

# UNITED STATES BIATHLON ASSOCIATION

## Hall of Fame

### WALTER WILLIAMS

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Walter Williams became interested in biathlon upon the graduation of his son Edward, a Dartmouth collegiate skier and national cross-country ski champion in 1964. Upon entering the military, he was assigned to the U.S Army's Biathlon Training Center (USMWBTC). Walter owned and operated a resort hotel in Rosendale, New York, which was a vibrant center of cross-country skiing and ski jumping. He was principal figure in the Rosendale Nordic Ski Club which hosted numerous competitions. After he suggested to the army that he host a national championship for biathlon he discovered that no previous championships had taken place and other than that of the U.S. Army, no organizational authority or structure existed for biathlon in the United States. The absence of a national federation manifested itself further when Charles Kellogg, and Ford Hubbard, both who had recently left the Army's USMWBTC and competed in the first National Biathlon Championships as civilians captured 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place but were unable to participate in the World Biathlon Championships because the army could not provide funding for civilian athletes.

As he prepared for hosting the first U.S. National Biathlon Championships in 1965 without any



real sanctioning guidance, he started from the beginning by organizing and developing the infrastructure for what would become an annual championship, bringing together interested parties, which highlighted the need to develop a guiding authority for the sport. Once the National Ski Association declined to accept biathlon under its control, Walter saw the sport as primarily military and became involved with the United States Pentathlon Association (USMPA) which was the organizational authority for pentathlon, another military sport with a training center at Ft. Sam Houston in Texas. As the International Modern Pentathlon and Biathlon (UIPMB) was the international governing body for the two sports, it seemed logical to him to follow the same path. Joining the

USMPA and becoming a member of its Board of Directors he eventually helped to facilitate acceptance of biathlon and becoming the USMPBA.

When Walter's attempts to convince the U.S. Army to continue its support and consider alternate options following the 1973 decision to close its training center at Ft. Richardson failed, he encouraged the National Guard's interest, and helped to arrange for the transfer of the Army program to the Vermont National Guard and supported the development of a biathlon training site at Jericho, Vermont.

With the 1978 passage of the Amateur Sports Act by the Federal government, Walter took the lead, along with his son Edward, outlining the 10 steps necessary to accomplish compliance of separation and goals of independence. Once final approvals for recognition as a 501 (C) (3) "Not for Profit Corporation" by the State of New York and the IRS were secured, the independent United States Biathlon Association achieved sole jurisdiction for biathlon by the UIPMB in 1981. For his remarkable role in establishing the National Championships and the formation of U.S. Biathlon Association he is honored as a member of the USBA Hall of Fame.