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## E. O. "Buck" Erickson

Born: ? Died: 1974

*E.O. "Buck" Erickson was the Sports Editor for The Iron Mountain News, and served as the Publicity Director for the Pine Mountain Ski Jumping Classic for thirty-five years. Erickson was forced to retire from the newspaper business after thirty-eight years because of a physical disability, but continued to write some ski jumping "propaganda" until his death.*

In 1974, E.O. (Buck) Erickson, former editor and sports editor of *The News*, completed his 35<sup>th</sup> year as publicity director for the Pine Mountain ski-jumping classics. This was the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the giant hill and Erickson, then sports editor, started as publicity director for the dedication tournament of the \$125,000 WPA project hill in 1939.

Through those years, and up until 1969, he produced the annually popular ski section in *The News*. This section was acclaimed nation-wide and his largest issue, eight pages, was reproduced in photographs

in the *American Ski Annual*.

In addition to local publicity, his ski releases were sent to 75 news media throughout the Midwest and other parts of the U.S. He also had charge of accommodations for visiting news media.

Erickson was responsible for bringing the first foreign jumpers to Pine Mountain tournaments. Among them were Fritz Tschannen, world distance record holder from Switzerland; Petter Hugsted of Norway and Matti Pietikainen of Finland, world champions; Nilo Zandanel, world distance record holder from Italy, and Jacques Charland, Canadian champion.

In 1969 he was presented with an honorary life membership plaque by the Ishpeming Ski Club for giving the Ishpeming tournament its first ski section in *The Mining Journal* published in Marquette, Michigan.

He served on the public relations committee of the U.S. Ski Association and was public relations director as a member of the 10-man National Ski Hall of Fame Committee.

Believed to have the longest ski-jumping and promotion career in the United States, Erickson was cited by the Central Ski Association, the U.S. Ski Association and the ski associations of Finland, Norway and Switzerland. In addition to the Ishpeming Ski Club plaque, he owned plaques from the Italian Ski Association, the Kiwanis Ski Club and the Iron Mountain-Kingsford Winter Sports Association.

In the long history of Pine Mountain, Erickson called the 1949 tournament the most thrilling and outstanding. "That's the year," Erickson said "unknown Jumping Joe Perrault, of Ishpeming had his day in the sun and broke the North American distance record twice while outclassing two world champions, Petter Hugsted of Norway and Matti Pietikainen of Finland."

Retiring from the newspaper game after 38 years due to a physical disability, Erickson was still able to write and planned to continue pushing out the ski-jumping propaganda.

E.O. "Buck" Erickson was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1974.