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Felix Koziol

Born: 1900 Died: 1976

Information submitted in a nomination letter by Sverre Engen to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame

Recognizing a need, Felix C. Koziol co-authored the first official publication on avalanches, the "Alta Avalanche Studies." This was followed, in 1954, by the first official government handbook on avalanches, and in 1961, by a handbook "Snow Avalanches," the bible for snow rangers everywhere.

Serving 42 years with the United States Forest Service, 21 of these spent as supervisor of the Wasatch National Forest in Utah, Felix C. Koziol has done an outstanding job of promoting skiing in America.

Becoming interested in skiing in 1936, he was an ardent booster and hard working supporter of the sport he loved so well. In 1938, as recreational staff officer in the Ogden Regional Forest Service, he had an opportunity to start promoting skiing in earnest by helping to survey and plan many ski areas in Utah, Wyoming, and Idaho. Now after many years of continued development, many of these areas are rated among the best in the world.

In 1942-43, Mr. Koziol was Supervisor of the Teton National Forest in Jackson, Wyoming, enabling him to play an important part in the development and promotion of skiing in that area. He was president of the Jackson Hole Ski Club at that time as he had been president of the Ogden Ski Club when residing in Ogden.

In 1943, he was transferred to the Wasatch National Forest in Utah where the opportunity for developing skiing really grew. At that time the need for avalanche control was recognized, and Mr. Koziol was instrumental in getting a program under way. He hired and trained the first Snow Rangers who carried on a scientific research program. In 1952, he secured artillery to be used in avalanche control, a major step in dealing with this problem.

Recognizing the need, in 1947, he co-authored the first official publication on avalanches, entitled "Alta Avalanche Studies." This was followed in 1954 by the first official government handbook on avalanches, and in 1961 by "Snow Avalanches" a handbook on forecasting and control measures. This has become the bible for Snow Rangers everywhere.

Working with the State Road Commission of Utah, Mr. Koziol helped institute highway and traffic safety programs for the canyons.

Besides his busy schedule with the Forest Service, he always found time to serve in all phases of skiing, being an active judge and timer of ski competitions for many years. For 10 years, he was the secretary for the Intermountain Ski Association as well as Intermountain Editor for the *American Ski Annual*. During this time, he was a delegate to many national ski association meetings.

He was one of the first to recognize the need for a unified way to teach skiing, therefore he helped to promote the first program for certification of ski instructors and their official professional organization.

Among the honors Mr. Koziol received was a citation from the U.S. Olympic Committee for dedication and support of the U.S. Ski Team in the 1952 Olympics in Oslo, Norway. In 1952, he was awarded the coveted Julius P. Blegen Memorial Emblem Citation for outstanding service to the U.S. Sport of skiing, presented by the National Ski Association of America. He served as chairman of the Salt Lake City Chamber of Commerce Recreation and Winter Sports Committee for many years. In 1966, Mr. Koziol received a citation from the Utah State University for outstanding contributions to Utah sports, as a member of Governor Rampton's committee to study and apply for the 1972 Olympic Games in Utah. He went to Rome to help present the application to the International Olympic Committee. That same year he received the Governors Annual "Ski Utah" Cup Award.

Following retirement from the U.S. Forest Service on December 31, 1964, he wound up his professional career by serving by appointment as director of the Utah State Parks System for four and one-half years.

Felix C. Koziol was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1974.



Felix Koziol with his two skiing daughters around 1950.