

UNITED STATES BIATHLON ASSOCIATION

Hall of Fame

WILLIAM A. (BILL) SPENCER

While attending high school in Utah, Bill spent his weekends skiing at Brighton and joined the Junior ROTC where he began competitive shooting. He later joined the Utah National Guard and attended the University of Utah, representing the Utah National Guard in national shooting competitions and the ski team at the University where he achieved a best finish of 6th place in the 1959 NCAA cross-country ski championships.



His interest in biathlon began when hitchhiked to Squaw Valley to participate in the North American Biathlon Championships and the Olympic tryouts in 1959. Determined to continue with biathlon he joined the U.S. Army, spending the early part of his military career at the USMWBTC in Alaska. He was a two-time national champion and participant at both the Innsbruck and Grenoble Winter Olympic games finishing in 30th and 37th places.

Immediately following his participation in the 1968 Olympic Games, as an Army officer he was assigned to Vietnam and arrived there just after the legendary Tet offensive. He later served in Germany and was temporarily released from his second tour in Vietnam to be the team leader at the 1972 Sapporo Olympic Games. Ending a 21-year career in the military as a Lieutenant Colonel, that included becoming the first Director of the National Guard Biathlon program, Bill essentially became one of the U.S. Biathlon's long-time coaches mostly focusing on the range and shooting. He served on the USBA Board of Directors for many years and was the first American elected to UIMPB/IBU Biathlon Technical Committee, serving until mandatory retirement as age 60. An athlete, long-time coach and team leader at more than seven Olympic Games, he also played a major role at the Salt Lake City Games in 2002. For competitive career and his early leadership role in the sport, both in the U.S. and internationally, Bill is welcomed in the US Biathlon Hall of Fame.