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Harry Pollard

Born: 1907 Died: 1992

Harry G. Pollard, Jr. was involved in every phase of skiing at some time in his career, always striving to make the sport better.

Harry Pollard was born in Lowell, Massachusetts, on June 29, 1907. He began his jumping and cross-country skiing activities at the Middlesex School in Concord, Massachusetts, in the winter of 1923.

In the winter of 1926-27, Harry brought his skis to New Haven, Connecticut, where people gawked at these ungainly contraptions. Forced to ski alone because no one was interested in this strange sport, he gave the sport up until 1923, when Otto Schniebs visited the Dartmouth Ski Club in Lowell and got him back on the boards.

In 1935, Harry started the Black and Blue Trail Smashers Ski Club, which is still in existence today (now known as the Waterville Valley BBTS). As the club grew, Harry started making skis in the local woodworking shop. From 1935 to 1939, he ran the largest ski shop north of Boston, the Chalet Ski Shop, in Lowell. On the roof of his grandfather's department store, the A.G. Pollard Company, he built the largest ski slide in the country – 170 feet long and 25-40 feet wide, with a 22-foot vertical drop.

In 1937, Harry joined the United States Eastern Amateur Ski Association (USEASA). He served on the Association's Board of Directors and was treasurer and chairman of its Safety Trophy Committee, for which he wrote and developed a safety program.

Harry entered active duty in the U.S. Naval Reserve in June 1942. In 1943, he organized the 11th Naval District Winter Rescue Squad and the San Diego Ski Patrol. After the war, Harry remained committed to ski safety.

In 1961, he moved to Rye Beach, New Hampshire, and became active in the National Ski Patrol System. Harry received National appointment #66. He served as chairman of the National Ski Patrol System from 1968 to 1976. Under his direction, the National Ski Patrol Board of Directors was expanded to include a representative elected by professional ski patrol directors. The greatest growth in the Ski Patrol occurred under Harry Pollard's chairmanship, from some 19,000 to 22,600 members – an increase of 18 per cent. Most importantly, the NSP achieved unprecedented recognition among other national ski organizations under his leadership.

In 1972, Harry assisted in organizing the American Ski Federation and became its first vice-president. In October 1972, he was awarded the New England Council Silver Bowl Award for outstanding contributions to the ski sport. During this time, Harry wrote articles on ski safety education for various publications. As a result, he was invited to participate actively in the American Society for Testing and Materials Committee (ASTM), which is devoted to protective equipment for sports safety. He soon became chairman of one of its subdivisions on Environmental Variables affecting ski bindings. Through the ASTM, the NSP became involved with the Consumer Product Safety Commission in developing a ski safety educational program.

As a member of the U.S. Ski Touring Council, Harry assisted in running touring clinics. In 1972, the Eastern Division started the Nordic Ski Patrol, which he encouraged strongly. In 1975, the Nordic Ski Patrol became a national program under the NSP.

No higher honor – induction into the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame – could have come to a man for his services to the sport he loved so dearly. Harry G. Pollard was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1976.

