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T. Gary Allen

Born: 1921

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

Gary Allen is a wonderful example of the complete skier and sportsman. Gary spent most of two years supervising the installation of the complicated snowmaking equipment on both jumps at Lake Placid. (The man-made snow had to be trucked to the cross-country biathlon trails). He also helped engineer a mechanized snow grooming system for the jumps which did the work of 100 non-existent rakers and packers.

Allen was just an enthusiastic youngster in New Jersey with one pair of pine skis with leather bindings for cross-country, downhill, and jumping. After that, Gary entered Dartmouth, spent 5 years war time flying for the navy (distinguished Flying Cross and 3 Air Medals); was a pilot for A.O.A. and Pan Am for 6 years, and then spent 7 years with Northland Skis and Saunders Engineering.

However, the mountains have their imperious call. He settled in Gilford, New Hampshire, earned a master in math and science and began his destined career of teaching and coaching at Laconia High School.

For 17 years he coached junior skiers at all levels in all events. Out of hundreds came Penny Pitou, Marty Hall, Dick Taylor, Teyck Weed and other national and international luminaries.

Coaching leads everywhere: building trails, financing jumps, organizing parents into clubs, running meets, rewriting bad rules – everything from waxing to discipline to first aid to child psychology to parent psychotherapy. Gary did them all, and always with that special mixture of thoroughness and kindness so characteristic of him.

Meanwhile he totally modernized the four ski jumps (15m, 25m, 45m, 70m) at Gunstock and helped set up the Eastern junior programs in alpine and nordic which later became the Buddy Werner, Torger Tokle, and Billy Koch leagues.

Organizing talent also leads everywhere. Consider the work Gary undertook in managing just these few responsibilities:

- Chief of Competition; Eastern Junior Alpine Championships (1967)
- Chief of Competition, Junior Nordic Championships (1967)
- Chief of Competition, National Nordic Championships (1974, 1975, 1981, 1982, 1985)
- Chief of Competition, National Jumping Championships (1977, 1985)
- Chief of Competition, F.I.S. International Jumping (1978, 1979, 1980)
- Chief of Competition, Olympic Jumping Tryout (1979, 1980)
- Assistant Chief of Competition under Gus Raam, Lake Placid Olympics

When Gary was nominated for the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame, his wife Lucille (his ever-forgiving winter widow) sincerely hoped that all members of the Selection Committee would seriously consider Gary for this honor so that “perhaps –perhaps – he’d now go skiing with her.”

T. Gary Allen was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1992.

