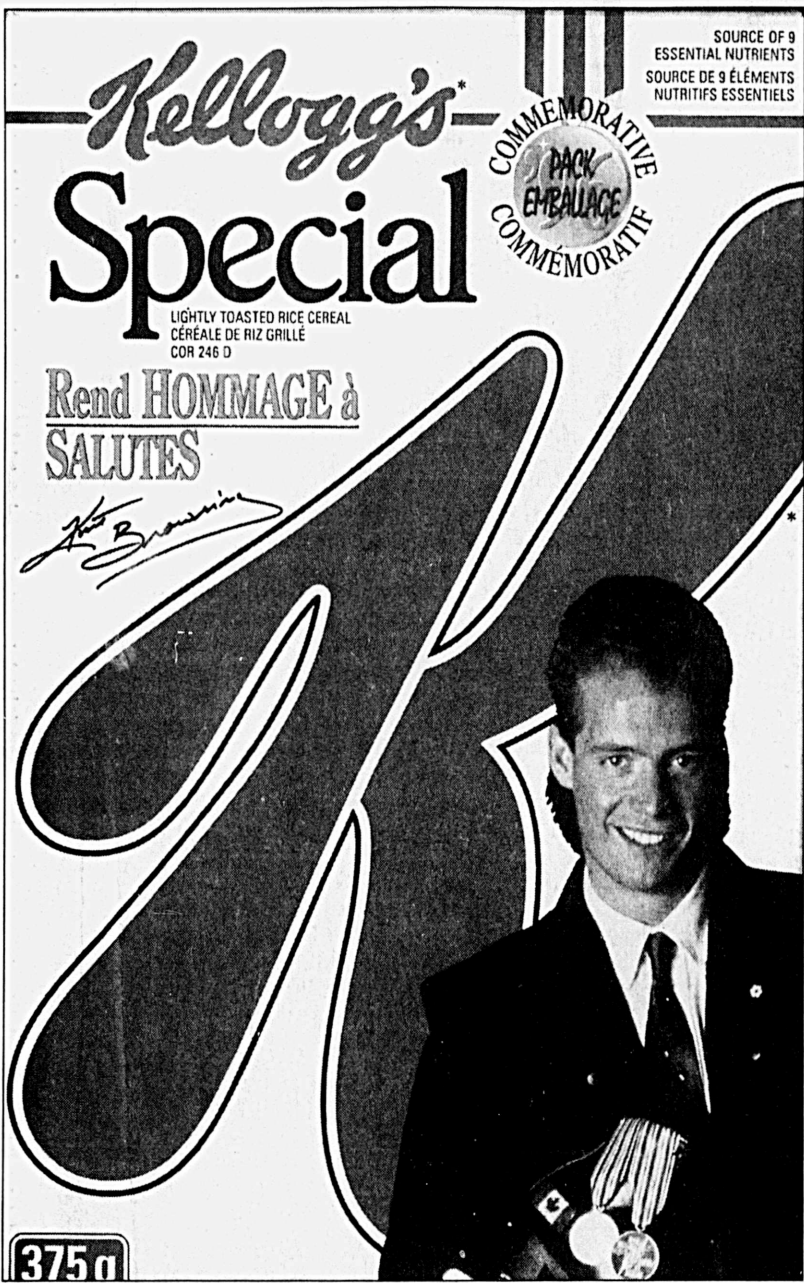


FOURTH FRONT

The 'K' stands for Kurt — as in Browning



by PAULA ARAB
Southam Newspapers

EDMONTON — Kellogg's Special K is even more special this month, with K standing for Kurt — as in Kurt Browning.

The four time World Figure Skating Champion is featured on two million cereal boxes. The limited edition will commemorate the 1996 World Figure Skating Championships, to be held in Edmonton March 19 to March 24.

"It's so cool," said Browning. "You're an athlete and you're on the Special K box."

"It's just something that you never thought would happen to you ... it just doesn't seem real," he said from a Toronto studio where he was filming skating clips to be aired during CTV's coverage of the figure skating event.

Kellogg's won't say how much it's paying Browning.

But being at the breakfast table with Canadian children is more than a paycheck for him. Browning said it's a responsibility he takes seriously.

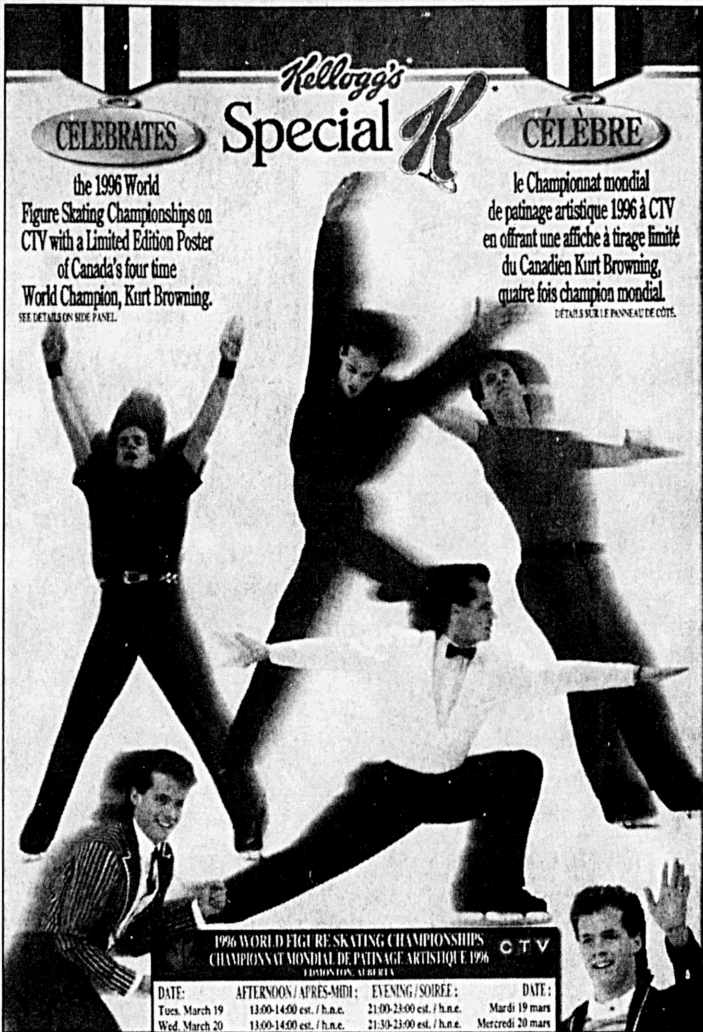
"You read the box, that's what you do when you're a kid. To have an athlete on the box is someone to look up to. You're a role model. People know your name, they watch what you do."

Kellogg's Canada spokesperson Joanne Parsonage said the promotion is meant to inspire Canadians and make money for Kellogg's.

"The message we're sending is that people who have dreams can accomplish them," she said. "He's just an ordinary person who decided he was going to be a figure skater — a world class figure skater."

A photo on the front of the cereal box shows a smiling Kurt holding two of his World Figure Skating Championship medals. On the back are six shots of various poses of Browning at his best, during past world championships.

Kellogg's has never before singled out a Canadian athlete. Previous promotions included team shots of the Toronto Blue Jays, after winning the World Series in 1992 and 1993. The Vancouver Canucks were also featured after winning the NHL Western Conference title in 1994.



Kurt Browning, champion Canadian figure skater is featured on the cover, photo at left, of two million Special-K cereal boxes. On the back of the box, photo above, Kurt is shown in many poses taken throughout his career and a fact box is included about his accomplishments. He's the first Canadian athlete to make a cereal box cover, although team shots of the Blue Jays and Canucks have been featured.

Heckler gave car buff all the push he needed

by DAVE HALLIDAY
Southam Newspapers

There's a heckler Dan Brochu would like to meet. And thank.

Brochu was halfway through building his 1955 GMC pickup when he started to lose enthusiasm for the project. He advertised the truck for sale and received only one phone call from a potential buyer.

The caller heckled Brochu about starting a project and not finishing it.

"It was a kick in the butt," Brochu said.

That kick got him restarted and on the way to finishing the six-year project.

"I wish I knew who it was. I'd like to thank him now."

The finished truck has been painted a bright yellow — similar to Corvette yellow — and sports a massive chrome grill.

While the '55 Chev pickup used a conservative-looking grill similar to that used in the 1955 Chev car, the GMC pickup took its styling cues from upscale General Motors' vehicles like the Cadillac. The heavy grill bars and bullet-shaped bumper guards followed Cadillac's lead.

The differences between the Chev and GMC truck lines was greater than than it is now.

"Now the only thing different is the nameplate," Brochu said.

He takes some ribbing about the brilliant yellow paint.

"I saw you driving your truck in St. Albert," a neighbor said. "I was at one end and you were at the other."

The truck's attention-grabbing grill tends to snare a lot of bugs during summer drives.

"The only thing that bugs me is the bugs," Brochu said. "It takes so much time to get the bugs off the chrome."

To make the transformation from rusty, beaten-up farm truck to the gleaming finished product of today required parts from three different trucks. The cab came from one truck, the grill from another and the frame from the third.

The front suspension has been changed to smooth out the ride, and the engine, transmission and differential were updated to allow for travel at modern highway speeds. The trucks have a reputation for being rough riding and struggling to meet highway speeds with the original drivetrain.

Building the truck cost \$6,000 and took 6,000 hours, said Brochu, 35. The vehicle now is appraised at \$14,500.

The front suspension came from a 1973 Chevrolet Nova car. A portion of the Nova frame, including the suspension, was welded into the truck's frame.

The 350 cubic inch displacement engine and transmission came from a 1977 Oldsmobile his wife, Judy, was driving.

"The body was badly rusted and she was due for another car," Brochu said. "She got another car so I didn't leave her without wheels."

When Brochu needed help and guidance with both the frame and the truck's body, he turned to his friend Al Hill, an auto body repair technician.

Hill helped weld the frame together and taught Brochu the basics of body work.

"He showed me how to make it come out nice and straight," Brochu said.

And he found he needed the body work expertise.

"Just about every body panel needed rust repair."

There were an abundance of dents to repair.

But the hours of hard work paid off in a straight, sharp-looking truck. Brochu, an automatic transmission repair specialist at Ron Hodgson Pontiac Buick GMC in St. Albert, said his job brings him in contact with parts that could be useful in a project vehicle.

For example, the steering column in his truck is from a 1981 Pontiac Phoenix and the transmission shifter is from a Pontiac Acadian.

Besides working at Ron Hodgson's, Brochu is also part of the dealership's Goodwrench top fuel racing team. His duties on the team include driving the truck hauling the race car and rebuilding the bottom end of race car's engine between heats.

With Brochu working on the bottom of the motor and two people on the top side and one on the clutch, the engine is rebuilt in 45 minutes. When a race ends, Brochu pulls off the oil pan and gets started.

"It's hot, oily and hard work, and I love it." He checks and replaces the crankshaft bearings to prevent problems on future runs.

If that's not done, the crankshaft can break.

"You can destroy a \$50,000 engine in a matter of seconds," said Brochu, holding up a damaged piston with a valve head imbedded in it as an example of what can go wrong.

The supercharged, Keith Black-built aluminum engine produces 5,000 horsepower.

Poaching becoming booming business

CALGARY (CP) — The classified advertisement was a little suspicious: Grizzly Bear for Sale. Fish and wildlife investigators figured the seller wasn't offering a live grizzly and reached for the phone.

The result is a charge against a Calgary man of trafficking in wildlife — just one of about 15 cases under investigation by Alberta Fish and Wildlife's Special Investigations Section.

Their undercover officers have gone on closed-season night hunts with spotlights, worked in a sausage shop, acted as buddy to guys illegally peddling wild meat and tagged along for some illegal net fishing. They have been known to surreptitiously slip greasy meat samples into their pockets while dining in restaurants — all in the line of duty.

And their business is booming.

In 1987, there were about 250 complaints about people trafficking in wildlife. Because of increased awareness and enforcement, the section now receives 400 to 500 tips a year — but investigates only about 30.

Unregulated sale of wildlife is one of the greatest threats to the future of wild animals, Hockley says.

Hockley says the courts used to impose fines of \$50 for trafficking in wildlife. That's changed. The maximum penalty is \$100,000 per conviction and or six months in jail.

Nobody has ever been slapped that hard, but "in the majority of cases, the courts have been really good. In 1993, one fine was \$30,000 and two weeks in jail for trafficking in bear parts."

Better late
than never

BARRIE, Ont. (CP) — John Vause got a postcard from his mom in this week's mail — which wouldn't be unusual except that it was mailed in 1949.

The card was sent to the then seven-year-old by his mother Sara Vause, who was on vacation in Michigan.

The slightly faded hand-stamped postmark was dated McMillan, Mich., Sept. 15, 1949. On the top was a series of digital numbers and symbols from a modern postal machine.

The only thing missing from the postcard, which features a pastel-colored scene of lake freighters, is a stamp. The remnants of one still exist under the coding of the new postmark.

MEET THE



March 9th 1996

These Prince George Cougars will be on location at your local Overwaita Store. Stop in, meet the players and get an autograph.

9 am - 10 am
Hart Highway

Chris Mason

10 am - 11 am
Spruceland

Brad Mehalko

11 am - Noon
Spruce St.

Geoff Lynch

Noon - 1 pm
College Heights

Matt Vanhorlick

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4 LOCATIONS: Hart Hwy. (Pharmacy) Regular Hours 9am-9pm Spruceland (Photo Centre) Regular Hours 8am-10pm Downtown Spruce St., Regular Hours 8am-10pm College Heights (Pharmacy) Regular Hours 9am-9pm