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## Picabo Street

Born: 1971

Information taken from a nomination letter to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame – Sponsor: Paul Robbins, USSA Senior Correspondent

*Picabo Street is a two-time Olympic medalist, winning silver in downhill in 1994, and gold in 1998 in Super G.*

On the U.S. Ski Team, she was “The Franchise.” Picabo Street was one member in the 1990s very likely to give an electrifying performance. She is much more than the popular media’s take on her – a cute nickname, “Peekaboo” and a set of fast freckles. She was so fast, it was a joke going around that “Picabo could’ve finished 1-2-3.”

Born on April 3, 1972, in the town that parents Stud and Dee fell in love with – a tiny village near Sun Valley; Triumph, Idaho – Picabo was to become the most triumphant downhiller in U.S. history, male or female.

With one older brother, she changed the spelling of her first name for her first passport to match the name of an Indian tribe in southern Idaho whose word “Picabo” meant “Shining waters.”

Picabo started skiing at five, cruising down her driveway, snowplowing to slow down – on a pair of used K2s. By seven, she was keeping up with her father on Sun Valley’s Mt. Baldy and was accepted in the Sun Valley Ski Educational Foundation’s racing program. At ten, she began dreaming of winning an Olympic downhill. At 11, she won every junior race she entered but one. At 14, she went to the 1985 U.S. Junior Olympics in Alyeska, Alaska, where she won the downhill, the GS, and the overall. At 15, she was allowed to race in the Nor-Am series. In 1986, she was picked for the national development team and thereafter, regardless of several major injuries, she was on the U.S. Ski Team for 14 years.

She won the 1988 Junior Olympics, winning the super-G and downhill, taking third in slalom. She finished in the top 30 at her first World Cup at Aspen. Promoted to the “C” Team, she finished 24<sup>th</sup> in the 1989 World Cup downhill at Steamboat but picked up her first injury, an ACL injury in her left knee in the super-G. She took a year off for recovery. She won the overall Nor-Am title in 1991 and then in 1992.

She broke through to international success after the World Cup at Cortina d’Ampezzo, in January 1993. Weather had forced the F.I.S. to add a second weekend of racing. She grabbed her first top-10 finish at Cortina.

A couple of weeks later, Street collected her first medal, posting the fastest downhill time in the 1993 F.I.S. World Championship at Skizukuishi, Japan. By the season’s end, she had added her first World Cup race podium, finishing second at Hafjell, Lillehammer, Norway. She was off on her “parade of podiums.”

In 1994, she won her first Olympic medal, the downhill silver at Lillehammer, Norway; and in 1995, her first World Cup season title, the downhill championship, with six wins, taking home her first Crystal Globe. She was the first American to win the World Cup overall downhill title. In 1996, she became Women’s F.I.S. World Downhill Champion for the first time, taking a super-G bronze as well. In 1996, she took her second World Cup overall downhill title with three wins.

In 1997, during the second World Cup downhill of the season, Street crashed during a training run. She had torn knee ligaments again. She was out for the 1997 season, but in 1998 rebounded in Picabo fashion. She and head coach Herwig Demtschär decided Nagano’s super-G course was more of a downhill run than a super-G – she climbed onto the same skis she had won the Olympic downhill silver four years previously and proceeded to win the 1998 Olympic super-G by the closest margin in Olympic history, just one-hundredth of a second.

A month later, on a Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>, Street crashed in the downhill at the 1998 World Cup finals. It looked like a routine crash but turned out to be a horrendous mishap. She tore the ACL in the right knee and broke her left femur.

Returning to racing for the 2001 season, Street worked to regain her form, and to complete her career at the 2002 Utah Olympics. She was chosen for the honor guard that carried in the American flag that had flown over the New York Trade Center and carried the torch in the stadium that lit the cauldron opening the 2002 Utah Olympics.

Since her retirement, Picabo has been a spokesperson for NASTAR and Ski Ambassador for Park City. Picabo dedicates time and energy to her newly established nonprofit foundation, “Picabo’s Street of Dreams,” which she established to benefit underprivileged youth. She became a relentless ambassador for skiing, equally at home dealing with admiring kids or adoring crowds. Picabo’s autobiography was published in 2002, characteristically titled: *Picabo – Nothing to Hide*.

Picabo Street was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 2004.