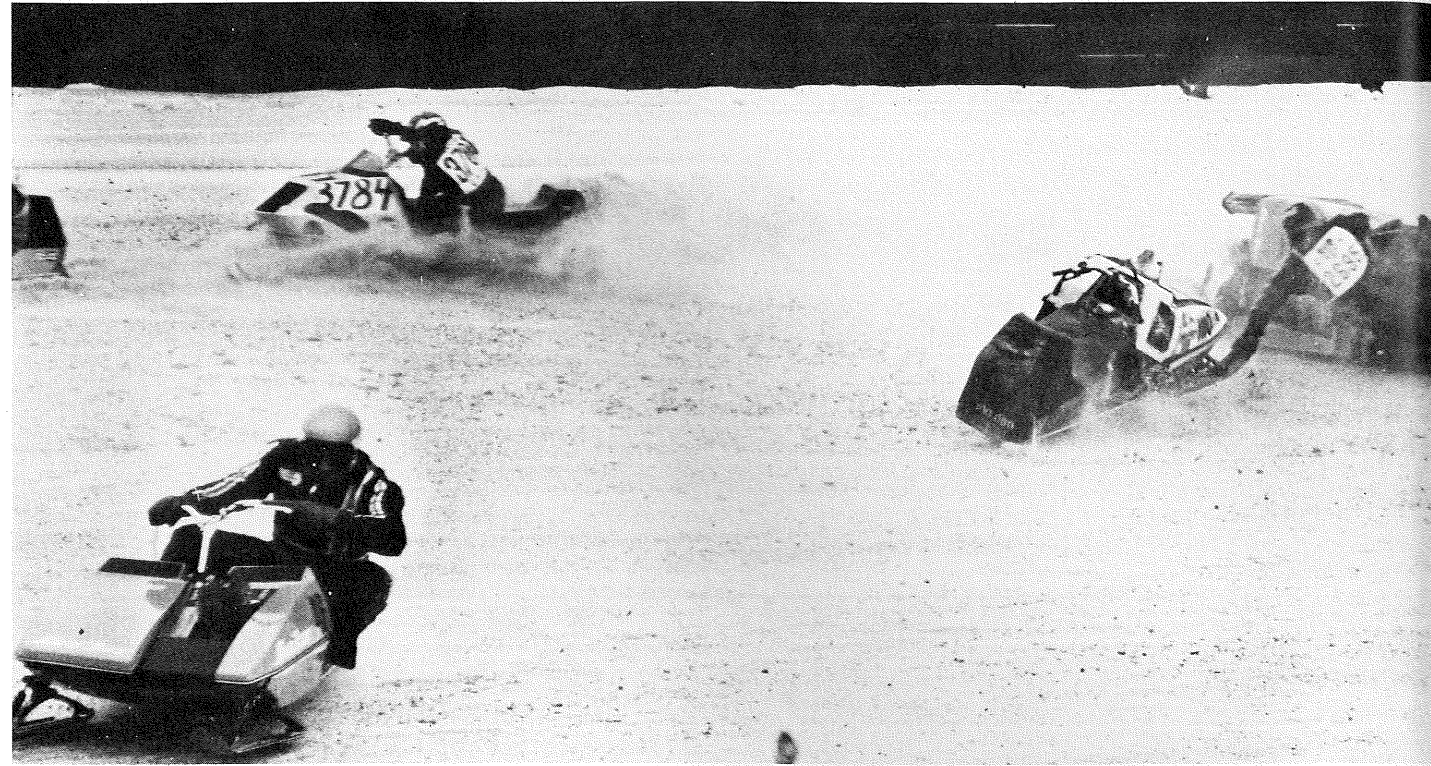
*The Mercury switch
Yamaha support truck
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All about suspensions*



Cover: Last March in W. Y. it snowed 7 feet in 7 days.

Like the cold northwest wind, Canadians Ian

and David Corbett roared into American racing.



David Corbett

When the chilling winter winds came down from Canada last season they brought little cold weather and hardly any snow, but they did bring two stars of Canadian snowmobile racing. Ian and David Corbett of Winnipeg, Manitoba roared to numerous racing wins aboard their lightening quick Sno*Jet Thunder Jets, making a name for both themselves and Sno*Jet.

In what might be considered their premier of snowmobile racing in the United States, Ian and David shared the Sno*Jet racing spotlight with Jim Adema of Belmont, Michigan. Previously, Adema had almost singlehandedly carried the Sno*Jet banner in the United States, but the duo from Winnipeg met the Michigan champ head on in several races and proved they had their stuff together, too. At first when the pair challenged United States racers they received little attention, but as the season progressed it was easy to see that the Corbetts were leaving their mark, so to

speak, on American racing. By the end of the season, the pair received just as much respect in modified racing as their U.S. counterpart, Jim Adema. This was because the brothers had beaten Adema as many times as Adema beat them to the checkers.

The Corbetts have a lot of respect for Adema though. The three Sno*Jet racers first met in 1972 and have become "fast" friends ever since. There's more an air of comradery between the Thunder Jet pilots than anything else. When Adema needed help with his machines at Eagle River last year when he decided to have a go at Sno Pro, it was the Corbett brothers he asked to help him. Ian said it was almost an honor to work so closely with Adema. "To think that he would trust us helping him with his machines meant a lot to us," he added.

David also commented that they exchange some advice with the Michigan Sno*Jet racer and find that many of the "tricks" of racing that Adema used also

helped them. For example, when the Corbetts began serious snowmobile racing in 1971 with the newly designed Thunder Jets, there was no question that a serious handling problem curtailed their success. They did come up with a solution though, and a rather amazing one at that.

Ian explained that in order to improve the handling of the new sled several adaptations had to be made on the suspension of the machine. After some contemplation the brothers decided to try something that most engineers would consider rather outlandish. They adjusted the front of the Thunder Jet suspension with a piece of a hockey stick they found laying around their shop. They simply cut a chunk off the stick and fitted it into place, and the suspension problem was immediately remedied. Their theory on the adjustment was reinforced next time they ran up against Jim Adema. He had found the same adap-

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The Corbetts of Canada

By Karlyn Elgin

They showed ingenuity, fearless driving, 100%

tion was necessary in order to handle his Thunder Jet, too. But with the facilities Adema had at his own disposal, he was able to produce a part for the suspension in his own machine shop. The part was much more advanced than the Corbetts' in terms of production, but it still did the same trick. Ian and David admitted that they both had a bit of a laugh when they saw the adaption Adema had made on his sled. "Here he was able to use his machine shop and develop a special part, when David and I used a \$2.95 hockey stick and got the same results," Ian said.

David and Ian got started in snowmobile racing because their father owned the Sno*Jet distributorship for Manitoba and part of Ontario. The family business began selling Sno*Jets in 1967—their total inventory numbered two machines, but they sold both of them.

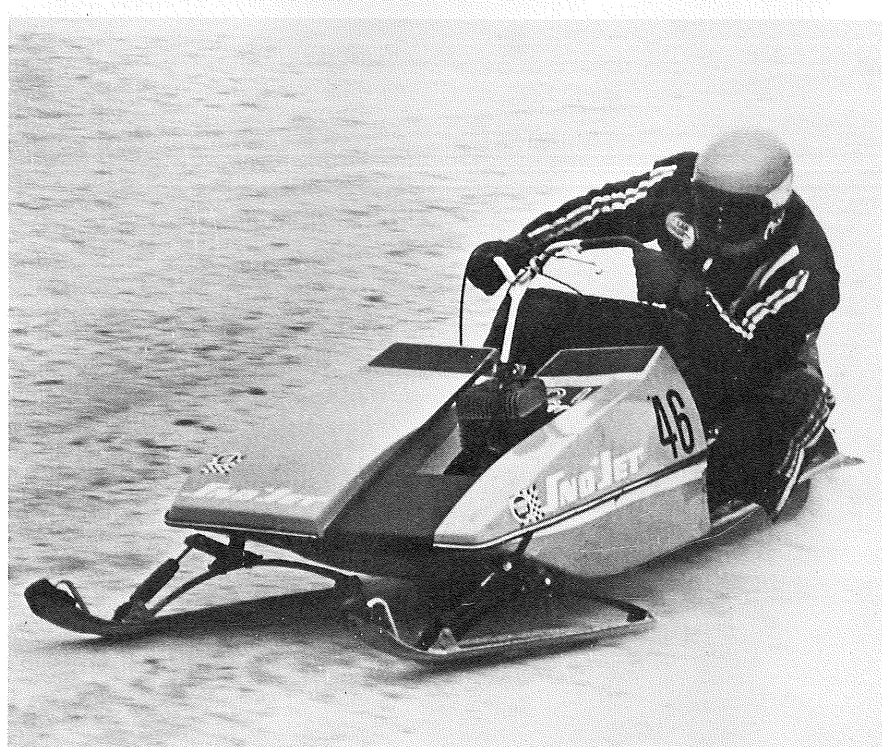
The guys entered their first race in 1968 at the Manitoba championships. David said it was something they did for a laugh on a Sunday afternoon. They loaded up two machines from the shop and were off to the races. The results of that first race got them competing full-time though. Dave, who was a junior racer at that time (he's now 20 years old), entered the 300 Modified class for

Ian not only had a lot of nerve out on the track but saved some for the award ceremonies too.

juniors and pulled down the first place trophy. Ian also placed in his first race winning third place in the men's 400 stock. He's now 22 years old.

Racing has been pretty natural for them ever since. In the two years that Sno*Jet offered the million dollar contingency fund, Corbetts were among the top money winners. In the 1972-73 season they tallied between \$18,000 and \$19,000, and this past season their total winnings amounted to around \$20,000. They sponsor themselves completely, even though their dad sells the machines. Last year they both bought their own 290's and got two machines from their father. All of the expenses come out of their own pocket.

Among the pair's wins was Ian's impressive World Cup title which he won at Peterboro, Ontario last spring. The title is based on the number of races entered and the finishes in each class. Part of the winnings for the coveted award included an expense paid trip for two to Jamaica. It would have been a nice break from work and cold weather in Canada, but Ian decided not to take the trip himself because he thought his parents should go. "Both the folks have done a lot for



family backing, and the ability to handle queens.



David and I while we've been racing, so I thought they earned the trip," he explained.

He especially recalls one time when his dad really helped him out. He and David were racing in a town about 400 miles away from Winnipeg. Ian burned down his machine on Saturday during the qualifying and called home on Saturday evening to tell his parents that they wouldn't be racing the next day but would stay to watch the races anyway. Early the next morning, he awoke to a loud knocking on the door. And who should be there but his dad with all the parts they needed to repair the sled. Mr. Corbett had driven all night to get the badly needed parts to his son.

Analyzing their racing career, both brothers concur a large part of their success is due to the fact they both race the same size sleds. Together they drove 290 Modified and 440 Modified. They found this to be particularly advantageous even though they ended up competing against one another. When it came to preparing sleds, David would try something on this 290 and then try it against Ian's same size machine. When that one ran better they would try something different on Ian's machine. They were always jockeying to see whose

Dave was just as cool on the track but was still learning when it came to handling sno-queens.

Below: The boys' father, R.G. Corbett, helps gas up Dave's sled.

machine would run best from weekend to weekend. As a result though, they always had a contest when they were conducting tests to see which method would work the best.

The guys made some interesting observations about racing in the United States compared to Canada, too. They said there was a lot more competition in the States and in the USSA racing circuit than there was in their own Manitoba Snowmobile Association, which was an affiliate of the USSA. The keener competition was to their own benefit though, because there was also more money in racing. They cited Eagle River as a good example.

At that particular race they arrived a few days ahead of time in order to set up their sleds for the high banked icy track. (In Manitoba they usually race on flat tracks, and Beausejour which is completely flat and very icy is their favorite.) The extra days paid off though. Ian posted the fastest time in the 290 modified class before a collision put him out of the action in the finals. They almost qualified a 650 they hadn't run all year

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"World's Championships" and "World Cups" too.



for the World Championship event, too. But all in all, it was the best paying single race they have ever attended. That was partly due to the fact that they walked off with an awfully lot of iron at that race. There were more than monetary benefits reaped, too. They made many friends and became a lot closer to their racing friend Jim Adema. It was not uncommon to see these guys talking over the results of the races with people like Arctic Cat Sno Pro racer Charlie Lofton and other factory drivers.

You might say that the Corbetts brought the friendly spirit of Manitoba with them when they came to the United States. People from all over the snowbelt in the United States and Canada readily agree that the Corbetts are among the really nice people in snowmobile racing. Sno*Jet Vice President Nolan Archibald says they are really super people to have aboard the Thunder Jet racers. And Bob Work, race director for Yamaha Motor Canada, has talked of how good it would be to have the brothers piloting Yamahas if those blue machines were replaced by Yamahas. (The Corbett distributorship also features the Yamaha motorcycle line.)

Left: Older brother Ian took on the better racers from both the U.S. and Canada at Peterborough to win the "World Cup" last spring.



But it's a new season now and the Corbetts have four new Sno*Jets ready to unleash on the track. Both of the guys are aboard 440 cc Super Modified machines and 440 cc Sno*Jet Free Airs for Modified Stock.

As the season was about to begin the Corbetts were really optimistic about the season. This year the Sno*Jet Free Air models are legal to compete in both the United States and Canada, and several changes have been made within their sanctioning administration. Last year Ian was vice president of the Manitoba Snowmobile Association and David was on the Drivers Committee. This year they serve in a supervisory position and are very pleased with the new classifications (family stock, super stock, modified stock and super mod).

There's no doubt about it—this year when the wind grows chilly and the snow begins to fall, there will be two Canadians preparing to make the trek down to the United States for another successful year of snowmobile racing. They've got what it takes to win—fast machines, exceptional driving skill and the spirit of winning. They're the kind of people who make snowmobile racing exciting.

