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**Sverre Engen**  
Born: 1911 Died: 2001

*Sverre Engen gained stature as a jumping competitor, instructor, writer, resort operator and consultant, pioneer in the study of avalanche control, and maker of ski movies. His versatile skiing background has never been equaled by anyone.*

Sverre Engen is perhaps among the last of a colorful generation of Norwegian immigrants to the United States who have been so deeply enshrined in romantic history of skiing of their adopted country, over four decades to gain stature to be among the permanent members of the Ski Hall of Fame.

Nijondalem was his birthplace where at the age of six he won his first ski trophy in 1917. At 14 years of age he developed a yen, as his brother Alf did, to come to America. However, he had to wait until 1929 to get his visa, and join his brother. Working diligently, he gained his final citizenship papers in 1936.

Although skiing had been Sverre's way of life in Norway, he did not expect to continue this kind of career in America. Fate ruled otherwise. Responding to the irresistible call of the slopes and to the companionship of his buddies, he entered the jumping competitions that were just getting under way in the United States, to the thrill and applause of thousands of enthusiastic fans of this new American Sport.

During his first winter in this country, Sverre won both the Class "B" Central Championship and the Norge tournament in Chicago, and placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in National jumping in Canton, North Dakota.

In the years that followed, as a member of the professional group, Sverre was without a doubt one of the top competitors, finishing at or near the top in most of the meets. His most cherished cup was the Norge Ski Club medal which he won in 1937 for skiing first place in Class "A".

In 1937 he purchased and developed Snow Valley in the San Bernardino Mountains of Southern California, which he operated for three years as the newest and most popular ski resort of this region. Snow Valley grew by



*Sverre Engen, Alta, Utah, 1945*



leaps and bounds under his skillful direction. He then sold out to a large Hollywood developer and returned to Salt Lake City, Utah, his home since coming to America. After serving his country during World War II in the Norwegian Battalion of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, he also was approved to teach professional ski instructors under the G.I. Bill. He had among his students some of the early top ski instructors.

Sverre Engen was elected to the National Ski Hall of Fame in 1973.