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**Arthur Tokle**  
Born: 1922

*During the early days of his North American jumping career, Art Tokle suffered unfair comparison to his late brother Torger, but later proved he was a great jumper in his own right by winning the United States National Championships in 1951 and 1953.*

This ski jumping great arrived in America at the age of 25 from his native Norway in 1947 and, like so many others who entered at the Port of New York, made his competitive debut at Bear Mountain's 50-meter hill and was immediately recognized as class.

During early days of his North American jumping career, Art suffered from unfair comparisons to his late brother Torger, who before being killed in action while serving with the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division during World War II in Italy had blazed a starry trail across America's jumping scene in the early 1940's.

Nonetheless, Art Tokle stands out as an aggressive competitor completely in his own right and careful scrutiny of the record substantiates it. In a number of instances he broke records which had been established by Torger and to this day still holds a Norwegian Ski Hill record at Fox River Grove, Illinois. Art Tokle's brilliant accomplishments made him national champion in 1951 and 1953 and earned him a berth on the 1952 Olympic team.

A further tribute to his technical skill and fierce spirit can be seen in the fact he again made the United States Olympic team in 1960 at the age of 38, beating men many years his junior to the berth. His competence was never spotty through any one season as he fought and won berths on the 1950, 1954, and 1958 F.I.S. American ski teams. But, above all, Art Tokle was a colorful and exciting competitor during a colorful and exciting period in American ski jumping.

The tourneys in which he competed with the like of Art Devlin and Mezzy Barber thrilled countless thousands. Like Devlin and Barber, he may have taken his jumping seriously but never himself.

In another vein, Art Tokle is also part of a different outstanding trio. He, along with his brother Torger and Art Devlin, made up the only three-time winners of the winged Trophy of the Brattleboro Outing Club. Further dedication to ski sport lies in the fact that Art Tokle served on the United States Ski Association's coaching staff from 1960 to 1968. In 1964 he was special jumping coach during the Olympics in Austria, in 1966 he performed the same duty for the F.I.S. squad at Oslo, Norway, and 1968 saw him with the jumping team for the Olympics in France.

At one point of Tokle's career, he posted 19 straight wins at Bear Mountain. His technical skills carried him beyond the reach of competitors who had the advantage of youth. This same technical skill prevailed again over age when he took up ski flying for the initial time in Norway at the age of 38. However, Art Tokle considered his finest season that which netted him 12 wins out of 13 tourneys – this when he was 40 years old.

In the ultimate end, one must also consider the person and his personal affairs in life since they directly affect performance. He married Oddfried Larsen in 1948 and together they have raised two fine children, Vivian and Arthur, Jr., during the father's outstanding record of athletic achievement. In looking at Art Tokle unemotionally one cannot help but to say, "There stands one helluva man!"

Arthur Tokle was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1970.

