



United States Biathlon Association

Hall of Fame

Andrew M. Shepard

As a high school ski racer in Yarmouth, ME, Andy Shepard dreamt of the U.S. Ski Team and the Winter Olympic Games. For a while, he chased the cross-country circuit, living out of his car, trying to work his way up the results sheets. When it became apparent to him that willpower and dedication wasn't enough, he took a job with a ski-racing equipment business, which eventually led to a position as L. L. Bean's product manager for a number of their outdoor businesses.

In the spring of 1992, the U.S. Biathlon Team was desperately seeking corporate sponsorships. Although L. L. Bean had never before sponsored any team, the company was such a force in the outdoor recreation market, including shooting sports, that USBA representatives felt it was worth a try. To their surprise and delight, Andy Shepard confirmed to his supervisors that the sponsorship had merit, both for the biathlon team and L.L. Bean. Andy became Bean's liaison to the team, resulting in a ten-year relationship between the company and USBA that provided the team with hundreds of thousands of dollars-worth of financial support, clothing, custom-made competitive gear and exposure to millions of recipients of the L.L. Bean catalog.

In 1992 Andy was asked to serve on the USBA Board of Directors. He soon recognized that the structure and organization of the board, as well as inadequate funding was undermining the international progress of our athletes. He then began the long and challenging task of completely modernizing the organizational structure of the USBA, including recruiting new members to the USBA board, installing new staff leadership, dramatically increasing the funding of the team, reorganizing the support staff, relocating the office to Pineland Farms in Maine and in the process, establishing a new level of recognition and financial support of biathlon from the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee.

In 1999, Andy led the innovative effort to create and fund what became the Maine Winter Sports Center in Aroostook County. The MWSC ultimately included two world class competition venues and dozens of Nordic trails adjacent to schools throughout the County. During his 21 years leading the MWSC, Andy raised over 48 million dollars for MWSC initiatives and oversaw three Biathlon World Cup events, two Biathlon Junior World Championships and several biathlon and cross-country North American Championships, U.S. National Championships and regional championships. It was estimated that these events created a 60 million-dollar economic impact in Aroostook County. In addition, athletes attracted to train at the MWSC as well as local

competitors developed by the program, eventually included seventeen biathlon Winter Olympians.

For more than three decades, Andy Shepard has tirelessly devoted his time, energy and perhaps most significantly, his organizational skills toward transforming the USBA into a model sport governing body in the opinion of the USOPC and the most successful non-European member of the International Biathlon Union. For his essential role in elevating the capabilities and expectations of the USBA which has resulted in impressive international results by our athletes, Andy is welcomed into the Hall of Fame class of 2019.