

#100
Richard Movitz

Born: 1927

Richard “Dick” Movitz was born in Utah in 1927, and was one of a new breed of daredevil young skiers who emerged from the armed forces after World War II.

Following World War II, Private First Class Dick Movitz won the National Slalom Championships at Franconia, New Hampshire, on March 3, 1946. A 19-year-old on 60-day special leave from the Air Force’s Arctic Training School in Northwestern Canada, Movitz also picked up 6th spot in alpine combined, having placed 13th in the opening downhill race against a field of 89 competitors. The *American Ski Annual* reported: “Richard Movitz running the course in a sort of jack rabbit style of 50 percent in the air and the balance in fast motion weaving through the flags to secure an undisputed 1st place of 1:40.4, followed by the smooth artists of the slalom Barney McLean in 1:43.5 and Toni Matt in 1:44.1.”

The only other starring newcomer youngster that day was Canada’s Harvey Clifford, who placed 3rd in combined and, like Movitz, would go on to international ski fame as youth began to take over the sport on both sides of the border.

Army Private Movitz, whose competitive career had begun in 1938 as a racer for the Little Kandahar Ski Club and a hickory flier at the Utah Ski Club’s famed Ecker Hill, reached Franconia fresh from Steamboat Springs, Colorado, where he had rides of 200 and 205 feet, good enough to place 11th in the Class “B” division of the Nationals. Down the trails were more events, each in its own way leading toward the F.I.S. World Championships of 1950 in Aspen, Colorado, and the 1960 Winter Olympics in California’s Squaw Valley.

Dick soon had swept the downhill, slalom and combined of the Reno Ski Club’s famous Silver Dollar Derby and California Ski Association championships. During the Alta Cup Races, Dick placed 2nd in combined to Canada’s veteran open-class Johnny Fripp. During that era the Alta Cup was three-way, with Movitz winning the giant slalom, placing 4th in slalom and 9th in downhill.



Silver Dollar Derby Winner

Enrolled at the University of Utah, Movitz in 1947 won the National Collegiate Athletic Association slalom championship and, of course, was a member of his school’s championship team. During the 1947 Nationals at Snow Basin, Utah, only Switzerland’s Karl Molitor outdid Dick in the slalom.

Many other alpine racing wins would be lashed to Dick’s belt – and then would come participation in the 1948 Winter Olympics at St. Moritz, Switzerland, and the F.I.S. World Championships of 1950 in Aspen.

Dick became one of the youngest alpine officials ever when the National Ski Association tabbed him to serve the International Competition Committee during 1956, 1957, and 1958. Serving as a member of the 1960 Olympic Committee was another honor for him.

Richard Movitz was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1970.