

Ski champion at 18

● Snow and tobacco sound a weird mixture, but they're the two most important ingredients in the life of 18-year-old Ross Milne, of Myrtleford, Victoria.

WHEN he's not skiing he's usually at work on his family's tobacco property at the foothills of the Australian Alps.

At the moment skiing has taken control of his time, for Ross is in the champion class and has been named as one of the five skiers to represent Australia at the 1964 Winter Olympics in Austria next January.

But Ross feels there is more to life than just skiing, and he's as happy at work in the tobacco fields as he is at play in the snowfields.

Ross, who left Albury Grammar at the end of last year, first began skiing at Falls Creek when he was 13.

It didn't take him long to show his talent.

For three years in succession he has won the annual junior championship held by the North-Eastern District Ski Association, and as early as 1961 he was a member of the Australian Inter-Dominion

By Cynthia Robinson

team which raced against New Zealand.

Last winter he finished third in the Victorian Slalom and was a member of the Victorian team.

Normally when the snows melt on the Australian Alps, Ross—a keen, all-round sportsman who played football at school—occupies his leisure moments water-skiing, riding one of his horses, or playing tennis.

He also looks forward each summer to spending a holiday at the beach.

But last summer was different. Ross had his eyes on next year's Olympics, and to gain valuable international experience he decided to follow the snow to Europe.

There, Ross and four other young skiers—Mike Tinsley, Simon Brown, Peter Wenzel, and Colin Stuart—toured the international circuit as an unofficial Australian team.

During the tour stocky, brown-eyed Ross had a fall and broke his ankle, which came out of plaster only a few weeks before he won the slalom at this year's N.S.W. championships.

In the Victorian championships he was equal first with Japanese Takayuki Takahashi in the Slalom and second in the Giant Slalom.

Later, in the national championships held at Mount Hotham, Ross had his greatest skiing success yet.

He won the Combined Alpine title after beating the field in the Downhill event and coming second in the Giant Slalom.

Ross, who will be 19 this month, has a keen fan in his 13-year-old brother, Malcolm.

For Malcolm is as much a snow enthusiast as his tanned and talented elder brother, and he's following in his ski-tracks so fast that he could well be competing against him for 1968 Winter Olympic selection.

Next week: Ilsa Konrads.



ROSS MILNE, who won the Combined Alpine title at the recent national ski championships at Mount Hotham, began skiing at 13. He has been selected for the Australian team at the Winter Olympics in Austria.

