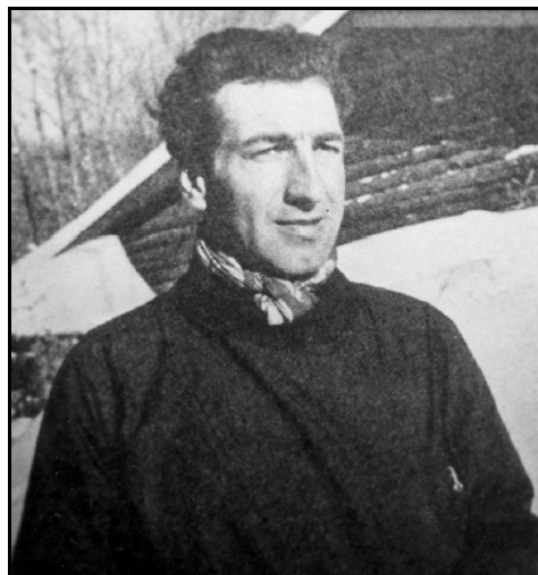


#128
Fred Iselin

Born: 1914 Died: 1971

Fred first put on skis at the age of four, and skied to school as a youngster. He rapidly learned the fundamentals and soon became an accomplished performer.

The late Fred Iselin introduced thousands of Americans to ski sport in the wake of a downhill racing career of formidable proportions for Europe and North America in the years preceding World War II. North America's most-famous alpine competitions knew Fred-the Far West Kandahar, the Harriman Cups, the FIS International Championships of 1939 in California, the Silver Skis at Mt. Ranier and many others. Then came ski teaching and directorships of ski schools; first under Otto Lang at Sun Valley and then in the post World War II era as co-director of the Aspen Ski School and Buttermilk Mountain Ski School and then his own ski school at Aspen Highlands. For Fred Iselin it was fine all the way.



The Ski Hall of Fame Committee is indebted to Otto Lang, former Sun Valley Ski School Director turned motion picture maker, for a warmly moving eulogy of Fred:

It is hard to think of Fred Iselin without a chuckle and a warm feeling on one's heart.

He had the rare ability to make light of a seemingly serious situation, with his inimitable turn of a phrase or one of those patented expressive looks or gestures that only Fred could produce.

I considered him a "natural" as a comedian and, next to skiing, acting in front of a camera was his passion. With the right type of material and proper direction, Fred could have been in a league with Fernandle and Peter Sellers.

As to his prowess as a skier, let me assure you it was formidable. I have seen Fred slice through a thick crust of treacherous snow, or a gooey spring mush, as though it was fluffy powder snow or the manicured and packed slopes of Highland Mountain in Aspen.

He was a forceful skier with a pair of the strongest legs I have known. But he also was wise and very cunning in dealing with different types of snow and terrain.

He put all his thoughts down in a book entitled "Invitation to Skiing." It clearly explains everything there is to know about skiing and now is in its fourth printing.

Fred came from a skiing family. His father, Christopher Iselin, was the founder of the Swiss Alpine Troops.

Born in 1914 in Glarus, Fred was surrounded by mountains. It was only natural that he would follow in his father's footsteps and take to snow and skis like a duckling takes to water naturally. He was exposed to a dose of higher education in the world-famous Rosay School for Boys at Zouz. His tenure as a lieutenant in the Swiss army did not last long. Fred was not a militaristic type of man.

In 1939 Fred came to the United States as a guest and personal skiing companion of an American couple who happened to reside in Yosemite National Park. But shortly thereafter Fred surfaced in Idaho's Sun Valley and became one of the top instructors. Then onto Aspen following World War II – to create a large following among the skiers of the past two decades.

During the shooting of his last film in the Swiss Alps, Fred took a vicious fall and injured himself quite severely. After a lengthy and painful recuperation period he appeared at last well on his way to complete recovery of his physical strength when an embolism suddenly snuffed out his life at the age of 57.

Fred had decided to retire from ski teaching and "live it up." Alas, it was not to be. Fred was truly a legend in his time. He will be sorely missed by all his friends, and even by the few enemies he might have had, as they have lost a priceless foil in Fred's often controversial ideas on skiing and teaching.

Fred Iselin was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1972.

