

FALLS CREEK, 1958

By SHIRLEY INGLIS.

Falls Creek in the Bogong High Plains last year provided three rope tows and one chair lift for a population of about 200 skiers. There were also two canteens and a general store with a cheerful coffee corner. This meant an abundance of services for a comparatively small population, and the effects of it were felt immediately. Interest in Falls Creek blossomed, and summer extensions and new buildings will provide about another 80 beds for this winter. There is also promise of another tow—so the situation snowballs.

The village was introduced to more new faces than usual last season, for the S.E.C. snowplowed the road at the end of August. Day trippers disembarked bright-eyed and rosy-cheeked from their tourist buses, gambolled a few steps across the road, bought a ticket for a ride on the chair lift, and before the

exhilaration of the altitudes had waned, found themselves in high heels and nylon stockings at the top station, gazing down at the village couched below them like a town planner's model. The open road meant also that more distant skiers travelled there for regular week-ends because of the ease of access.

There was also ample ski instruction available. Six active instructors offered a choice of technique—2 Austrian, 2 Australian, 1 Yugoslav and 1 French. With this guidance and the new nursery tow, it was noticeable that the beginners' standard of skiing improved more rapidly than in past years.

During the school holidays, the children's races were held. They were in every way a replica of a grand grown-up affair. Instructors marked out the courses, and numbers were issued. There were gatekeepers and timekeepers,

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John Robertson, Captain of the Australian Team to New Zealand, in the Australian Championship Slalom.

Photo by Don Cowie.

judges, flags and about 50 entrants. Mr. Williams, the S.E.C. Construction Engineer, awarded the trophies, and the children went north and south back to school with ready material for the essays and talks that would be demanded of them in their first few days at the desk.

Falls Creek, unlike its other Victorian counterpart, Mt. Buller, has more commercial than private accommodation. This year the commercial lodges should provide about 160 beds, while private lodges will offer roughly another 120,

this latter includes the rebuilding of the Albury Ski Club, destroyed by fire in the Autumn of 1958.

Having increased in stature, it should not be long before the National Championships are held on the Bogong High Plains (the National Langlauf passed through and through the village last year), and if Marsh Collis's promised tow and cafe eventuate, we lazy spectators should be able to sit in comfort at the top of the mountain and watch it all from above.