

Working title:

Tournament of Champions

“Winner’s Circle”

Design: Rob Buchanan

“What good is a town without a ski jump?”

World Champion Revelstoke ski jumper Nels Nelsen

Location: Pedestrian and Cycle access road to Mount Revelstoke National Park from Track Street (near the Railway Museum).

Artist Statement

Born in Norway, world-champion ski jumper Nels Nelsen sprang to fame on Suicide Hill in Mount Revelstoke National Park. He set four world records here in 1920, 1921, 1923, 1925. Ski-jumping, the original extreme skiing, was something that most kids in Revelstoke did in their spare time. By the 1920’s, girls and ladies were also jumping competitively on the ‘Big Hill’. Locals flew off the A-Jump even when it intimidated international competitors. In 1950, the first Tournament of Champions was held in Revelstoke. Over the next 24 years, this event would attract thousands of spectators and international competitors from as far away as Norway, Finland, Sweden, Germany, Italy, USA, Austria, Switzerland and Japan.

Revelstoke is the home of Canada’s only world ski jump records and is the original home of Canada’s oldest continually operating ski club.

The design for the Tournament of Champions “Winner’s Circle” introduces and celebrates Revelstoke’s rich history with international ski-jumping. A semi-circle has been excavated from the deactivated road-bed leading to the jump site. The walls of the circle are rock and mortar to mirror the historic construction of the A and B jump at the Nels Nelsen Historic Site. Red cobblestones provide the surface treatment for the Winner’s Circle and create a consistent look and link with the cobblestone elements of Grizzly Plaza. Ten colourful flags from the ten participating countries flank the upper perimeter of the circle and are clearly visible from the Railway Museum and Victoria Road and act as a lure to the site and a connection for our town with international visitors. On each pole is a small interpretive panel telling short histories of the competitors from each respective flag. Two larger interpretive panels within the circle introduce stories of the Tournament of Champions - this internationally significant event where daring jumps were launched and records were smashed.

At the centre of the semi-circle, a large shiny stainless steel sculpture on a concrete plinth also acts as a lure to the site. Simple in form, the sculpture is based on balance. From a centre point of gravity, the piece goes in two directions, cantilevered but equalized by opposing weights. The piece is ambiguous: it is a ski jump, it is the trajectory of flight, it is the two skis and imagined presence of a competitor, it is a trophy, a three-dimensional representation of the balance required to fly without wings. The plinth has two angles to echo the two transition slopes or landing areas of the A and B Jump.

Wrapping around the circle is a bike path. This also serves as a wheelchair accessible route to the top of the site. Stairs from within the circle enable casual walkers and hikers to gain the upper level. The Tournament of Champions “Winner’s Circle” functions as a gateway to both a story - the colourful history of ski jumping in Revelstoke - and a place - Mount Revelstoke National Park and the Nels Nelsen Historic Site.



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Tournament of Champions "Winner's Circle"

Artist Concept - scale approximate

Design: Rob Buchanan



Tournament of Champions

1950 -1974

Participating countries (represented by their flag):

Canada, USA, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Japan, Italy, Germany
(missing in the model but to be added: Austria, Switzerland)





Proposed Stainless Steel Sculpture
Working Title: Flying Without Wings
The two slopes of the plinth represent the landing transitions of both the A Jump and the B Jump.