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Jimmy Johnston

Born: 1928

Information taken from a nomination letter to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame, Sponsors: Edna Dercum, Max Dercum, and Doug Pfeiffer

Jimmy Johnston's role as a ski instructor and director of a ski school for 30 years is only part of his long and distinguished career.

Jimmy Johnston was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on February 13, 1928. His skiing roots go back to 1936, when at age 8 he skied on a golf course managed by his father. By the time he was in high school, he was the city slalom champion. Johnston entered law school in 1950 and became a trial judge.

While in school, he was asked by the Minneapolis Park Board to head its ski school program. The program grew from a modest beginning of 12 children and 86 adults to 1000 children and 4,000 adults taking one lesson a week for 10 weeks. Jimmy ran his program for 30 years.

His role as a ski instructor was instrumental in being a co-founder of the Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA) in

1961. He was a developer of the certification standards for the PSIA, and published the book *Official American Ski Techniques*. He served as secretary as well as president of the PSIA and served on the board of directors for eleven years.

Johnston also wrote articles about skiing for the *Minneapolis Star* in 1959 and 1960. In the 1950s, he founded and edited the *Minnesota-Wisconsin Ski News*, a weekly publication. He was also responsible for originating the first 24 hour telephone snow report line in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area.

Well known and respected throughout the international ski world, Johnston, as PSIA's secretary and eventually as its president was involved with their fielding instructor demonstrations and lectures at the tri-annual International Ski School Congress (INTERSKI). He was also a member of the organizing committee of PSIA's very successful hosting of the 1968 INTERSKI at Aspen. This was the first time this event was held in the United States.

Jimmy Johnston also served as a director of the Central Division of the United States Ski Association from 1957-1971. During that time, he held various offices and was a delegate to the USSA annual meetings.

In December of 1995, at the annual Veterans Professional Ski Instructors reunion in Park City, Utah, Johnston was presented with the first Lifetime Achievement Award granted by the PSIA for his contribution to ski technique and the sport of skiing.

Jimmy Johnston was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1996.

