

Ski right up until you
can no longer walk
and have fun doing it.



SCOOTER

TEXT BY LYNSEY BURKE, PHOTOS COURTESY OF SCOOTER UNLESS OTHERWISE MENTIONED

PHOTO BY FRIDA VIKLUND

He's called Scooter. I'm not sure he'd even respond if you addressed him as Scott, or Mr. Reid for that matter.



Keeping a resume to one page isn't feasible for this ski professional. Through a conversation over a cup of black coffee and from behind an impressive beard, he expressed only the most humble musings on his career as a professional ski coach turned ski tech. Despite his accolades, Scooter admits that he is first and foremost a ski bum.

"I couldn't even begin to estimate the time I've sat on a chair lift," he quips. "[My career] has taken me around the world. Fun times. Hard times. Crazy times," he says in simple summary of his 30-year profession.

"As soon as I turned 18, I ran to the mountains," says Scooter, the Edmonton-raised boy whose life revolved heavily around sports, including football and of course — ski racing. "Ski racing was huge in the 80's," he tells me of the then highly accessible sport for young kids.



PHOTO BY FRIDA VIKLUND

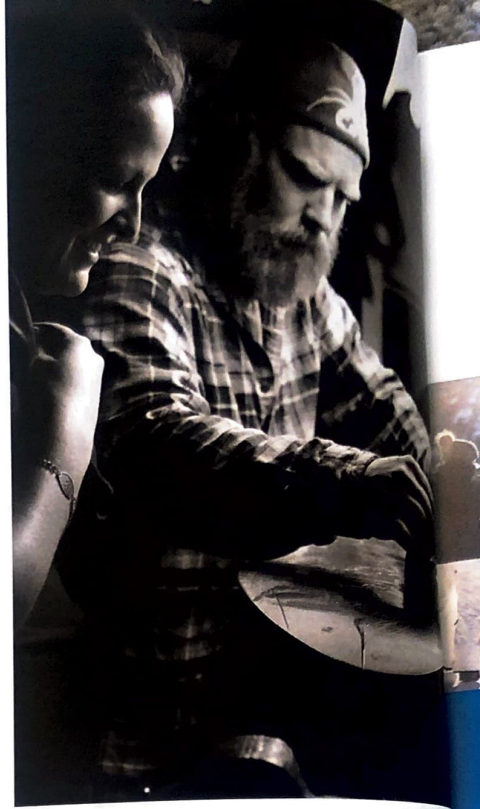
A career path was paved for this ski enthusiast before he could even conceive what direction might take him. With a degree in kinesiology, a background in ski racing and an obsession with such; his affinity for the lifestyle and knowledge of skis proved to be the magic formula that got him to the top, a place where he'd never really admit to having been.

Scooter was a ski coach for 15 years. With a primary goal to nurture the love of the lifelong sport of skiing, he'll teach whoever is ready and willing to learn and grow. There have been times where he's found himself reciting the art of the pizza stop to stumbling three-year-olds, and on the contrary, he's also worked with 'formula one' level Olympic athletes.

"I've been lucky enough in my career to work with Olympic champions — some of the best in the world. You can see traits in these athletes that would lead them to be the best in the world," he says, "Every coach instinctively sees talent. I've done it all, from the national team, to men, women, speed tech, ski cross, alpine, able body and Paralympics. I'm still quite involved, even with the local kids who have made the national team."

It's more than just ability. To be good, there has to be passion and desire. "You can't make it on one or the other," he says. "I'm not there to create passion, I'm there to facilitate it and hopefully I do that through my passion."





There is no single formula to coaching. In the wisdom and experience of someone who has been surrounded by the sport of skiing for 30 years, he's worn all of the hats; the hard hat, the soft hat and the sad hat (or shoulder to cry on rather).

Today, he wears the serviceman hat. I think it resembles a ball cap. Or maybe a toque. A toque seems more fitting.

"It's ironic that I became good at making skis go fast," he jokes of his transition from coach to tech. "It provides me a pretty unique view with working with skis."

After being hired on as a serviceman for five or six years, "People forgot that I was ever a ski coach." It's now been 15 years and he and wax – they have a pretty intimate relationship. "It's not rocket science, but it kind of is." On one pair of skis, Scooter might use 200 dollars worth of wax. "My wax box was worth 35,000 dollars. I need to have wax in my kit from -30 to 12 degrees, to low humidity and high humidity."

He compares the athlete/tech relationship to that of a pit mechanic. "For the coach, it's their athlete. For the serviceman, it's my pilot."

Scooter knows the science of skis. "You figure out how to make the best equipment, tune it for the athlete, the condition and the event(s)," he says. "The last thing said in a start gate is from me after I put them in their skis. I give them their final high five and translate what is radioed in by their coaches."

At one point in his career, he was looking after three athletes, and between them he had 75 pairs of skis to look after. "Technically, you could have a different pair of skis for every run," he says of the intricacies of skis.

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So yes, Scooter knows best. And while working abroad and at Olympic events has been life changing, the comfort of his own bed and proximity to his family has been keeping him closer to home. For the past five years he owned and operated Scooter's Service Shop, and today, he's closed that chapter and can be found servicing and talking skis at Black Dog Cycle & Ski in Kimberley.

Being closer to his 19-year-old son Tye, who is currently abroad, and his 16-year-old daughter Kianna, he's excited for the next chapter in his career. And while he's no longer working a ski training camp in Europe for 13 straight days in five different locations, his infatuation with the sport has never fallen flat. It was never for the glory, it has been, and still is, for the passion behind the two-plank sport.

"So often we forget that the fundamental principle of sport is play," he says. "Sport has evolved from play. We played around with something and created a sport about it. If people forget about the element of play, we've forgotten about something. When you're out for a round of golf, and it's not going well, focus on the play. That's why the best in the world still have fun."

If there's one takeaway here, it's to do as Scooter suggests, ski right up until you can no longer walk and have fun doing it. ■