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Nels Nelsen
Born: 1894 Died: 1943

An advocate of pure amateurism all his life, Nels Nelsen did his best to keep both the Canadian Amateur Ski Association and the National Ski Association strictly amateur organizations. Nelsen recognized that as "professionalism" took hold within the National Ski Association, if it continued unchecked, would tear the organization apart, and it nearly did!

Nels Nelsen was a top-rated jumper in the nineteen twenties. A native of Revelstoke, British Columbia, Canada, Nels set a world distance record of 240 feet on the hill at Revelstoke in 1925. Nelsen competed at ski jumping meets all over North America during the twenties, including the National Ski Association National Jumping Tournaments at Brattleboro, Vermont in 1924; and Denver, Colorado, in 1927.

Nelsen was very active in the affairs of the Canadian Amateur Ski Association from its inception in 1921, and his influence extended into the states of Washington and Oregon. A strict amateur all his life, Nels was an advocate of pure amateurism within the National Ski Association.

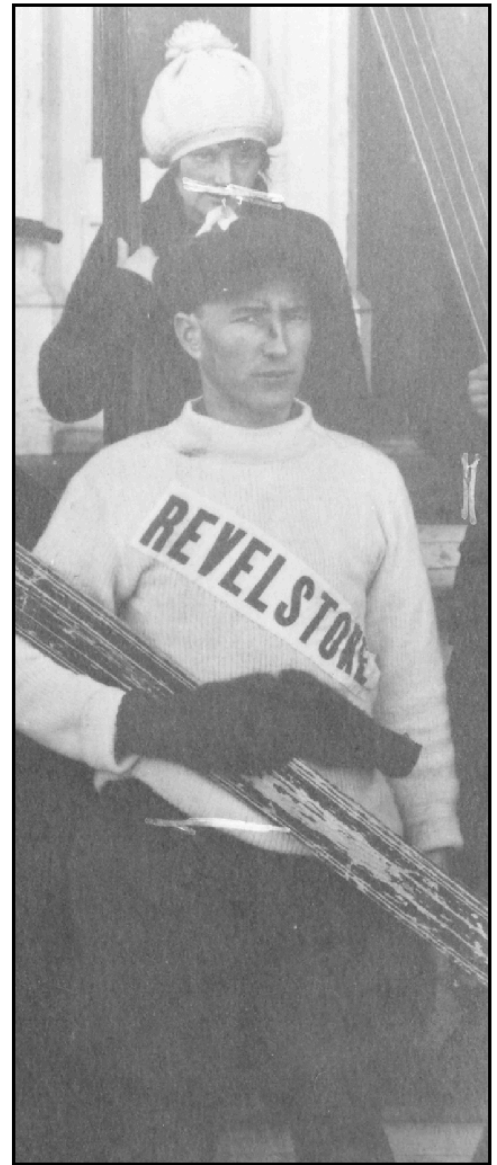
Nels was a coach and teacher of skiing in the British Columbia and Quebec Provinces, always as an amateur, his love of young people his only incentive. Nels recognized that professionalism within the National Ski Association was going to tear the Association apart if it continued unchecked, and this was the reason he was so much against the

professional ranks as they were set up within the National Ski Association.

Nels Nelsen was a positive influence on skiing in Western Canada and the Western United States, even before the founding of the Pacific Northwest Ski Association. Some of his rules were what the Pacific Northwest Ski Association based their constitution on when it was formed in 1930.

Nelsen and his friend, fellow jumper Ragnar Omtvedt, representing the Norge Ski Club of Chicago, worked together with the Canadian Amateur Ski Association to construct the big hill at the Mount Revelstoke National Park, which was later named in the honor of Nels Nelsen.

Nels Nelsen died in 1943, at age forty-nine in Revelstoke. Although his enthusiasm was sorely missed, his innovations and influence on skiing remains to this day. He was a true sportsman in every sense of the word. Nels was a most popular ski athlete and ski sport builder, perhaps Canada's most influential. For his service to skiing on both sides of the border, Nels Nelsen was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1971.



*E. Dickey, Revelstoke – B.C.
Nels Nelsen, Center, March 5, 1940*