

UNITED STATES BIATHLON ASSOCIATION

Hall of Fame

PETER KARNIS

Pete Karnis grew up skiing four events in Jackson, WY and began competing in the Intermountain Ski Association in 1955, quickly accumulating several championship titles in slalom, downhill, jumping and cross-country as well as Skimeister. He continued to excel at the University of Utah where he won collegiate events in slalom, giant slalom and cross-country. At the NCAA Championships he finished 3rd in the Skimeister rankings in 1965, 4th in the cross-country event and 2nd in the Skimeister in 1966, which earned him All America recognition. In 1967, Pete finished 3rd in the U.S. Cross Country National Championship 15 k event.



Following graduation from college, Pete entered the army and was assigned to the Modern Winter Biathlon Training Center at Ft Richardson, AK. He quickly established himself as the top biathlete of his era winning the National Championships in 1970 and 1972. Internationally, he was typically the top American, finishing 2nd in the 1969 Swiss Biathlon Championship and 2nd in the 1970 Swedish Biathlon Championships. He was a member of the 1969 Biathlon World Championships team in Zakopane, Poland as well as the 1970 World Championships in Ostersund, Sweden. Pete's most impressive biathlon results were at the Sapporo Olympic Games in 1972. Despite the suspended start, cancelation, and rescheduling of the individual event due to a

freak snow squall, Pete finished 14th overall, an Olympic result which equaled and remained an American record for decades. In the Sapporo biathlon relay, Pete contributed to a 6th place finish, which remains the top American result in that event to this day.

After retiring from international competition, Pete continued to contribute to the sport as National Team coach. He coached U.S. Teams to the World Championships from 1973 through 1975 as well as the 1976 Innsbruck Olympic Team. Concurrently, he was coaching junior biathletes in his hometown of Jackson, WY and in 1973, his junior athletes swept the podium at the National Junior Championships. Two of his athletes, Martin Hagen and Rusty Scott were the first U.S. juniors at the World Championships and went on to international biathlon success. Beyond competing and coaching, Pete has continued to serve the sport representing biathlon on the U.S. Olympic Committee from 1973-76, served as Chief of Timing for the biathlon events at the 1980 Olympics in Lake Placid and, was the Chief of Forerunners for the biathlon events at the 2002 Salt Lake Winter Olympics.