

STREET SCENE

Inside **S²**

'Call me Mr. Bond'

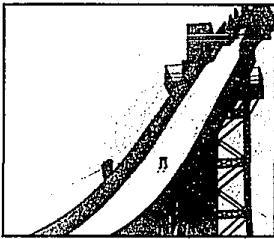
The wonderful gadgets that seem to get super spy James Bond out of trouble are more than glitzy Hollywood special effects. There's a company that offers everything from wristwatch cameras to anti-kidnapping devices. For a price, of course. Find out more on Page 6D.

The Observer & Eccentric® Newspapers

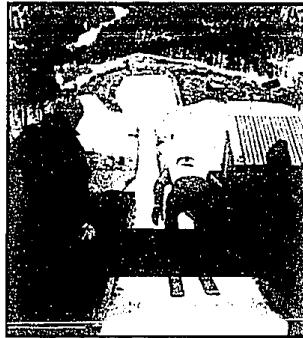
Monday, March 12, 1980 O&E

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Look at me, I'm flyyying



The copper Peak sky flying scaffold rises up 421 feet above the 364-foot summit of Chippewa Hill and has a vertical drop three times greater than that of Niagara Falls.



With his final destination in sight, Team USA Member Jim Grahak starts down the in-run where speeds exceed 60 miles per hour.



photos by DAH DEAN/staff photographer

According to Team USA member Kris Severson, a Colorado transplant who grew up in Grosse Pointe, "when you take off, you concentrate on technique and faith . . . because you can't see where you're going to land."

Skiers soar at the 'peak'

By Pat Schutte
special writer

IRONWOOD — Some sports are pretty wild like fighting bulls or SCUBA diving with sharks. Other sports are rather insane, like jumping out of an airplane with a parachute or jumping a motorcycle over a bunch of cars.

And a couple are just plain nuts, like doing kicks in the NFL, or, in most cases, stepping into the ring with Mike Tyson.

But there's one sport that is so far up the list of crazy things to do that to top it would be as close to death as one could come.

If you've ever skied before, or even just jumped off the ground once or twice, you know what it's like to "catch air."

Picture yourself standing at the end of a football field, looking down toward the other end zone. Around 100 feet away is another goal line. A good Olympic skier can jump that far on a pair of skis.

At Copper Peak in Ironwood, guys on skis fly almost twice as far. And last weekend the best in the world were here to compete in the Continental Cup International Ski Flying Event.

"Flying" is actually the word for it. Ski flying is closely related to its Olympic cousin, the 70- and 90-meter ski jump. Yet, at 120 meters, you might call it flying the "grandfather."

The Copper Peak ski flying scaffold rises up 421 feet above the 364-foot summit of Chippewa Hill in the western corner of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. From the tippy top of the scaffold, if you spin around in a circle, you can see Michigan, Wisconsin,

Illinois and Minnesota as well as Canada.

WITH A vertical drop three times greater than that of Niagara Falls, it took more than 300 tons of steel to complete the scaffold in 1970.

OK. It's your turn to go. Picture this. You're standing . . . er . . . shaking at the top of the scaffold, hands gripping the starting rails so tight that they're sweating (as well as the rest of your body) in the freezing temperatures.

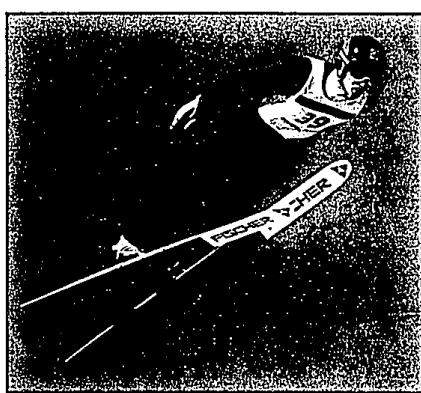
As you look down the long, narrow takeoff chute, you think to yourself, "Heavens, I'll be traveling in excess

of 70 miles per hour before I hit the air. And I have no idea where you're supposed to land is even scarier."

You can't see where you're going. You let loose the white-knuckled grip you have on the starting rail and there's no turning back. SWOOSH . . . 10, 20, 30, 60, 70 miles per hour in a matter of seconds. Once airborne, you actually slow down a bit. If you're good, you can travel the length of two football fields. If you're bad . . .

"All right Detroit, it's 7 a.m. Time to wake up." right. You're dreaming.

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Vasko Stanislav of Czechoslovakia shows off his sky flying form in the process of setting a new Copper Peak record of 158 meters or 512 feet and winning the Continental Cup competition.

The winner is . . .

Copper Peak is quiet now. The ski flyers have packed away their skis, but the excitement they generated still lingers in the air. For the record, Vasko Stanislav of Czechoslovakia finished first in the Continental Cup competition and in the process of winning set a new Copper Peak record of 158 meters or 512 feet. The old record was 503 feet, set by Alois Lipburger of Austria.

Second was Stefan Horngacher of Austria, followed by fellow Austrian Franz Wiegels in third.

The top finishers among American competitors was Mark Konopack of Iron Mountain, who finished seventh, with Mark Hammel of Team USA 11th and teammate Kris Severson 14th.



The fans had their feet planted firmly on the ground in the landing area of Copper Peak, raising their hands in a unified cheer for each and every competitor.