

THE LATE GEORGE AALBERG

GEORGE AALBERG died in Sydney early this year. To many of us among this generation of New South Wales skiers' first memories of the snow are tied up with a vision of George's weatherbeaten grin or the slightly puzzled look that to the end of his days accompanied his efforts to comprehend the mysteries of the English language. Tied up, too, these memories with the recollection of a good friend and a stout-hearted racer.

He came to Kosciusko with the Alpine Club in 1927 and in that and the two succeeding years won the Australian Championship, then decided on the results of a Langlauf. There was at that time no Jumping Championship, but George Aalberg showed us the first jumping of European standard and the jump that he built at the side of the Kerry Course will be for most of us his memorial. He came with a good record, having several times been a prize-winner at Hollmenkollen and being by repute the holder of some two hundred ski-ing trophies. In 1929, with Gelling, he established the record of 6 hours 9 minutes for the Summit Race (35 miles) which stood until last season. Even more remarkable among his dauerlaufing exploits were his trip from the Hotel Kosciusko to Mount Jagungal and back, a distance of some 54 miles, in 10 hours 40 minutes, and his trip (again with Gelling) from Kiandra to the Hotel Kosciusko (about 60 miles) in 15 hours 50 minutes. It is highly unlikely that either of these latter feats will be equalled for years to come.

In 1930 he became a professional and was for some years a teacher at the Hotel. Later, with Mr. W. Reed, he opened the first indoor ski school in Australia and visited Japan to buy equipment for sale at the school.

Occasionally hot-headed and quick to anger he was, nevertheless, a faithful friend and the best of companions on the snow. We owe to him many of the beginnings of N.S.W. ski-ing standards and, more, an example of dour endurance typical of his countrymen. Since all of us remember George Aalberg as connected with our happier moments, we make no excuse for accompanying this article with the characteristic drawing of him by "Wep" and feel some certainty that thus he would like to be remembered.

