

STYLE

Nyman wears a suit by **BCBG ATTITUDE**, \$595; shirt by **J. CREW**, \$65; cardigan by **RALPH LAUREN PURPLE LABEL**, \$895; watch by **HAMILTON**, \$3,995; skis, boots, and bindings, all by **FISCHER**; poles by **SWIX**. Shave products: **EDGE VAULT** shave gel.




At the 2006 Winter Games, when Bode was going on all-night benders, the rest of the U.S. Ski Team did what they do best: collected hardware. These days Miller's on his own, reliable Rahlves is out to pasture, and the next generation of American skiers is rushing into the spotlight — and making these khaki suits for spring look good.

THE TEAM ERIC

text by
EVELYN SPENCE
photographs by
DYLAN COULTER
fashion by
PATTI O'BRIEN


THE ORIGINAL *Steven Nyman* Before he was picked for the 2002 Junior World Championships, where he won the slalom wearing "1990s stretch pants," Nyman had never been invited to a team camp. "They thought I was this stoner kid," says the 26-year-old. "But I'm a Mormon boy from Utah!" Point taken. Nyman, who grew up at Robert Redford's Sundance resort (his father ran the ski school, his mother was an instructor), used to mow the actor's lawn and skateboard down his driveway. These days, his team nickname is Planet Provo, because, he says, "I'm in my own world sometimes." His other nickname: the Albatross. At a lanky six-feet-four, with a technique that team coach Phil McNichol calls "loose and hectic," the downhill specialist can seem all over the place. But it works for him. Last season, in Val Gardena, Italy, Nyman won his first World Cup downhill, and this December he nabbed second place at Birds of Prey in Beaver Creek, Colorado — one of the toughest downhills.





Ligety wears a suit by **CALVIN KLEIN COLLECTION**, \$1,150; sweater by **BANANA REPUBLIC**, \$68; shirt by **GAP**, \$40; skis, boots, bindings, and poles, all by **ROSSIGNOL**. Moisturizer: **ANTHONY LOGISTICS FOR MEN** Action High-Performance Moisturizer.

THE COMPETITOR *Ted Ligety* You'd think that an Olympic gold might go to a guy's head, but Ligety, 23, who won the combined in Turin in 2006, decided that new hardware was no reason to change his aw-shucks style. "When my head's getting a little big, my old friends take me down a notch," he says. On skis since age two in Park City, Utah, Ligety worked his way up on local teams, but it wasn't until he saw Tommy Moe win the downhill at the 1994 Olympics in Lillehammer that he realized that ski racing was his calling. "Before that, every single sport I played, I wanted to be a professional in it," he says. Just two years ago Ligety didn't even have a headgear sponsor (his helmet read "Mom and Dad"), and he was considered a specialist in slalom — a slower, more technical discipline — with a wild style. "You're not going 80, but there are gates every 6/10ths of a second, and you have to lay it on the line every turn," he says. Thanks to the confidence slalom gave him, he has one eye on a World Cup title. The other is on winning a \$50 bet that he won't cut his hair until after the national championships in March ("It's my aerodynamic mud flap," he says). But he's not all laid-back all the time. According to McNichol, Ligety's a killer competitor: "We call him Race Day Ted for a reason," he says.



Macartney wears a suit by GANT, \$795; vest by PERRY ELLIS, \$80; shirt by JOHN VARVATOS, \$245; skis, boots, and bindings, all by NORDICA; poles by SWIX. Hairstyling product: PAUL MITCHELL Tea Tree Hair and Body Moisturizer.

Spencer wears a suit, \$1,295, tie, \$115, and shirt, \$145, all by POLO RALPH LAUREN; skis, boots, and bindings, all by ATOMIC; poles by SWIX. Moisturizer: LAB SERIES SKINCARE FOR MEN Daily Defense Lotion.

THE SCHOLAR *Scott Macartney* “When you’re going downhill at 80 miles per hour you pull a lot of G-forces,” says 30-year-old Macartney. “Your legs are screaming. You can pick up your feet and put them back down — and you’ve traveled 100 feet.” But Scotty Mac, who grew up skiing at Crystal Mountain in Washington, where his mom and dad were volunteer ski patrollers, is as much a thinker as a no-holds-barred racer. He has a degree in economics from Dartmouth and looks at courses as a tactician, deliberating ahead of time about each gate and corner. “There are some hills that are just plain dangerous, where you stand at the top and think, *I give myself a 70 percent chance of making it*,” he says. “That means you just have to be really smart in how you attack them. I’ve finally figured out all the little things and secrets, if you will, of each course to be faster.” It’s hard to argue with results. At the Turin Winter Games, Macartney, whose nickname is Leisure, due to a slight punctuality problem, came within 3/10ths of a second of a bronze in the super-G. *By [unreadable]*



THE MIRACLE MAN *Dane Spencer* Spencer's life can be divided into two parts: everything that came before Launch Pad and everything that came after. The Boise native, who was the number one skier for his age when he made the U.S. Ski Team at 16, spent some 10 years on the team, which included a 16th place in the GS at the 2002 Olympics. But when he flew wildly off that aptly named jump in February 2006, while competing in a Whitefish, Montana, downhill race, his world fell apart. Spencer crashed, breaking his C2 vertebra in four places, fracturing his pelvis, and blowing out a lung. He lost six and a half out of the eight units of blood in his body, and doctors estimated he had a 98 percent chance of dying or living as a quadriplegic. "I drew the short straw, and then I was real lucky," says Spencer, 31. After

spinal fusion surgery, a host of titanium plates and screws, a huge weight drop (from 198 pounds to 165), and just nine months of rehab, he was back on skis. "Mentally, I needed to know if I even wanted to do it anymore," he says. He did. "When you're on the slopes, there's such freedom. You have control of your destiny." This past October he returned to competition in a World Cup giant slalom in Sölden, Austria. "I was scared," he says. "I just wanted to get past that first time and start skiing for real. You can be content with 'just finishing' for only so long." Still Spencer, who used to rely on intensity more than technical skill, is taking things a bit more slowly. "I've skied all my life, so it's easy to get stuck in a box," he says. "This whole experience could be great for my performance. I just have to get past the fear."



THE NATURAL *Marco Sullivan* U.S. Ski Team members are on the road some eight months a year, which means a lot of time in hotel rooms. For Sullivan this means a lot of time playing *Guitar Hero*. The obsession “started when I broke my heels last fall in Chile and was on crutches for two weeks,” he says. “Now I travel with it.” Sullivan, 27, a downhill and super-G specialist, made the team right out of high school, near Lake Tahoe, California. After three big injuries and a bunch of top 10s, he posted his best career result last November when he took second place in a World Cup event in Lake Louise, Alberta. “It was great to get that monkey off my back,” he says. Known for his smooth, natural technique, Sully is simply in love with barreling down mountains. “I have 10 downhill races and 10 super-Gs a year, and that’s my outlet for a whole year of training. I have 40 minutes to exhibit my talent, and I can never wait to do it again. Most people say, ‘You’re a downhiller? You’re nuts.’ I say the fear keeps you honest.”



THE SOUL OF A MOUNTAIN

Sullivan wears a jacket, \$325, and pants, \$108, both by **BANANA REPUBLIC**; zip-up jacket by **GAP**, \$58; T-shirt by **EARNEST SEWN**, \$62; watch by **HUGO BOSS**, \$355; skis, boots, and bindings, all by **NORDICA**; poles by **SWIX**. Moisturizer: **ZIRH DEFEND**.

Associate fashion editor: **BRYNN CARHART**. Production by **JESSIE LEVOY**. Makeup and hair by **DEE SANDELLA**. Grooming for Ted Ligety by **MICHELLE MONEY FOR TALENT MANAGEMENT GROUP, INC.** Ligety photographed at **DEER VALLEY RESORT** (deer-valley.com), Park City, Utah. Nyman, Macartney, Spencer, and Sullivan photographed at **THE CIRQUE, COPPER MOUNTAIN RESORT** (coppercolorado.com), Colorado. For more information, see *Where to Buy*, page 128.

JAMES HALE ALWAYS PLAYED AN IMPASSIONED ROLE IN THE LIFE OF MOUNTAIN SKIERS. His passion for the sport was evident in 1976, when he was part of the first team to win the World Cup in the giant slalom. He was also a pioneer in the development of the modern ski binding, and he was instrumental in the creation of the first ski resort in the United States. His story is a testament to the power of passion and the pursuit of excellence in a sport that has become a global phenomenon.