

#11 Andrea Mead Lawrence

Born: 1932



Andrea Mead Lawrence is truly one of the outstanding sportswomen in the annals of United States sports history. She held a brilliant slate of alpine records at all levels of competition. Her greatest single skiing accomplishment was a double gold medal performance at the slalom and giant slalom races.

Andrea Mead Lawrence was born April 19, 1932, in Rutland, Vermont. Her father and mother, Brad and Janet Mead, moved from New York as a young couple with a dream founding a ski area in the Rutland area. Their dream turned into the fine ski area, Pico Peak. Pico Peak was Andrea's home ground, and under the guidance of her father, she was on skis about the same time she learned to walk.

At age 10, she was ready for competition, particularly after her father died in September 1942.

Pico Peak continued to prosper under the watchful eye of Andrea's mother, a strong, well-organized woman, and although times

were difficult, Pico Peak continued to grow. Many a serviceman remembers Pico during World War II because they were all invited guests. The equipment was provided for them at no charge.

In 1948, Andrea, age 15, was the youngest member of the United States Women's Alpine Olympic Team, securing a place on that team by winning the slalom tryouts in Sun Valley, Idaho, at age 14. This was the first year Andrea won a major event, that being the 14th Olympic tryouts. This put her on the team, and although her results at St. Moritz were overshadowed by teammate Gretchen Fraser's gold medal in the Olympic Slalom, and silver in the Alpine Combined. Andrea's 8th place in the slalom, 21st place in the Alpine Combined, and 35th place in the downhill after a fall, made her a definite threat for 1952. After all, she was only 15 years old and in her first international competition of any major proportion. Andrea did take a second place in the Arlberg-Kandahar Slalom Race, Chamonix, France, that year and received the prestigious Arlberg-Kandahar pin, one of the highlights of her skiing career.

In 1949, the nationals and the F.I.S. tryouts were held at Whitefish, Montana, and Andrea won the tryouts in all three events, as well as her first national championship. She was on the 1950 F.I.S. team, and the stage was now set for her claim to skiing fame. Oslo, Norway, was the site of the 1952 Winter Olympics where Andrea won two gold medals, one in the special slalom, and the second in the giant slalom, with a 17th place finish in the downhill, a feat never accomplished by an American in skiing before or since.

Andrea Mead married Dave Lawrence on March 13, 1951, at Davos, Switzerland, after a very successful ski season in Europe placing 1st in 10 races and 2nd in 4. Subsequently she gave birth to 5 children, 3 daughters and 2 sons.

The 1956 ski season again found Andrea in the quest for an Olympic berth on the U.S. Olympic team at Cortina, Italy. She made the team and skied the three events, placing 4th in the giant slalom, 25th in the slalom, and 30th in the downhill, a respectable showing for a career spanning three Olympiads.

Andrea remained active in the sport after deciding to stop competitive skiing. She helped Dave coach at a national training camp, and she represented the United States at two F.I.S. Congresses in 1950 and 1954 on the Ladies Committee. Perhaps a most fitting climax to a brilliant ski career was the honor awarded her to ski the Olympic flame to light the Olympic torch at the Squaw Valley Olympics in 1960 as thousands of people watched and applauded. This was a scene sure to bring tears to this grand lady's eyes.

Andrea Mead Lawrence was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1958.

