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## William "Sarge" Brown

Born: 1922

Information taken from a nomination letter to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame submitted by Bob Parker

*William "Sarge" Brown's love of skiing led him to Colorado, where in 1966, he help develop Vail and Beaver Creek into world-class ski areas.*

William "Sarge" Brown was born in Cascade, Idaho, in 1922. He starred in every sport available in high school, including four-event skiing. At the University of Idaho, he led the ski team to an intercollegiate championship.

In 1942, he gave up on a promising ski racing career for the army, won his paratrooper wings and transferred to the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division. At Camp Hale he became the youngest first sergeant in the division.

Recuperating from his wounds back in McCall, Brown organized and directed the McCall Junior Ski League, nicknamed "Bill's Mighty Mites," which produced several junior ski stars, and won three national championships. With Lea Bacos, another ski troop veteran, he initiated, organized and staged this nation's first National Junior Championships at Bogus Basin, Idaho, in March of 1948.

Called back into the military, Brown volunteered for combat in Korea, where he was twice wounded and decorated for valor.

As a peacetime soldier, Brown instructed a whole generation of young soldiers in military skiing and mountaineering. Brown was selected to direct the Dartmouth College R.O.T.C. program. He turned this program into the highest rated college officers training unit in the eastern United States.

Brown was named to the 1948 and 1952 U.S. Olympic Teams, but was injured on both occasions and could not compete. He volunteered for combat duty in Vietnam in 1966, but was refused, so Brown retired and went to work as the Mountain Manager at Vail, Colorado. While there, he created one of the world's finest mountain operations,

introducing major innovations in slope building and maintenance. Brown retired from Vail in 1989 after a very successful career.

His accomplishments in the ski industry were numerous. Brown created the most efficient mountain communications system in the world. He established modern criteria for mountain personnel management, designed important improvements in slope maintenance machines, organized and trained the first Secret Service "Whitehouse" skiing unit, and the first FBI mountain-trained "anti-terrorist" detail. Sarge invented Brown's Brush, a unique slope finishing device. He set new standards for slope re-vegetation and anti-erosion methods. Brown developed standards and techniques for international race management which are accepted as "state of the art" throughout the ski world and ran major races including World Cups and 1989 F.I.S. Alpine Championships. Brown also initiated slope control devices greatly increasing skier safety during peak hour and peak season periods.

William "Sarge" Brown was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1990.

