

## SHOOT ALBERTA

by Linda Kupecek

Spring has been accompanied by a renaissance of feature activity in Alberta, with several projects close to production. In addition to out-of-province possibilities, one local production is said to be ready to go.

*Snowballs*, a \$1 million ski comedy will start shooting May 1 for four weeks, says producer Larry Ryckman of Calgary. He claims the film, financed entirely locally through private offerings, has all the money in place after a six-month effort. Ryckman lists the following personnel: Ray Arsenault (*King of Kensington*, etc.) as director; David Kelly (camera operator on *Return of the Jedi*) as D.O.P.; John Scott as production manager; Mike Baker as co-producer and 1st a.d.; Frank Griffiths on sound; and John Blackie as art director. Ryckman also named Neil Gordon, Alex Tadich, Michelle Stirling, Jim Woodland and himself as screenwriters, and Jackson Davies, Michael Scott and Celine Lockhart as major cast.

"*Snowballs* coincidentally rhymes with *Meatballs*" says Ryckman, saying it is intended to be a *Meatballs* or *Porky's* on skis, but "clean fun" with no nudity and a PG rating.

"This is one of the funniest scripts I've ever worked on", says writer Stirling, adding with a chuckle, "with the possible exception of my own project, *Studhorse Man*".

*Snowballs* plans to shoot for three weeks at Sunshine Village and one week in Calgary.

Alberta played major and minor roles in two recent segments of CBC's *For the Record* series. *Change of Heart*, a drama produced by Anne Frank and directed by Anne Wheeler of Edmonton, was shot on location in Vermilion. *Rough Justice*, a tough well-paced story about the maze of the legal system as it affects a young girl attacked by a child molester, was written by Calgary Herald writer Don Truckey, who once covered the court beat.

### Low-budget co-op

TORONTO - The Ontario Film Production Group, a non-profit coop created to assist filmmakers interested in low-budget production, is holding a membership drive.

The OFPG, founded in summer 1983 and run by Detlev Zagel and John Timmins, provides creative and technical resources, from people to production equipment.

For more information, contact the group in Toronto at 598-8119.

Nick Bakyta and Gayle Helfrick of Tinsel Media in Edmonton have *River of Bones* on course for a June shoot, with pre-production already in progress. Tinsel Media has also joined hands across the country in a co-production deal with Atlantis Films of Toronto. The two companies will co-produce two

thirteen-part series, one hour and one half-hour in length.

Wendy Wacko, producer of the award-winning *Challenge: the Canadian Rockies*, has been invited by the BBC to co-produce *Mountain Men*, part of a prestigious mini-series. Wacko Productions will be responsible for one hour to be shot in October '85. Meanwhile, Wacko has several projects cooking from her office in Jasper. *Striker's Mountain*, an adven-

ture series to be produced with the assistance of the AMPDC, Superchannel and CBC, is climbing towards a March '85 shoot. The Mary Shaffer project (a feature based on the Banff pioneer) which Wacko has had on the back burner for a number of years, has now taken priority as a spring '86 shoot. *Doris McCarthy: Heart of a Painter*, a one-hour docudrama, is being screened at Canada House in London, and *The Great Rocky Mountain Relay Race* will be broadcast

on CBC the first week in June.

The CAN PRO awards, held in Lethbridge, attracted over 200 people from stations across Canada. CFAC and CFCN-TV in Calgary, won three awards each... Meanwhile, the City of Calgary is debating the merits of hosting the Miss Universe pageant (to be broadcast on CFCN)... Rumours whisper that Merv Griffin may be a special guest at the 1984 Banff Television Festival, taping several shows at the event.

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