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Helmut Teichner

Born: 1911 Died: 2001

From the time he strapped on his first pair of skis as a boy in Germany, Helmut Teichner was hooked on the sport. Teichner, however, was never satisfied to savor the thrill of skiing for himself alone. He was determined to share his beloved sport with as many people as possible.

In 1939 Helmut Teichner founded the Wilmot Mountain Ski School in Wilmot, Wisconsin (located near Chicago). Today it rated among the top ten ski schools in the nation.

Teichner's achievements have earned him the title of "Mr. Skiing" and the "Dean of Midwest Ski Instructors" for his intense dedication to the art of controlled, safe skiing – the theme preached by Teichner over his long career.

Teichner is recognized as one of the innovators of the "humanistic" approach to ski instruction. The teaching program which he developed and the ski school manual which he wrote have influenced other ski schools throughout the country.

He was always concerned to develop ways to harness the fear the beginning skier encounters. His unusual innovative approach to effectively overcoming the six main types of fear greatly contributed toward giving novices confidence. A program dear to Teichner's heart was the special ski group for children and teenagers that he helped organize and instruct.

Teichner, was a full-certified instructor and certification examiner, co-founder, director and Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Central Professional Ski Instructors Association.

Helmut served fourteen years as director and vice-president of the United States Ski Association, CD. In recognition of his outstanding service, he was elected Director Emeritus, and in this capacity still served on the board. He is also a charter member of P.S.I.A.

Teichner developed a program to train "Qualified Amateur Ski Instructors." The program was subsequently adopted by the USSA-CD.

Helmut worked with schools and universities throughout the Midwest to develop skiing courses for college credit. He also conducted a special ski school for the Chicago Tribune introducing 100,000 novices to the sport over a thirteen year period.

Teichner communicated his enthusiasm for skiing by writing a nationally syndicated column on skiing for the Chicago Tribune, as well as numerous articles for various skiing magazines and professional journals. Over 500 various groups called on him to lecture, give seminars and presentations dealing with all phases of the sport. Radio and television media frequently invited Teichner to speak on skiing, recognizing his knowledge, sense of humor and the interest and enthusiasm he generated. NBC spotlighted Wilmot and Teichner on a network documentary.

Teichner always found time to help raise funds for various ski organizations including the U.S. Ski Teams, Central and National. He was singled out as the largest fundraiser for the 8th Interski (Worldwide Ski Instructors Convention, 1968) in Aspen, Colorado. The master of seven musical instruments, Teichner performed frequently as a one-man band to raise money for a variety of charitable causes.

He was the recipient of numerous awards including the coveted "Trailblazer Trophy" presented for "Distinguished Service Award of the Year to the Skiing Community" by the 75 member Ski Clubs of the Chicago Metropolitan Ski Council.

In recognition of his contributions to the sport, the CPSIA organized an annual ski race called "The Helmut Teichner Professional Award." The invitation reads: "In honor of the one individual who more than anyone else has promoted the cause of professional ski instruction to the general public."

Teichner, in his native Europe, competed in 64 cross-country competitive races; was involved in amateur boxing; motorcycle racing; and competed in 1000 meter track events. He held a private pilot and glider license.

In 1964 he competed and won the 1st prize in his class in Zurs, Austria International Giant Slalom race.

Helmut Teichner was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1983.