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## Lars Haugen

Born: 1891    Died: 1969

*Lars Haugen was a top ski jumper in Norway, and continued his winning ways when he immigrated to the United States in 1900. Lars was never on an Olympic Team because he turned “professional” shortly before the 1924 games, and his brother Anders was chosen to replace him.*

Lars Haugen was born in Bo, Telemark, Norway, in 1891, and immigrated to the United States when he was eighteen years old. He settled in Minneapolis, Minnesota, after brief stays in Red Wing, Minnesota, and Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. He was a top ski jumper as a youth in Norway and continued his winnings ways after settling in this country. Beginning in 1912, Lars won nearly every title in the country, including big wins at the Norge Ski Club event in 1912, 1918, and 1922, the Brattleboro meet in 1924, the Denver jump in 1927, and the Red Wing, Minnesota, meet in 1928. In 1919, he held the national record of 214 feet, set at Steamboat Springs, Colorado, and was the National Class “A” Champion in 1912, 1915, 1918, 1924, 1927, and 1928.

Lars was a bachelor for 42 years when he married his wife Cora in 1933, and after a brief honeymoon at the Chicago World’s Fair, Cora and Lars headed west to Lake Tahoe, where he and Jack Miner of Truckee, California, helped organize the Western ski clubs. After a year of organizing the West, he and Cora returned to the Minneapolis area where Lars was chief inspector for Northland Ski Company at Midway, Minnesota, when he wasn’t skiing.

Lars never skied on the United States Olympic Ski Team. This was about the time he turned professional and wished to head west to compete on the professional level. On his recommendation, Lars’ brother Anders was chosen to replace him.

In 1929, Lars established himself temporarily at Tahoe City, California, and directed the construction of the 60 meter hill known as Olympic Hill, which was being constructed in anticipation of Tahoe City’s bid for the 1932 Olympics. California was at first awarded the bid, but it was later retracted. The Olympics were awarded to Lake Placid, New York.

Lars and Anders Haugen were the ski leaders of that era that were directly responsible for the ski boom in the Lake Tahoe – Northern California area which lead to the establishment of Squaw Valley some 30 years later. The fate of the Olympic Hill was not so bright. After the failure of the Olympic bid in 1932, Olympic Hill was completed and used sparingly, never living up to the hopes of Lars when he designed it.

Lars Haugen settled back in the Minneapolis area after his retirement from skiing and died there in 1969.

Lars was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame, along with his brother Anders, in 1963.

